

SPORTS

JUNE 15, 2017 • 23

Quartet of Addison Trail softball players named all-conference Blazers win playoff opener in dramatic fashion

By Mike Miazga
CORRESPONDENT

The Addison Trail softball team received good postseason news times four recently.

The Blazers placed four players on the all-West Suburban Conference Gold Division team. Those earning recognition included Marie Baumgartner, Alyssa Pham, Ally Polhad and Vincenza Zaccaro.

"Getting four players on the all-conference team was nice," said

Addison Trail coach Mark Olson.

Addison Trail finished the year 14-19 overall and went 6-6 in the WSC Gold.

"A 6-6 record in the conference is not disappointing," said Olson. "We were happy. We were really competitive the second time through the conference. We beat Hinsdale Central, we beat Willowbrook and played competitive against Downers Grove South. Getting to six wins was important for all-conference

selections. We beat Morton twice. I thought we were competitive and did a good job in the conference this year."

The Blazers won their Class 4A regional quarterfinal game against Elgin Larkin in dramatic fashion by scoring eight runs in the bottom of the seventh to win 10-9.

"It was one of the most unbelievable things I have been part of or been around as a player or coach," said Olson. "It was pretty incredible. It was a great story."

Olson noted Addison Trail was down three runs with two outs in the seventh inning.

"And then the fence blows down and breaks and rips in half," Olson described. "The umpire told us this story. Marie Baumgartner is in the box talking to herself and saying, 'I can do this. I can do this.' She hits

her first career home run to tie it at 9-9."

Addison Trail then had three straight singles from Sophia Hawkins, Polhad and Pham. Hawkins scored the game-winning run on Pham's single.

"When we had second and third with two outs and the game was tied 9-9 I told Ally whatever you do stay right on the base," said Olson. "It was one of the stranger games I've been involved with. We slept-walk through things early on. We were hitting it hard but it was right at people and we gave them a few things. And then all of a sudden things clicked."

Addison Trail was eliminated by St. Charles East in the regional semifinals.

"We made progress throughout the season," said Olson. "We were a better team from where we began. We

got better from last year to this year. We had a lot of returning kids back. Allie and Marie averaged about a walk a game pitching at the end and we weren't committing as many errors. We were making less than two a game. We also had great chemistry all season. All the girls bought into their roles. It was a great team effort. The seniors like Jessica Bach, Marie Baumgartner and Gianna Sarli did a great job leading the way. It was a fun year to coach."

Olson noted Bach played third base for three years, while Baumgartner also was a fixture.

"We know we have some big shoes to fill with losing starters like Jessica, Marie and Alyssa," he said. "We had 33 girls out for softball at the varsity and JV levels. We had a good year and we're looking forward to next year."

Willowbrook boys volleyball players honored on and off the court

By Mike Miazga
CORRESPONDENT

Members of the Willowbrook boys volleyball team recently were honored for their efforts on and off the court.

Calvin Linnig was named to the all-West Suburban Conference Gold Division team.

Linnig also was one of four seniors that earned all-WSC academic honors along with Peter Alessandri, Andy Shrockengost and Brendan Waldorf.

Coch Ryan Bazon noted all four Willowbrook seniors on the roster earned the academic accolades.

Willowbrook finished the 2017 season with a 16-21 overall mark and a 1-5 record in WSC Gold Division action.

"We played better than our record portrays," said Bazon. Willowbrook dropped a 26-24, 20-25, 25-21 contest to St. Francis in the quarterfinals of the West Aurora regional.

Earlier, the Warriors went 2-3 at its own Willowbrook Warrior invitational. Willowbrook defeated Leyden 25-17, 25-15 and also defeated Joliet Catholic by a 25-22, 25-17 count. The Warriors dropped a three-set match to Hinsdale Central (25-14, 21-25, 16-14), lost to Riverside-Brookfield (25-18, 26-24) and lost to West Aurora (25-21, 25-23). Hinsdale Central was a No. 1 sectional seed, while R-B was a No. 3 sectional seed and West Aurora was a No. 4 sectional seed.

"We played very well at our invite," said Bazon. "I thought our kids played with enthusiasm and heart. We played Hinsdale Central to three games and even led 14-9 in the third game. I thought out-blocking was fantastic and communication on the court led to a well-rounded game. Unfortunately, their outside hitter was too strong in the end and we dropped the third game 16-14. Also we played very well against Riverside-Brookfield, which ended up beating Hinsdale in the finals of the tourney. I felt this was a great tournament."

