

SPORTS & SCHOOL NEWS

BASEBALL

Play-in loss ends season's play

St. Cloud pulls away for 9-5 extra-inning win; Bison finish with 3-18 record



Buffalo catcher Tyson Moore (left) attempts a tag on a St. Cloud baserunner in a 9-5 home loss Tuesday, May 31, against the Crush. The defeat came in the Section 8AAAA play-in elimination game. (Photo by Rob LaPlante)

BUFFALO BISON SPORTS SCHEDULE

Advertisement for American Family Mutual Insurance Company, S.L. featuring a portrait of Chris Chapman and contact information for American Family Insurance Agency, Inc.

A schedule table for Buffalo Bison sports events from June 9 to June 16. It lists events for boys track & field, girls track & field, girls lacrosse, and amateur baseball at various venues like Howard Lake, Rockford, and Cokato.

SOFTBALL

Rogers eliminates Buffalo

By Rob LaPlante Sports Editor

One game after ending Sartell-St. Stephen's season in the Section 8AAAA softball tournament, Buffalo saw its season come to an end in a 11-0 defeat Tuesday, May 31, against No. 4 seed Rogers.

ing and some unfortunate circumstances that led to the shutout. "We had runners on, we just couldn't get them in," Amundson said.



Rachel Hintze

The Royals tacked on three more runs in the third for the 11-0 advantage. Even in the win over Sartell, Buffalo rallied from a 3-0 deficit to start the game.

The Royals jumped on Bison starting pitcher Heidi Johnson early and often. Ten batters came to the plate in the bottom of the first. Four singles, two walks and a double later, and Rogers had a 6-0 lead.

"We had a couple times where we had guys on and didn't get a big hit," said Head Coach Mike Beilke. "Anytime you leave guys on second and third, it's a missed opportunity."

"We dug ourselves a hole early," said Buffalo Head Coach Greg Amundson. "The Royals played their type of game. They hit the ball hard, but they hit them to the right spots."

Buffalo stranded a total of 13 base runners over nine innings, including the bottom of the seventh in a 5-5 tie where they left the bases loaded, forcing extra innings.

"We had a couple missed opportunities, but we got a couple of breaks as well," said Brown, who finished the game 2-for-4 at the plate with a walk, run scored and two RBI from the cleanup spot.

Senior pitcher Evan Soeffker made the one-run lead stand until the Crush rallied for four runs in the top of the fifth to grab a 5-2

By Rob LaPlante Sports Editor

The Buffalo baseball team picked the right time to smack out a season-high 16 hits. There was one problem, however. In a Section 8AAAA play-in game, the No. 8 seeded Bison could only manufacture five runs out of the 16 hits, resulting in a season-ending 9-5 home loss Tuesday, May 31, against ninth-seeded St. Cloud.

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St. Cloud argued the call, but after the two umpires conversed, the call on the field stood, forcing extra innings. St. Cloud relief pitcher Elian Mezquita would walk the next batter, but with the bases loaded, got a big strikeout to end yet another threat.

Buffalo squandered another opportunity in the bottom of the eighth. With runners on first and second and one out, Mezquita got Brown to hit into a 6-4-3 double play.

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lead. Soeffker would start a two-out rally in the bottom of the fifth after he doubled, and scored on an RBI single by Brown. Buffalo was down to its final three outs, down 5-3 in the seventh, but Soeffker again started a rally when he reached base with a one-out single. Brown followed with a walk and Logan LaPlante singled to load the bases. Seventh-grader Tyson Moore made it 5-4 when he drew a bases-loaded walk.

What appeared to be a potential game-ending double play off the bat of Zach Salonek, turned into a game-tying run when pinch runner Wyatt Hicks forced a bad throw to first base on his force out at second.

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Tristan Moore had pitched three scoreless innings in relief of Soeffker,

but St. Cloud's power hitters came through in the ninth. Back-to-back doubles by Jaxon Kenning and Mezquita gave the Crush a 6-5 lead in the ninth. A hit batter put runners on first and second with one out. After a meeting with the mound, Moore got the second out on a weak ground out. Unfortunately for Buffalo, the third out came after a three-run homer by Jaden Mendell made it 9-5.

