

Press Clippings 5/19/2022

Daily Herald

Wheaton North attack finds its rhythm to beat South Elgin --

- 5/18/2022

By Craig Brueske

Having scored just one goal in its last six matches, Wheaton North's girls soccer team put aside its offensive frustrations for 40 minutes on Wednesday night.

Junior forward Macy Hutchinson scored a pair of first-half goals, while senior forward Olivia Moreno added another off a picture-perfect feed from Maddie DelAlcazar as the Falcons (9-9) jumped out to a 3-0 halftime lead over **South Elgin** (6-9-4) during their Class 3A regional semifinal match at Jim Rexilius Field in Wheaton.

Nearly five minutes into the second half, senior Rowan Smith found the back of the net off a centering pass from freshman Talia Kaempf, and the seventh-seeded Falcons eventually cruised to a 4-0 triumph.

"It was one of our most complete games," said Falcons coach Tim McEvelly. "We just haven't been able to string that last pass together for a couple weeks. We played tight games with (Wheaton Warrenville) South, Geneva and St. Charles North.

"We've been playing quality competition, but the kids were focused tonight. We were really organized in the back and composed getting the ball forward."

Five minutes after Hutchinson fed Kaempf for a shot that was turned away by Storm goalkeeper Karissa Cruz, Kaempf returned the favor, setting up Hutchinson for the game's first goal with 26:13 left in the opening half.

"We've been working a lot on taking the ball in and crossing it in practice, so it was really good to see it translate on the field," Hutchinson said. "I was so glad to have a nice little finish."

Nine minutes later, senior midfielder Claudia Kim was tripped in the box, and Hutchinson delivered a right-footed penalty kick into the back of the net for a 2-0 lead.

"Macy's PK finish was very composed and confident," McEvelly said.

The Falcons' 3-0 halftime advantage was just what McEvilly was looking for.

"It has been difficult for us to put the throttle down all the way," the coach said. "When you've got a chance, you've got to bury somebody."

The Falcons did just that, adding their fourth goal early in the second half, and sophomore keepers Zoey Bohmer and Olivia Iberle combined for the team's eighth shutout.

"We talked at halftime about starting strong in the second half," said McEvilly, whose team will face second-seeded St. Charles East in Friday's 5 p.m. regional final.

The Saints defeated Wheaton North 4-0 on May 12.

"You're always going to be challenged playing St. Charles East," McEvilly said. "They're dangerous all of the time. My kids will be up for the challenge."

South Elgin loses eight seniors to graduation -- Mallory Stueck, Katrina Barthelt, Liliana Hernandez, Chloe Beucler, Madeline Meiner, Emily Delamora, Alexia Benitez and Norak Stueck.

"We've been fighting adversity all year," said Storm coach Laura Szwaja. "We had four starters out injured today. One of them (freshman Ashley Gonzalez) was at home after her ACL surgery today.

"COVID stole a lot from this group. I feel badly for them because they didn't get what they deserve out of high school soccer through no fault of their own."

Chicago Tribune/The Courier-News

Bartlett's Addison Koth keeps hitting home runs, adding to her school records with two more. And her 53 RBIs? 'She's just that kid.' --- 5/18/2022

By Rick Armstrong



Bartlett's Addison Koth (33) gets greeted by teammates at the plate after hitting one of her two home runs against Glenbard South during an Upstate Eight Conference game on Tuesday, May 17, 2022. (Mike Mantucca / The Beacon-News)

Do you know me?

For most opponents, the answer to that question concerning Bartlett's Addison Koth is "all too well."

Koth, a junior pitcher and first baseman, is a very good power hitter. She was back at it again Tuesday when the Hawks spoiled Glenbard South's senior night with a 9-7 Upstate Eight Conference victory in eight innings.

We're talking boom shakalaka.

"I'm probably known more for my hitting," Koth said.

That was apparent early in the game as senior shortstop Nicole Young and Koth hit back-to-back home runs for Bartlett (14-12, 9-6) in the first inning.

Koth hit the repeat button in the third, this time with two runners on. She sent a line drive to straightaway center that cleared the eight-foot fence with little room to spare.