Through the end of the season, Tim Keefe was leading the team in kills with 172. Waldorf had 112 kills and a 27.92 kill percentage. Alessandri was the team leader in blocks with 71, while Keefe was tops in aces with 21. Buddy Martens was tops in digs with 215, while Linnig was leading the team in assists with 305.

Bazon felt the entire program took another step forward this season. "I thought the season was very successful on all levels," he said. "Our program ended with 67 wins and the future of Willowbrook volleyball looks bright. At the varsity level we had 10 juniors this year and all saw substantial playing time. We should begin next year with more varsity experience and begin to play at a high level right away. This year it took us a few matches to adjust to the speed of the varsity game."

Bazon also tipped his hat to the senior class. "I had some great kids this year and I will miss our seniors greatly," he said.

Timothy Christian's Allen named to Class 2A all-state team

By Mike Miazga
CORRESPONDENT

Timothy Christian junior baseball standout Jimmy Allen was properly rewarded for his play on the field this spring.

Allen recently was named to the Class 2A all-state team put out by the Illinois High School Baseball Coaches Association. Allen was one of only four juniors to make the all-state team and assistant coach Jim Boven pointed out Allen was one of only four Chicago-area players named to the team.

Allen was a key cog in Timothy Christian winning its first-ever sectional title and coming within one game of playing in the state semifinals in Peoria.

"He had a great year," said Timothy coach Jim Snoeyink. "He led our team in virtually every offensive category. He struck out seven times all season and his on-base percentage was outstanding."

Allen batted .459 with 45 hits. Of those 45, hits 23 went for extra bases. Allen also had a .561 on-base percentage.

"More than half his hits were for extra bases," Snoeyink noted. "He had an outstanding season."

As did Timothy Christian as a whole, the coach noted.

"We had a good run at the end," said Snoeyink. "We had a lot of fun. We got on a roll. Part way through the year we made some defensive changes and that seemed to help. We had so many rinfouts and breaks in the

schedule in the beginning of the year. Once we started playing regularly we started getting in a rhythm. And then we started hitting the heck out of the ball and playing good baseball."

One of those key defensive changes was swapping catcher Noah Marrera and third baseman Connor Gwaltney on defense. "That sparked us for some reason," said Snoeyink. "We also started playing Nick Huisman more at first and moved Joey Davidson to second. Those two moves provided a spark for the rest of the season and helped us defensively. We played good baseball after that."

Timothy defeated St. Joseph 2-1 in the regional championship by scoring two runs in the seventh inning. The Trojans hit well in the sectional semifinal against Chicago F.W. Park-er.

"F.W. Parker had a really good pitcher and we scored eight or nine runs off him. We came out hitting," said Snoeyink.

Timothy also brought the heavy lumber in the sectional title game against Chicago Holy Trinity. "We jumped out to a quick start and led 7-2," said Snoeyink.

Of note, Brian Schiff started both sectional games on the mound for the Trojans. "He got a pair of wins. That's unusual to start both games of the sectional," the coach said. "He didn't pitch a lot during the year, but he got healthy and he won both games."

Huisman started the regional final

and picked up the win with Allen coming in for the save.

Timothy saw its season end at the hands of conference foe Chicago Christian. It was Timothy's third loss of the season to Chicago Christian.

"Chicago Christian has good pitching," said Snoeyink. "We got shut out three times against them. We lost 7-0 in the supersectional and we had two hits. I looked it up, Chicago Christian played 42 games and 27 times gave up zero or one run. You will win a lot of games doing that. It was frustrating because we were hitting so well and only had two hits."

Allen, Schiff, Marrera and Davidson were named to the all-Metro Suburban Conference Red Division team. "All those guys had great seasons," said Snoeyink.

Snoeyink is looking forward to next season with numerous player returning. "We have a lot of guy coming back," he said. "We lost six seniors to graduation and we certainly will miss them. Josh Anderson is one of them and he could have been an all-conference player this year. He was a four-year starter. We have Nick Huisman back and Jake Loero pitched outstanding. Jimmy Allen is back. We're excited about the guy we have coming back. Harrison Stanton is a freshman we brought up and we brought up Noah Marrera's brother, Trent. We have a lot of guys who are looking forward to seeing next year and it is nice when you have your top three pitchers returning."