

Kohawks hang on to edge Ripon

Written by Metro Sports Report

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LA CROSSE, Wis. - Jack Hoffmann picked up his fourth save in as many games as Coe survived three home runs from Ripon's Michael Polcyn to win, 5-4, in second-round NCAA Division III regional play here Thursday at Copeland Park.

The Kohawks (33-12) play in the winner's bracket final at 7:45 p.m. Friday against the winner of a game between Was hington-St. Louis and Wisconsin-LaCrosse that was suspended by rain Thursday night with Washington leading, 6-5 in the third inning. That contest will be continued at 10 a.m. Friday

If Coach Steve Cook's Kohawks win Friday, they will have two chances to win the regional championship.

Ripon (24-15) drops into the loser's bracket at 1:15 p.m. Friday against Concordia-Chicago.

Polcyn almost single-handedly pushed the Red Hawks, which downed defending national champion Wisconsin-Whitewater, 15-7, in their opener, to their second-straight upset. He hit solo homers in first, sixth and eighth. He has hit 12 homers in the last 13 games.

But the Kohawks stuck with the plan that has resulted in a school-record 33 wins. Coe got offense throughout its lineup to back solid pitching from AJ Reuter and Hoffman. After Polcyn put Ripon up 1-0, Coe took the lead with two in the fourth.

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Reuter homered to left to start the inning. Former Linn-Mar prep Michael Redmond gave the Kohawks a 2-1 lead with a sacrifice fly to left, scoring Hoffmann.

After Ripon tied it at 2-2 in the top of the fifth, the Kohawks retook the lead with an unearned run as Craig Konrardy scored when Michael Goerd't's fly was dropped in left field for an error.

Polcyn tied it again for Ripon with his second homer of the game in the sixth only to see Jory Heckenberg hit his first homer of the season in the bottom of the inning.

Coe increased the lead to 5-3 in the seventh when Goerd't singled home Cole Tomlinson.

Polcyn drew the Red Hawks within one with a homer off Hoffmann in the eighth, but that is all the Coe closer would allow, picking up his fourth save in four straight postseason games.

Konrardy and Heckenberg each had two hits for Coe.

Reuter moved his pitching record to 7-1, giving up three runs in seven innings. Hoffmann struck out three in his two innings of work.

Ripon 100 011 010 - 4 9 4

Coe 000 211 10x - 5 8 0

Zahn, Anderson (7) and Busch. Reuter, Hoffmann (8) and Henning. WP - Reuter (7-1). L - Zahn (5-3). SV - Hoffmann (4).