

Jaguars sweep Trojans in softball doubleheader

BY RICH PALZEWIC
SPORTS CONTRIBUTOR

GREEN BAY – Behind strong pitching, good defense and timely hitting, the Ashwaubenon softball team swept a doubleheader from Green Bay Southwest on April 29.

The Jaguars posted 14-1 and 14-4 wins to improve to 14-1 overall and 11-0 in the Fox River Classic Conference (FRCC) in games played at Southwest High School.

Both games ended after five innings due to the 10-run mercy rule.

On the evening, Ashwaubenon Coach Shannon VanLaanen picked up his 200th and 201st wins as coach of the Jaguars.

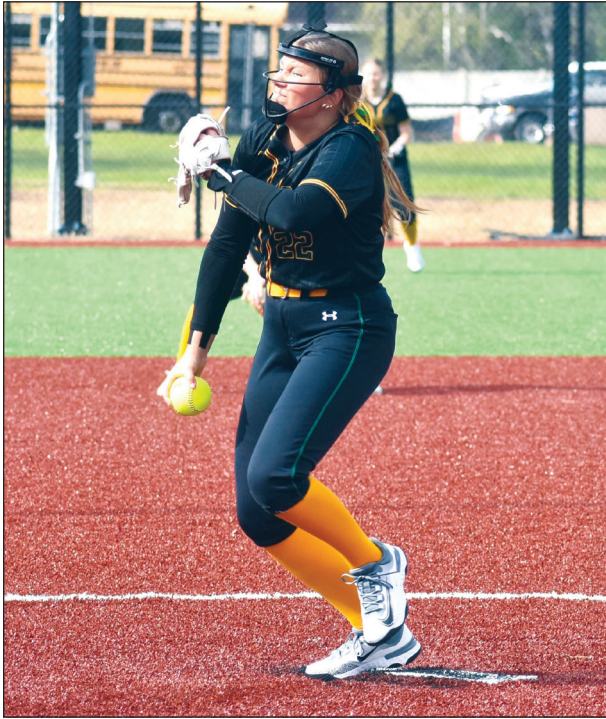
“That means I’m old — that’s what it means,” VanLaanen laughed. “I’ve had the opportunity to have coached a lot of awesome kids over the years. It’s been my pleasure to be here (since 2014) — whether it’s 200 wins or whatever that number is. Every year is a different puzzle to put together with a new team.”

VanLaanen was the Ashwaubenon baseball coach for six years from 2006-12 and served as the assistant softball coach in 2013.

“I’ve been fortunate to have had great assistant coaches with me,” VanLaanen said. “The parents have been awesome as well.”

Game one

After a scoreless first inning, Ashwaubenon erupted



Ashwaubenon pitcher Jocelyn Wirth prepares to uncork a pitch on April 29 versus Green Bay Southwest. The Jaguars swept the doubleheader with 14-1 and 14-4 victories.

Rich Palzewic photos

ed for eight runs in the second and six more in the third.

“It was good to put up some runs early in the second inning,” VanLaanen said. “The hits came, and it was momentum after that.”

In the second inning, Ashwaubenon used four hits, two walks, two Southwest errors, a passed ball and two wild pitches to put the game out of reach early.

Kendyl Weiner had a two-RBI single to make it 5-0 before an out was recorded.

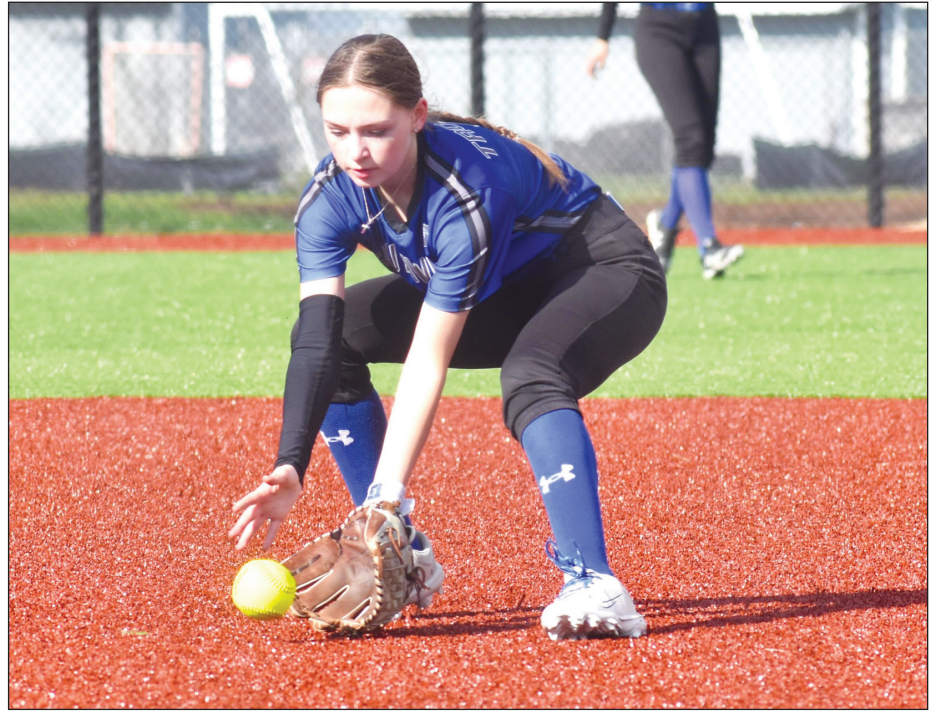
Jocelyn Wirth had two

hits in the inning — and an RBI — while Brynn Wirth and Gianna Guarascio (double) also had hits — a part of the Jaguars sending 11 batters to the plate.

