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Moorhead Blues battle past Perham in sub-state quarterfinals

A late home run from Carson Zimmel, allows the Moorhead Blues to edge past a tenacious Perham team in the quarterfinal game of the Minnesota Legion #14 Sub-State Tournament.



Moorhead Blues' Carson Zimmel is congratulated for his home run hit against Perham in their quarterfinal Division I Sub-State 14 baseball tournament game Thursday, July 21, 2022, at Matson Field, Moorhead.

Michael Vosburg/The Forum

By [Andrew Haugland](#)

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MOORHEAD — It might not have been pretty, but the Moorhead Blues toughed out a win on Thursday at Matson Memorial Field.

The top-seeded Blues bested No. 5 seed Perham Post 61 6-4 in the Minnesota American Legion baseball Sub-State 14 tournament quarterfinals.

Moorhead head coach Bryant Bergeson said the Blues might not have had their greatest outing, but they did enough.

“Sometimes you gotta win when you don’t have your best stuff,” Bergeson said. “Gavin (Quade) on the mound didn’t have his best stuff. He battled through it tremendously and he ended up doing a great job. I don’t think our defense had the best game. We didn’t have the best game swinging the bats, but we battled. We came through when it mattered the most and we came through in the end.”

Moorhead Blues' Gavin Quade pitches against Perham in their quarterfinal Division I Sub-State 14 baseball tournament game Thursday, July 21, 2022, at Matson Field, Moorhead.
Michael Vosburg/The Forum

Quade pitched six innings, giving up four runs, eight hits and striking out five. The Blues defense committed four errors and the offense compiled eight hits.

Carson Zimmer's sixth-inning home run helped the Blues secure the win against Perham, which kept it within one run, until the big hit.

Zimmer fell into an 0-2 count and knew he had to make his swing count.

"When you get two strikes on," Zimmer said, "you just try to put a bat on a ball, get a barrel, and do something for your team. He threw another high curveball, (I) put a barrel on it and it went out."

The Blues found the run column first in the game, tallying a monumental five-run second inning.

Moorhead Blues' Aaron Reiersen slides into third on a triple against Perham in their quarterfinal Division I Sub-State 14 baseball tournament game Thursday, July 21, 2022, at Matson Field, Moorhead.
Michael Vosburg/The Forum

Aaron Reiersen led off the inning with a triple into the alley in left-center. Zimmer knocked him in with an RBI single. The bases were loaded after a couple free bases were awarded. Justin Stalboerger then smashed a single into center field to capitalize.

Wyatt Tweet then singled to score Stalboerger, who reached third after the error. The inning ended with a 5-0 Blues lead.

The deficit was quickly shaken off by Perham, which rallied in the third with four runs.

Jacob McAllister led off the inning, smacking a single into left field. Perham's Ben Schumansky and Logan Pulju hit back-to-back singles, driving in the first three runs for Perham. Moorhead's defense coughed up the second error of the inning that allowed the fourth run to cross for Perham.

Zimmel admitted his team started to feel the pressure after the Perham surge.

"It's always kind of nerve-racking when you're up a little bit," Zimmel said. "And they kinda get their rally going and get a streak going, but it's tough. We were definitely nervous and fought through it and came out in the end."

Moorhead Blues' Cullen Wilson bunts against Perham in their quarterfinal Division I Sub-State 14 baseball tournament game Thursday, July 21, 2022, at Matson Field, Moorhead. Michael Vosburg/The Forum

The game remained stagnant until the sixth inning, when Moorhead got the big swing it needed from Zimmer, boosting the Blues' lead to 6-4.

Perham threatened in the seventh inning with a runner in scoring position, but the two-out rally came to no avail. Moorhead sealed the deal with a double-play to end the game at 6-4.

Tweet continued his offensive stride at the plate, hitting 2-for-3. Stalboerger had a solid day at the plate going 2-for-2. Jacob Hendrickson had a 1-for-3 day with a double and Reiersen went 1-for-3 with a triple.

The Blues move on to play Alexandria Post 87, a team Moorhead is no stranger to, in the semifinals at 6:30 p.m. Friday at Matson Field.

Moorhead Blues' Jacob Vannett bats against Perham in their quarterfinal Division I Sub-State 14 baseball tournament game Thursday, July 21, 2022, at Matson Field, Moorhead. Michael Vosburg/The Forum

The two squads collided on the diamond in a doubleheader on June 28, with Moorhead taking the first game 4-3 in extra innings. Alexandria got its revenge with an 8-5 win in the second game.

"It's always a big one versus them, a big rivalry game," Zimmel said. "It's gonna be fun. It's gonna be tough, tougher than today, but survive and advance."

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