

OAK HILLS GRADS
make history
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Silverado, AAE

LOSE IN SEMIS

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GOOD MORNING, HIGH DESERT

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CIF-SS DIVISION 7 SOFTBALL SEMIFINALS

One step short

Sloppy play costs AAE in semifinal loss to Cardinals

By MARK A. PEINADO ~ STAFF WRITER

APPLE VALLEY • Errors, passed balls and wild pitches.

Mistakes the Academy for Academic Excellence softball team has avoided throughout the postseason crept up at the most inopportune time, the CIF-Southern Section Division 7 semifinals.

They ended up costing the Knights a trip to the CIF-SS championship game, along with Mesa Grande Academy's four-run fifth inning that lifted the Cardinals to an 8-3 win over AAE on Tuesday.

"It's disappointing," Knights coach Brian Frederick said. "We knew coming into the game it would be a battle of errors and errors got us. Overall, I think the score should have been 4-3. We had some dropped balls and some passed balls that we haven't had all season. But I'm proud of the girls."

AAE (18-5) committed a total of 10 passed balls, wild pitches and errors in the game. The mistakes led to Mesa Grande scoring four runs without the benefit of a hit.

Still, the Knights had a lead after four innings.

Trailing 1-0 in the bottom of the third, AAE got a three-run homer from Rebekkah Keller to take a 3-1 lead.

But Mesa Grande wouldn't go away and in the fourth the mistakes began to mount for AAE.

The Cardinals (18-4) cut their deficit to 3-2 when a passed ball from AAE freshman catcher Victoria Edwards brought in a run. Frederick said that earlier in the season Edwards had a thumb injury and it was still lingering. Then in the fifth, Mesa Grande took the lead for good with a four-run rally.

It all started with a pop-fly single in between Knights pitcher Cassie Williams and second baseman Haley Perea. Two outs later, with a runner at third, Williams walked Katie Boadway, who then stole second. That brought up Michaela Garcia and she came through with a two run single.

Garcia stole second and took third on an error. She came home on a wild pitch from Williams. Jen Deiner followed with a single, and she scored after three passed balls — two charged to Edwards and the other to Keller — to give Mesa Grande a 6-3 lead.

“The momentum shifted over to them and it was hard to get that back,” Williams said. “I love my team. Even though there were a couple of errors, they played their best and tried their hardest. I couldn’t ask for more. (Mistakes) happen and they just get lucky sometimes. I just have to shake it off. My team has to shake it off.”

The six runs were more than enough support for Deiner. She set the Knights down in order in the fifth, sixth and seventh innings. Deiner retired 12 of the last 13 batters she faced and finished with eight strikeouts.

“Our bats didn’t come alive like we’ve been hitting the last few games,” Frederick said. “I thought Rebekkah’s home run was what we were going to need to get our spark going. We left a few runners at third base which we generally don’t do. I think we were timing (Deiner) OK, the girls just weren’t making the contact that we usually make.”

Williams finished her four-year career at AAE with 12 strikeouts. Williams, who is headed to Cal State University San Bernardino next year, said it was a great run and she expects the Knights to contend for the CIF-SS title in 2014.

“This year has been by far the most amazing year that we’ve had,” Williams said. “I just hope they remember what has happened the last four years and what was taught to them — what’s correct and to hang onto that. With these freshmen, they have something special. They can definitely do it again.”



KENNETH SOUSA, FOR THE DAILY PRESS Mesa Grande’s Michaela Garcia scores in front of Academy for Academic Excellence catcher Victoria Edwards on Tuesday afternoon.



KNIGHTS 3



CARDINALS 8



KENNETH SOUSA, FOR THE DAILY PRESS

Mesa Grande's Shelby Herling forces out Academy for Academic Excellence's Cassie Williams on Tuesday.

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Deiner and Garcia. Williams and Edwards, Keller (5). WP - Deiner. LP - Williams. 2B - Deiner (M). HR - Deiner (M); Keller (A).

*Mark A. Peinado can be reached
at mpeinado@vvdailynews.com
or at 760-951-6274.*