

# 'Cats Run Short in Title Defense

## Errors Prove Costly

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For 27 baseball games this spring Miller City did very few things wrong. In the first game of the state Class A high school semi-finals, however, the Wildcats did very little right.

The state's top-ranked Miller City Wildcats, carrying a perfect 27-0 slate and county record 36 straight victories dating back to last year, committed six errors against Graysville Skyvue Friday and Saturday in the rain-delayed contest and ended up losing 9-8. It also ended MC's chance at a second straight title.

Skyvue, which had four errors and just six base hits, went on to take the small school title by crushing Fort Loramie in the finals by a score of 9-2.

"You cannot make six errors against anybody and expect to win," stated Coach Dan Kern. "Plus we missed a couple of playable balls that hurt."

A team that has averaged around 1.5 errors a game, Miller City opened the door for the Golden Hawks who at one point trailed 5-0.

Catapulted by a three run homer by Tim Winland, Skyvue (26-2) got within one after three innings, 5-4. After falling behind 7-4 in the fifth, Skyvue got four more runs, three of them unearned, and the Hawks had their first lead of the night.

The rains came in the bottom of the sixth causing for a delay until Saturday morning. MC got out of a jam when play resumed as pitcher Leroy Johnston was inserted back to the mound after being relieved by Mark Lammers in the fifth. He got a pop up to short and a strikeout to end the sixth with a man on third base.

Needing a run to tie the game, Miller City used a lead off walk, two errors and a Steve Alt single to make it 8-8.

Skyvue, however, won it in the seventh when a single, a sacrifice bunt, an error and a walk loaded the bases with one out. With the infield pulled in

and the outfield shallow, hitter Mitch Hannahs, 1 for 4 in the game, sent a legitimate shot in the gap in right center for the winning hit.

Johnston suffers his first loss in 13 decisions. "He pitched a good game," said Kern. "He just did not have any defense behind him." Johnston gave up seven hits and five walks. He fanned seven.

Miller City looked in control early. Scoring an unearned run in the first, the Wildcats added four more in the third for a 5-0 lead. A solo homer by Lammers hit top of the center field fence at the 370 mark and went over. This homer started the third frame explosion. Hard singles by Johnston and Bruce Kreinbrink set the table for a towering smash to left center that easily cleared the fence for a 5-0 lead.

That chased Skyvue started Mike Hannahs and Todd Hilverding came in to do a good job keeping the 'Cats at bay. He allowed just single runs in the fifth and sixth innings that gave Skyvue the chance to come back. Miller City had 11 hits, three by Lammers and Lehman two.

Though the team lost a chance at back to back state titles, Kern is not displeased with the team. "These kids put themselves in a hole quite a few times this year but always found a way to come back. I'm very pleased with the way they played this year."

"And the fan support was great. We had the largest crowd of all the games at state and I know if we would have won Saturday morning more fans were going to come down for the finals."

MC	104	110	1	8	11	6
Skyvue	004	040	1	9	8	4