Again, down to their final three outs of the season, the Bison made things interesting. Singles by Tyson Moore and Broc Mütterer put runners on first and second, but with two outs, Mezquita ended it on a ground out to end it. The loss ended the Bison's season 3-18 overall. While heads were down after the defeat, Beilke stood by his young squad for never giving up.

"I've said it all year, when you have a record like we have, it would be really easy for guys to just quit, not play hard, and just fold it up," Beilke said. "They didn't do that. Even down 9-5, they were going up and giving good at-bats. The effort these guys gave for us this year was second to none."

With nine teams in the section, the bottom two seeded teams had to play for an invite into the double-elimination tournament, which started the following day with No. 1 seed St. Michael-Albertville hosting the winner of the play-in game.

"We knew this play-in game was make or break," Brown said. "We came ready to play. We came out

hitting in the first inning, then we had one rough inning, but we still fought hard all the way to the end."

Brown is one of five graduating seniors, which also includes, Soeffker, Dawson West, Doug Bartlett, and Max Hartke. Soeffker is the longest tenured member of the Class of 2022, but Beilke had nothing but great things to say about all the seniors.

"I think it's hard when you have such a small senior class and you try to drag up a lot of the younger kids along with you," Beilke said. "I think they did a great job with their leadership. I saw a lot of young kids in our program really grow talent-wise and get up to speed with varsity baseball."

Beilke wasn't alone in seeing the progression of the younger players.

"We have a lot of young talent," Brown said. "I think in the future years, Buffalo baseball will definitely be one to watch out for."

Section 8AAAA Play-In Game St. Cloud 9, Buffalo 5, (9 innings) (Tuesday, May 31 at Buffalo) #9 Crush 0 1 0 0 4 0 0 0 4 - 9 9 0 #8 Bison 1 1 0 0 1 0 2 0 0 - 5 16 0

BRIEFS

First ace of season recorded June 1 at Wild Marsh Golf



Ralph Blake was the first golfer to card a hole-in-one this year at Wild Marsh Golf Club. (Submitted photo)

The first ace of the season at Wild Marsh Golf Club in Buffalo came on the first day of June.

By hitting his ace, Blake becomes eligible for the hole-in-one pot, a \$10 league fee that is split at the end of the year to all golfers that record a hole-in-one.

Ralph Blake, of Maple Grove, hit a hole-in-one using the white tees on the 131-yard, Par-3, Hole 4. Blake used a 6-iron, while

Buffalo posts two blowout wins over Loretto

Bulldogs

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quitting. We're chipping away every inning and continually getting guys on base and putting the pressure on the other team's defense."

Squeezed between the two Loretto wins was a "lower" scoring 7-5 road victory last Friday at Dassel-Cokato.

Buffalo trailed 2-1 after four innings, but a three-run inning in the top of the fifth gave the Bulldogs a 4-2 edge. The Saints battled back from a 5-2 deficit in the sixth to tie the score 5-5, but the eventual winning run scored in the eighth on a fielding error that allowed Cole LaPlante to score. Buffalo added an insurance run in the ninth on an RBI single by Renshaw.

John Weber pitched 5.1 innings in relief of Josh Gavin to record the win. Weber struck out 10 and allowed just three hits in his outing. James Howell suffered the defeat in relief of Collin Krick, who pitched seven innings for the Saints to start.

"Their (D-C's) lineup is much improved from last year, and Krick through well against us," Braun said. "He mixed up pitches a lot and kept us off-balance for a bit, but we were able to get on him a little. It

was a good game. They are much improved."

The Bulldogs returned to action Wednesday, June 8, with a road game against Maple Lake. Next up is a 7:30 p.m. home game Friday, June 10, against Howard Lake. Sunday, June 12, they travel to Rockford for their first-ever game against the Crows, a first-year team that plays at Rockford High School. Sunday's game starts at 1 p.m.

Buffalo 23, Loretto 1 (Wednesday, June 1 at Buffalo) Larks 0 1 0 0 0 0 - 1 5 4 Bulldogs 5 0 3 5 5 5 0 - 23 19 1

Buffalo 7, Dassel-Cokato 5 (Friday, June 3 at Dassel-Cokato) Bulldogs 0 0 1 3 1 0 1 1 - 7 11 0 Saints 0 0 1 1 0 3 0 0 0 - 5 6 4

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