

Stadium beats back Wilson

Tigers fight back from an early deficit to stay on top of division standings

TODD MILLES; The News Tribune

Published: April 18th, 2006 01:00 AM

All offseason, coach Lynn Batchelder entertained the notion of her Stadium High Tigers challenging for the fastpitch title in the Narrows League Bay Division.

That is, until the first day of workouts.

Batchelder showed up, only to discover three of four starting infielders from a team that reached the Class 4A West Central District tournament last year had left the team.

A feeling of panic set in.

"I pegged us," the coach said, "scrapping for fourth place."

The Tigers are nowhere near the middle of the pack.

In fact, they lead the division standings, and strengthened their grip Monday afternoon by halting Wilson, 5-4, at South End Recreation Area in South Tacoma.

Stadium (7-1 overall, 5-0 Narrows Bay) recovered from 1-0 and 2-1 deficits for good with a three-run fifth inning, then held on to beat the Rams (5-3, 3-2), the three-time defending division champions.

"You can see we have a lot to keep working on," Batchelder said. "The kids are willing to keep learning."

The matchup of aces – Stadium's **Jordyn Kurtz (Sidewinder 16A)** and Wilson's Kellie Ruth – figured to keep this game a low-scoring affair, but that was not the case.

Wilson grabbed a 2-1 lead in the top of the fifth inning when Amber Roberts scored on Alyssa Tachell's RBI single to center field on a 1-2 pitch.

The Tigers answered off Ruth. Courtney Rentas and Becca Cable strung together back-to-back, one-out singles, and Sarah Glennan advanced them with a bunt.

That brought up Kurtz, the team's top hitter, who was hitting .500. Wilson coach Ron Balmer wasted no time in issuing a walk, loading the bases.

"It was a no-brainer," Balmer said. "The percentages were with us putting her on."

Stadium's **Jessica Snyder (Sidewinder 18 Gold)** coaxed a walk by taking a high fastball in a 3-2 count, earning the RBI that tied the game.

Up came Kim Cable, who was one of the players shuffled around at the beginning of the season when the three infield starters were gone. Cable was moved from right field to first base.

She must know that area well, because she blooped a single just inside the right-field line that drove in her sister, Becca, and Kurtz. Snyder also scored on a Wilson error for a 5-2 Tigers' lead.



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Wilson's Amber Roberts, right, slides in safely at second before Stadium's Samantha Miller can reach for a tag during the Tigers' victory over Wilson on Monday.

"I just wanted to put the ball in play," Kim Cable said. "It was a fastball. (That hit) gave us more confidence."

It also gave the Tigers much-needed insurance. Kurtz surrendered two runs in the sixth, but retired the final five batters, including one in the seventh inning amid some controversy.

With one out, Wilson leadoff hitter Anthea Aasen fouled a ball off her leg that dribbled to third baseman Stephanie Reddaway. The umpires did not see it, and ruled the ball in play, and Reddaway easily threw her out.

That left Amanda Pulley, the Rams' No. 3 hitter, stuck in the on-deck circle when the game ended.

"I thought we hit it pretty good against (Kurtz)," Balmer said. "I was happy offensively. They didn't make any mistakes."

Box Score

Wilson 001 012 0– 4 5 1

Stadium 000 140 x– 5 6 2

Ruth and Aasen; Kurtz and Glennon. W–Kurtz (6-1). L–Ruth. Highlights: Britney Dinelt (W) 2-3 triple, Kim Cable (S) 3-3 3 rbi.