



Lady Longhorns are looking at a No. 3 seed, possibly No. 2

By Jan Schultz

The Imperial Republican

Chase County softball has a solid No. 3 seed in next week's C6 district tournament, but has a shot at No. 2 if a few games went their way among other contests this week.

It's out of Chase County's hands now, as Tuesday was the cut-off for games considered in district tournament seeding, according to the NSAA.

Coach Denise Smith's Chase County team held a 9-10 record on Monday (39.3158 points), and was less than a point below Chadron, which holds an 8-10 record (40.2778) in the NSAA standings.

Gothenburg, who is hosting the Oct. 10-11 tournament, is the likely top seed with a 15-6 record (42.333 points).

Chase County did not play on Tuesday this week, but Chadron and Scottsbluff did, and the outcome of that game could help bump up the Lady Longhorns closer to the No. 2 spot. There were also a couple of other games whose outcomes could factor in, Smith said.

The No. 2 seed would be nice, the coach said. It means one less game on Thursday, as well as a later start time.

The bracket will be officially out by today (Thursday) on the NSAA website: nsaahome.org

Each team will play at least two games, some three, on the tournament's first day.

It continues Friday, Oct. 11, with three, possibly four, contests.

The winner qualifies for state Oct. 16-18 in Hastings.

Prior to the district tourney, Chase County will be in Holdrege today (Thursday) for a varsity triangular that also includes Grand Island CC. Games start at 3 p.m. MT

On Saturday, the Lady Longhorns travel to Alliance for their final regular season outing, a triangular with Alliance and Chadron. Games start at 12 noon.

Scottsbluff double-header

Saturday's two games with Scottsbluff were important in Chase County's final point standings for district seeding, but the Lady Longhorns lost both.

The first was a real heartbreaker as Chase County lost 11-12 after holding a three-run sixth inning lead.

Chase County had nine errors in the game, their worst showing this season, and left 12 runners on base.

"Can't win too many games with that," Smith said.

"It was extremely unfortunate to lose that one with a three-run lead going into the seventh," she said.

It was a see-saw game for most of the opener, and was tied 8-8 as Chase County came to bat in the sixth. Without a hit, Chase County scored three that inning on several Scottsbluff errors,

two walks and a hit batter.

Leading 11-8, Scottsbluff's eight, nine and 10 hitters were up in the top of the seventh. The first two batters were hit by pitches, then Scottsbluff loaded the bases on a Chase County throwing error, bringing up their top of the order. A single and double drove in the four runs needed.

In the bottom of the seventh, Jodi Koellner led off with a line drive out to short. Josie Peterson walked, then stole second and third. Abbi Vetter also walked, but Chase County's next two batters went down on strikes to end the game.

Chase County tallied eight hits, led by Koellner and Claire Kuenne, both with doubles. Singling were Anna Bauerle, Ally Vrbas, Katelyn Wheeler, Peterson, Emma Bauerle and Cassie Burpo.

Anna Bauerle pitched the seven-inning game, striking out six, walking two and giving up 11 hits.

That disappointing loss carried over into the second game, Smith said, which Scottsbluff also won, 8-4.

All of Chase County's runs came in the fourth, tying the game 4-4. After holding Scottsbluff to no runs the next three innings, the Lady Longhorns gave up four more in the seventh.

Chase County couldn't muster much of a seventh. Lead batter Anna Bauerle got to first on an error, then was put out at second on a fielder's choice. The next two batters struck out.

Chase County had just three hits, singles from Anna Bauerle, Koellner and Peterson.

Wheeler started on the mound for the Lady Longhorns, and went two and a third innings, walking four and giving up four hits. Bauerle finished, striking out three, walking one and giving up five hits.

Cozad games

Chase County played a pair of games at Cozad Sept. 24, winning the JV outing but losing varsity.

In the JV game, Chase County put up eight runs in their first at-bat, and held Cozad's JVs from scoring until the third inning, en route to an 11-8 win.

Earning Chase County's eight hits were Brittanie Benge, two singles; Emma Mollendor, two singles; Destiny Reinke, double; and a single each from Jessica Hartman, Becca Huicochea and Sarah Allen.

Wheeler was on the mound for the five-inning game. She struck out one, walked six and gave up three hits.

Coach Smith said she was able to move players around to different positions in the five-inning JV contest.

The Chase County varsity lost a 9-4 game to Cozad.

After taking an early 1-0 lead, Cozad scored five in the second helped by three Chase County errors. Before the game ended, the Lady Longhorns had seven errors.

Chase County put one run across in each of the third, sixth and seventh innings.

Earning hits for Chase County were Peterson, two singles; and a single each from Anna Bauerle, Vrbas, Vetter and Burpo.

Bauerle was on the mound all six innings, striking out three, walking two and giving up seven hits.

Tourney at Ogallala

Chase County got a little revenge last Thursday, beating Cozad 11-8 after losing to the Lady Haymakers just two days earlier.

The Lady Longhorns also faced McCook in the eight-team tourney hosted by Gothenburg in Ogallala. Chase County was blanked by the 14-8 Lady Bison, 16-0.

Against Cozad, the difference-maker last Thursday was errors, as Chase County had just two in this outing.

It was a 5-4 game through three, but Chase County put five runs across in the fourth as Cozad's pitcher struggled with four walks and a hit batter.

It was a 10-7 game after four, before each team scored once more and Chase County pulled out the 11-8 victory.

Anna Bauerle put Chase County's final run across in the sixth after a triple, then scored on a single from Wheeler. Coach Smith said Ogallala did not have the shorter 200-foot softball fences up for this tournament, which took away a sure homer for Bauerle in that at-bat.

Koellner went 4-5 at the plate with three singles and a double. Wheeler had two other singles, while Peterson doubled, and Vetter and Burpo each singled.

Bauerle went the full seven innings on the mound, striking out two, walking four and giving up 10 hits.

Against McCook, Chase County managed just two singles from Burpo and Vetter as they lost a 16-0 game.

Bauerle pitched the first three innings, walking three and giving up five hits. Peterson pitched the last inning, striking out one, walking five and giving up seven hits.