Peyton Crutcher led off the inning with a fly ball to right field that was misplayed, resulting in a four-base error for the first run of the game.

In the third, Ashwaubenon sent another 10 batters to the plate to score six runs.

The Jaguars collected five hits in the marathon inning and were aided by



Green Bay Southwest second baseman Addison Gusick fields a ground ball on April 29 versus Ashwaubenon.

another Trojans error, a passed ball and a wild pitch.

Sophia Zabel, Crutcher, J. Wirth and B. Wirth all had RBI in the inning.

J. Wirth collected three hits in the game.

The Trojans (4-9 overall, 2-9 FRCC) finally broke into the scoring column in the fourth after Audrey Nelson ripped a one-out double and scored a batter later when Delaney King plated her with a double of her own.

“We didn’t start well,” third-year Southwest Coach Shawn Neuville said. “Our (starting) pitcher (Dekorah VonHaden) had to come out with a bloody

nose, so that didn’t help, either. The wheels came off after that.”

Game two

Ashwaubenon starting pitcher Grace Aichelle got the win for the Jaguars, pitching four innings while striking out six.

Only one of the Southwest runs was earned off Aichelle.

J. Wirth was 3-for-3, while Deejae Johnson (triple), Weiner (two doubles), Crutcher and Guarascio (two doubles) all collected two hits.

E. Kirst also nailed a three-run homer.

For the Trojans, King had two RBI.

“I’m pleased with how things are going this season,” VanLaanen said. “We didn’t peak too early — we’re getting better every day. The girls are feeding off that and are hungry.”

For Southwest, Neuville said, “We have a great group of girls.”

“I have five seniors — seven in all — who have been with the program for a long time, one who came out after playing in middle school and a foreign exchange student from Italy. We’re starting to grow the program.”

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Bodart-Frelich to the cornerflag, she was able to find herself free and get a cross off, but few runners in the box allowed Southwest to clear the ball out.

In the 16th minute, the Trojan defense stayed strong when faced with an outside shot from Jordan Domnick that sailed just over the net.

One minute later, Ashwaubenon found themselves on their heels with a strong attack from Southwest. Domnick dropped back on defense to defend Southwest’s corner kick and sent the ball up the field and out of the danger zone.

In the 19th minute, Southwest’s Autumn Nolle ripped a shot off of the crossbar from the top of the box in the 19th minute to keep the Jaguars on their toes.

Autumn Noel, center back for the Trojans, stepped up to fire off a shot that was blocked by Ashwaubenon’s keeper, Mercedes Matke.

Bodart-Frelich and Jayla Brunhoefer created trouble for the Trojans’ back line by forcing a turnover and having a run at goal but Trojan midfielder, Nolle, had a strong counterattack up the field.

Southwest gained another opportunity when Nolle was fouled just wide of the box in the 36th minute, but Alexandra Siudzinski’s free kick was scooped up by Matke.

The score remained 0-0 going into the second half.

“I am most proud of their hustle and grit — they fought through the whole entire game,” said Ashwaubenon



Ashwaubenon’s Leah Young and Southwest’s Kylie Kowaleski engage in a 50/50 ball at half-field. The final score of the game was a 2-0 win for Southwest.

Tori Wittenbrock photo

Head Coach Emily Bangen.

The Trojans again came out strong in the second half, earning two corner kicks in the first four minutes of play.

On the second corner, Siudzinski followed up her kick in the box to slot it in the near post past Matke to give her team a 1-0 lead in the 45th minute.

In the 48th minute, Nolle was able to get her head on another corner kick, but not enough to redirect it on goal.

Emily Buzaitis came up big for her team on defense with a stop in the box in the 55th minute.

Ashwaubenon continued to build up from the back, allowing Lainey Prunty to get a shot off to test the Southwest’s goalkeeper, Gail Wery.

Moments later, Nolle forced a turnover in the midfield and, despite drawing four defenders in the box, managed to slot the ball in for a goal to go up 2-0 in the 57th minute.

“We kind of challenged them at halftime to really focus on that and make that connection with all of

the midfielders and really thought it paid off with those goals in the second half,” said Draves.

Kathryn Remiker and Adyson Coady won battles in midfield for the Jaguars to create a spark in the 65th minute.

A diving save by Matke in the 70th minute kept the Jaguars safe from trouble in the box.

In the closing minutes of the game, Engels received a cross in the box and volleyed it just outside the net to keep the final score at 2-0.

“I think we still have to work on our finishing. We had some more chances out there on the field and we just have to turn them into goals,” said Draves.

Bangen said her team is looking to improve their confidence going into the rest of the season.

“I think we just need to keep being aggressive the whole game and believe in ourselves. A lot of times we get down, and we just need to keep that confidence up and we can achieve anything,” said Bangen.

Hornets see loss to Tritons



David Petasek is safe sliding into second base. The final score of the game was a 3-0 win for NDA.



(Above) Carson Glosny steps up to bat in the Tritons game against the Hornets. The Tritons record remains 11-3 overall, 8-2 conf. The Hornet retain a record of 5-8 overall, 3-6 conf.

(Right) Peyton Kuehn of Preble throws out a pitch in their game against Notre Dame Academy on Thursday, April 25.

Janelle Fisher photos