Bartlett's Addison Koth squares up the ball for one of her two home runs against Glenbard South during an Upstate Eight Conference game on Tuesday, May 17, 2022. (Mike Mantucca / The Beacon-News)

"We all know when Addie comes up to the plate she's got the capability of hitting the ball hard somewhere," [Bartlett coach Jim Wolfsmith](#) said. "She's a great contact hitter, so she doesn't strike out a lot. She puts the ball in play."

"And because she's got such a strong swing, because she's a workout fiend, almost every ball is hit hard. Even the pop-up she hit later in the game was a monster pop-up."

Wolfsmith called it a positive vibe for the Hawks when Koth steps into the box with runners in scoring position, no doubt due to her .489 average and 53 RBIs.

"We know she's going to drive those runners in — she's just that kid," Wolfsmith said. "She works hard and should be rewarded for it."

Koth's two home runs gave her 16 for the season, breaking the school record of 15 she set last year. Her freshman season was lost to the pandemic.

[Taylor Rotondo](#), who finished with 19 career homers, had Bartlett's previous single-season record by hitting 12 in 2018.

The 6-foot-9 Wolfsmith said Koth hit a home run the previous week that was similar to the third-inning liner.

"It was like my height and it was out in a second," he said. "It skipped off the top of the fence. I'd never seen a ball go out that fast."



Bartlett's Addison Koth delivers a pitch against Glenbard South during an Upstate Eight Conference game on Tuesday, May 17, 2022. (Mike Mantucca / The Beacon-News)

Koth credits much of her hitting success to work with instructor Marc Mantucca, a former Naperville Central and Carthage baseball standout.

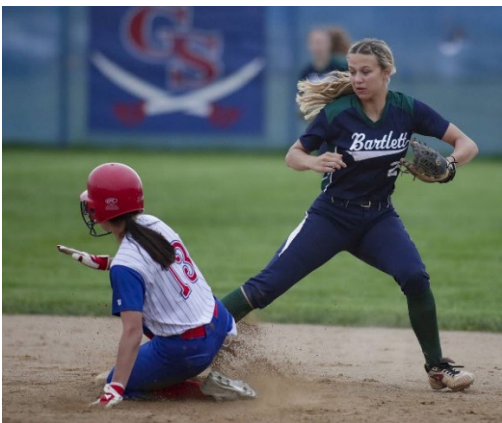
"I've worked with him over the past 18 months to two years and I started hitting the ball harder, started making more contact," Koth said. "We've worked a lot on my mental approach, being able to stay in my own zone and know what I'm capable of doing."

She also has worked individually with Rachel Folden, who's a hitting instructor in the Chicago Cubs' organization, and St. Charles' Jill Waldron on pitching.

Koth's work Tuesday was far from done, however, as the Raiders (9-10, 9-7) kept chipping away, forcing a 6-6 tie with two runs in the bottom of the fifth.

Alexa Burzawa's solo homer in the top half of the inning had extended Bartlett's lead.

Koth (7-8) went the distance, striking out seven and giving up just four hits. She walked nine and hit two, however. She didn't have any 1-2-3 innings but escaped trouble by stranding 10.



Bartlett shortstop Nicole Young (21) forces Glenbard South's Mackenzie Brach (13) at second base during an Upstate Eight Conference game on Tuesday, May 17, 2022. (Mike Mantucca / The Beacon-News)

"I think she did a really good job pitching," Wolfsmith said. "She likes the ball low in the zone and we just didn't get a lot of low strikes. I thought she had good movement and rotation and did a good job of mixing in her change-up."

"Glenbard South is a really good contact-hitting team. Julie (Fonda) does a great job of teaching her girls to put the ball in play."

Young, a Muskingum commit, did the same for Bartlett and finished 5-for-5 with two singles and two doubles in addition to the home run.

"She batted .700 for us last year and it was a legit .700," Wolfsmith said of Young.

Koth, meanwhile, was intentionally walked in her other two at-bats.

"It's frustrating, but at the same time, any way I can get on base helps my team," Koth said. "We have a bunch of hitters who can make solid contact."