

Day Four Recap

Columbus, Neb. – A total of 56 hits were pounded out in Monday's action at Legion Field in Columbus, Neb., at the Area 6, Class A Juniors' Tournament – leading to a pair of exciting games with the hopes of a continued season and State Tournament Berth on the line.

In the first action of the evening, the Columbus Blues continued their winning ways, capturing their third straight game of the tournament, eliminating Grand Island Five Points Bank in a 9-4 victory. Columbus jumped out to an early 7-1 lead after 1.5 innings, and never looked back. The Blues posted five runs in the opening frame, led off by three straight bunt attempts, resulting in runners on second and third with just one out. Each of the next three Columbus batters would all add singles through the gaps in the infield to extend the lead to 3-0. Ian Baumgart would score the fourth run for the Blues on a passed ball, and Cory Hladky drove home the fifth with his own RBI single.

Brendan Ritzdorf would have all the support he would need to earn the victory, as he went four innings, allowing just three runs on five hits. Nick McElhose picked up his second save of the tournament, as he threw the final three innings of the contest, allowing just a lone run and a pair of hits to the eleven batters he faced.

During the battle of the "unbeaten" in tournament play, Fremont First State Bank would push across 16 runs in the first three innings to cruise to their 17-11 victory over Grand Island Wells Fargo.

In those first three innings of the contest, Fremont's lineup would bat around in each frame, and as a team, they had collected 30 plate appearances before Grand Island was able to record a ninth out. During the third inning, Fremont's Derek Drews, Blake Smolinski, Mitchell Hahn, Jacob Pribnow and Elliot Gloeb struck a rare five consecutive doubles in five consecutive at bats.

Despite the amazing offensive display by Fremont in the first three innings, Grand Island did not go down quietly, as they would rally back to cut the deficit to six runs at 16-10 after four innings. However, Fremont would add their 17th and final run in the top of the 5th, and hold Grand Island from any major threat the rest of the way.

By the end of the contest, every batter that played in the game had at least one base hit, with the exception of Grady Gardner of Grand Island, who left the game early due to an apparent injury. Furthermore, 14 of the 18 starters for the two teams scored a run, and 13 of the 18 starters had an RBI during the seven-inning offensive onslaught.

Fremont's Trevor Wiegert earned the victory for the game, as he did do a fine job in relief of starter Mitchell Hahan. Wiegert slowed Grand Island's fourth-inning rally, and allowed three runs over 3 1/3 innings, striking out one.

Grand Island will take on Columbus tomorrow in an elimination contest at 5:00 PM, with the winner advancing to take on Fremont for the Area Championship on Wednesday.