

Baseball

Trojans



Troy's Nick Antonides scores a run Thursday against Springboro.

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"This was a big win on Senior Night, especially against Springboro," senior Jordan Guillozet said. "This was definitely a quality win over a good team."

Greater Western Ohio Conference North Division-leading Springboro (16-4) run-ruled Troy 11-1 in the first round of last year's tournament — mere weeks after the Trojans beat the Panthers by the same 7-6 score in the regular season.

Now the Trojans travel to Miamisburg today before facing Fairfield at Fifth Third Field Sunday night ... the night before a two-game series with rival Piqua that will decide the GWOC North championship. Troy needs to sweep both of those games to win its first league title since 1991, while the Indians need only a split.

"These are the kind of games we need to be in right now," Troy coach Ty Welker said. "Springboro is a quality baseball team. That is the kind of team we need to beat from here on out."

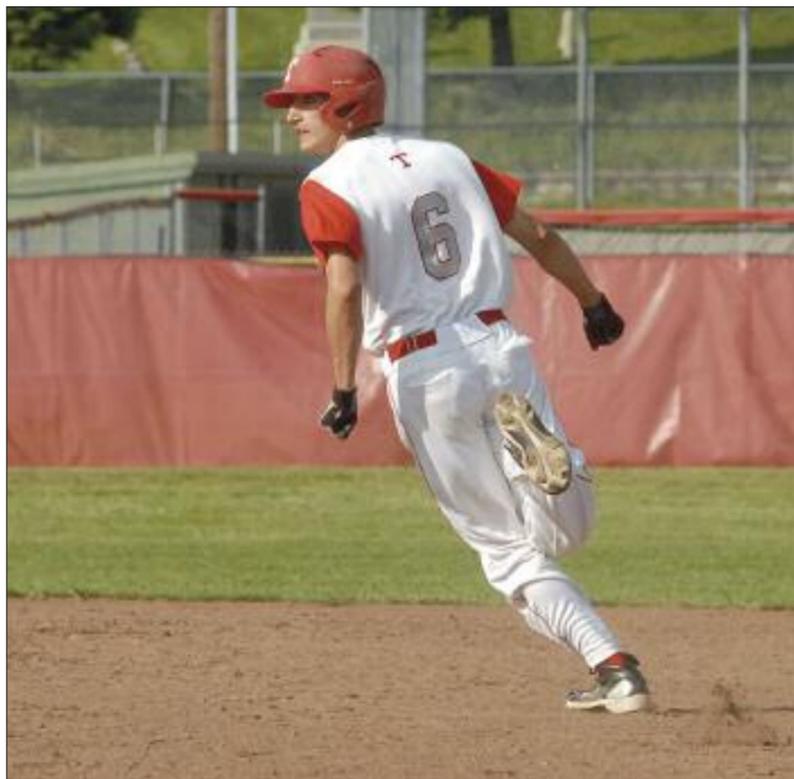
And even after falling behind 6-2 after the top of the fourth, the Trojans showed the had what it takes.

And it all began in the bottom of the fourth.

After Springboro starter Sean Pfeifer struck out the first two Trojan batters, Dylan Cascaden got his third straight hit of the day, and Nick Antonides doubled to the opposite field to put runners on second and third. Then Helke — the GWOC North leader in RBIs who was 0 for 2 at that point — hit a dribbler to third that he beat out for an infield RBI single.

"I can count on one hand how many times I've done that," he said with a laugh. "But hey, I'll take it."

A wild pitch and an errant throw to third by the catcher brought in another run, then



Troy's Jordan Price rounds second base Thursday against Springboro.



Troy's Jordan Guillozet strikes out swinging Thursday against Springboro. He reached base safely on the play.

Guillozet struck out swinging but reached base after the ball got by the catcher. That allowed Ian Nadolny to rake an RBI single that made the score 6-5.

Troy's first five runs in the game all came with two outs.

"Today was kind of the opposite of the way we've been all year," Welker said. "(Starting pitcher) Devon (Alexander) didn't have his best stuff, Springboro came out swinging and we made some defensive mistakes. But we battled with two outs, put up a couple runs here and there and stayed in the game."

Alexander gave up eight hits and four runs in three innings, seven of those hits and all of the runs coming in the first two innings. Sophomore Ben Langdon then came on for the next three innings, giving up four hits and two runs — but also getting out of two jams. He

induced an inning-ending six-four-three double play from Cascaden to Thomas Harvey to Helke to get out of the fourth. And then after a play from left fielder Jordan Price to Cascaden at short to Nadolny at home to nail a runner trying to score early in the sixth, he left runners stranded on first and third.

