

Magill leading Raider optimism

Sophomore keys 5-2 softball win over North Hills

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🕒 April 21, 2017 📁 High School Softball 💬

JACKSON TWP — A talented group of underclassmen have contributed to the optimism surrounding the Seneca Valley softball program.

And Mandy Magill is leading the youth movement.

SV's sophomore second baseman went 3-for-4 with a double, run scored and two RBI in the Raiders' 5-2 section victory over North Hills Thursday at Raider Field.

Magill's rise to prominence in SV's lineup has been a swift one.

"I started my freshman season on the junior varsity team," she said. "I got called up to varsity and earned a letter."

Earlier this spring, she was hitting in the bottom half of the batting order but is now near the top.

"We needed a No. 2 hitter," said SV coach George Trew. "Mandy makes good contact and we gave her a shot there. It's worked out well for us. Morgan (Aloi, leadoff hitter) and Mandy are doing a good job of getting on base and the girls behind them are hitting them in."

Magill currently leads the Raiders with a batting average over .600. She doubled three times in Tuesday's win at Fox Chapel.

"I feel comfortable right now and am motivated," said Magill.

"She's really seeing the ball well right now," said Trew.

On Thursday, it was Magill's first-inning double down the left field line that got the wheels turning for Seneca's offense.

She scored on a throwing error before Maddie Schultz's single brought home two more runs for a 3-0 lead.

"You get out to a lead like that early on, it helps take the weight off everybody on the team," said Trew. "It means making one mistake won't kill you."

The Raiders added a run in the second off North Hills starting pitcher Megan Hitchan when Magill's base hit chased home Julia Ehrman.

Senior outfielder Elayna Nagy then provided SV a spark on defense.

The Indians (4-7, 2-4) were threatening to cut into the Raider lead in the top of the third. Maddie Traub doubled to lead off the frame and moved to third base on Hitchan's groundout.

The next batter, Madison Posterivo, hit a fly ball to center field, where Nagy made the catch and fired a perfect strike to catcher Karli Hacker to nail Traub, who had tagged from third.

"She's one of the best center fielders out there," North Hills coach Libby Gasior said of Nagy. "It feels like I've been watching her for years."

Seneca Valley starting pitcher Claire Zimmerman kept the Indians off the scoreboard through the first five innings, scattering three hits in that span.

North Hills finally broke through in the sixth. Hitchan hit a solo home run and Mekenzie Saban's sacrifice fly scored a second run. But Zimmerman remained in the game, stranding a pair of baserunners in the seventh to cap the victory.

She struck out one and walked one.

"Claire pitched well today," Trew said. "She struggled against Fox Chapel and this was a nice turnaround for her."

The Raiders (9-3 overall) sit alone atop the Section 3-6A standings with a 5-1 record. They will look to stay there when they travel to Shaler on Tuesday.

North Hills 000 002 0 — 2 6 2

Seneca Valley 310 100 x — 5 8 0

W: Claire Zimmerman 7 IP (1K, 1BB). L: Megan Hitchan 6 IP (2K, 2BB).

North Hills (4-7, 2-4): Madison Posterivo R, Mekenzie Saban 2B RBI, Hayley Behr 1B, Kallie Kretzler 1B, Maddie Traub 1B 2B, Megan Hitchan HR

Seneca Valley (9-3, 5-1): Mandy Magill 2-1B 2B R 2RBI, Elayna Nagy R, Karli Hacker 1B, Maddie Schultz 2-1B 2RBI, Julia Ehrman 1B 2B 2R, Morgan Prouty R

Tuesday: Seneca Valley at Shaler