Which set up the Trojans for some late-game heroics in the bottom of the inning.

Cascaden — who finished 3 for 3 with two doubles and three runs scored in the leadoff spot — led off with a walk and was bunted to second by Antonides. Helke then walked, and Guillozet — who finished 3 for 3 with a double and two RBIs — poked a run-scoring single through the hole between first and second to tie the game.

"We just never quit. We kept on going and hitting

the whole game," Guillozet said. "Everybody hit. It was a good team win."

Nadolny then drove the first pitch he saw to right field for a sacrifice fly, bringing in pinch runner Jay Swigard and giving Troy its first lead of the game.

Helke made sure it was the only one the Trojans would need.

He gave up a leadoff single to start the seventh, but a fielder's choice and a strikeout put Springboro down to its last out. He then walked the next hitter to put the tying run in scoring position and went 3-1 on the next hitter, but he got a fly ball to Devin Blakely in center to put an end to the game.

"I was just trying not to make a mistake, and they were trying to capitalize on one," Helke said. "Thank God our defense was there. Dylan made a great play at short, and Devin made a nice catch to end it."

"Ben, a sophomore, battled out of some tight spots and got some nice experience," Welker said of Langdon, who got the win. "And we just kept chipping away. Nathan would tell you he didn't have his best stuff, but he did his job and we got a great team win."

And some all-important momentum.

SBoro ..220 200 0 — 6 13 1
Troy110 302 x — 7 10 1
 Pfeifer, Thackery (6) and Kirby. Alexander, Langdon (4), Helke (7) and Nadolny. WP — Langdon. LP — Thackery. SV — Helke. 2B — Barth (S), Reynolds (S), Cascaden 2 (T), Antonides (T), Guillozet (T). HR — Winning (S). **Records:** Springboro 17-4, Troy 14-7.

Tennis

Tennis

■ **CONTINUED FROM 17**
 Miler 4-6, 6-1, 6-4. At second doubles, Tyler Heint and Nick Denuzzo defeated Josh Remmetter and Drake Pensworth 6-1, 6-0.

Tippecanoe improved to 16-0 on the season and 13-0 in the Central Buckeye Conference. The Devils travel to Oakwood today in a key non-league matchup.

Lehman 3, CJ 2

DAYTON — Lehman picked up a tough win Thursday, edging Chaminade-Julienne 3-2. At second singles, Dan

Sehlhorst defeated Sean Miller 6-3, 6-1. At third singles, Mitchell Shroyer defeated John Chick 6-0, 6-3. At second doubles, Louis Gaier and Michael Comer defeated Anthony Genousi and Daniel Striebich 6-4, 6-4.

At first singles, Pierce Bennett lost Andrew Bole 6-4, 6-1. At first doubles, Matt Ulrich and David Freytag lost to Tony Vo and John Manovich 2-6, 6-3, 6-3.

Lehman improved to 10-2 on the season.

College Football

The 'P' word

College football making progress, playoffs near

HOLLYWOOD, Fla. (AP) — College football is on the verge of finally having a playoff, its own version of the final four.

For the first time, all the power brokers who run the highest level of the sport are comfortable with the idea of deciding a championship the way it's done from pee-wees to pros. And the way fans have been hoping they would for years.

"Yes, we've agreed to use the P word," Pac-12 Commissioner Larry Scott said Thursday.

They want to limit it to four teams. That's for sure. Now they have to figure out how to pick the teams, where and when to play the games and how the bowls do or do not fit in. The new postseason format would go into effect for the 2014 season.

As for the 14-year-old Bowl Championship Series, it's on life support. Any chance that it survives past the next two seasons? "I hope not," said Southeastern Conference Commissioner Mike Slive, who pitched a four-team playoff four years ago but was shot down at this same hotel beachside hotel.

"This is a seismic change for college football," BCS Executive Director Bill Hancock said after the 11 conference commissioners and Notre Dame's athletic director wrapped up three days of meetings in south Florida.

That Hancock actually used the word playoff when describing what was being considered alone signaled a shift in thinking for the BCS. In a memo leading up to these meetings, the term "four-team event" was used to describe creating two national semifinals and a championship

game.

Hancock said the commissioners will present a "small number" of options for a four-team playoff to their leagues over the next month or so at conference meetings. He estimated that between two and seven configurations are being considered.

It'll be up to each conference to determine which plan it likes best. The commissioners will get back together in June and try to come up with a final version, and eventually the university presidents will have to sign off on it. Hancock has said they'd like a new format ready for approval by July 4.

And he warned that if no agreement is reached, the fallback could be sticking with an overhauled version of the old system, which aims for a No. 1 vs. No. 2 championship game.

But that's a longshot.

"It's great to get to a point where there seems to be general consensus that a four-team, three-game playoff is the best route to go," Atlantic Coast Conference Commissioner John Swofford said. "The next challenge obviously is figuring out a format that brings consensus where we can truly make that work. The more this narrows, the more challenging it gets."

The first step is figuring out the where and when. The when should be easy.

The commissioners all agree the college football season needs to wrap up as close to Jan. 1 as possible. That would mean semifinals soon after Christmas and the title game within a few days of the calendar flipping.

"One of the goals is to make the postseason a celebration of college football," Slive said.

Major League Baseball

Indians off at home in loss

CLEVELAND (AP) — The Cleveland Indians have been dominant on the road this season. Playing at home, however, has proven to be a major problem.

Kansas City added to the Indians' home woes on Thursday, scoring three runs in the fifth inning en route to a 4-2 victory.

The loss was Cleveland's sixth in eight games at Progressive Field in 2012, which has largely negated its 7-2 record on the road.

"It's just a fluke. It has nothing to do with coming back home," Indians pitcher Josh Tomlin said. "I think it's just a fluke and we'll play better here, for sure."

Indians manager Manny Acta doesn't think the early problems at home are the beginning of a trend.

"We love playing here," said Acta, whose team was 44-37 at home in 2011. "We scored a lot

of runs here last year. It's four bases and a mound everywhere you go. It's just a coincidence the way we're playing at home right now."

Third baseman Jack Hannahan echoed his manager's thoughts.

"Home is where you've got to take care of your business," he said. "It's just baseball. It's our second homestand. It's just a coincidence. We're going to start winning at home, no doubt about that."

The numbers, however, tell a different story. The Indians have been outscored 46-28 at home while outscoring opponents 54-41 on the road.

Tomlin (1-2) allowed four runs and eight hits in 4 2-3 innings. Jeff Francoeur's go-ahead RBI single with two outs in the fifth, then was knocked out of the game when Mike Moustakas followed with a run-scoring hit.

Major League Baseball

Bullpen woes cost Reds

CINCINNATI (AP) — Sean Marshall often goes to his curveball as an out pitch.

It didn't work that way against Angel Pagan.

Pagan hit a hanging curve for a three-run homer in the ninth inning, lifting the San Francisco Giants to a 6-5 win over the Reds on Thursday.

"The curveball's been a good pitch for me," said Marshall (0-2), who had his first blown save after converting four opportunities. "I've gotten some outs with it. The ball hung in the middle of the plate. He didn't get a good swing on it. What hurts is the guys played so well."

Marshall, acquired from the Cubs during the offseason and moved to closer in spring training after Ryan Madson was lost to season-ending elbow-ligament replacement surgery, struggled from the beginning of his second outing in less than 24 hours.

He walked Joaquin Arias to lead off the ninth, and Ryan Theriot followed with a single. After pinch-hitter Brett Pill struck out, Pagan



Cincinnati Reds' Scott Rolen (27) celebrates with Zack Cozart (2) after hitting a home run off San Francisco Giants pitcher Guillermo Mota during the seventh inning Thursday in Cincinnati.

lofted a 1-2 pitch 386 feet into the left field seats to snap the Giants' losing streak in Cincinnati at seven games.

The homer came on the first pitch after Pagan took what many in the crowd of 17,317 thought was strike three.

"I didn't hit my spot with it," the left-hander said. "It was borderline. The next pitch was the one that mattered."

Manager Dusty Baker couldn't tell from the dugout

opportunities.

Jay Bruce hit a two-run home run in the sixth inning and Scott Rolen led off the seventh with his second of the season, both in the last two games, giving starter Homer Bailey a shot at evening his record at 2-2.

Bailey lasted 6 1-3 innings, allowing seven hits and three runs two earned with two walks and six strikeouts.

"I had some quick innings," said Bailey, who also had a run-scoring single in the second inning. "The fastball and (split-finger) were working, and I was able to get some groundballs and some quick outs. I really felt like I should have put up a zero in the last inning, so in a roundabout way, I think I should've done a lot better than I did."

Giants third baseman Pablo Sandoval went 1 for 5, extending his season-opening hitting streak to 19 games, a franchise record. He went into the game tied with Johnny Rucker, who hit in the first 18 games of the 1945 season with the then-New York Giants.