

Kalida falls in Semi-Finals to Newark Catholic 4 - 2

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Winning on the baseball diamond is about making adjustments.

Kalida had 23 1/2 hours to adjust to Newark Catholic pitcher Michael Taylor. And when the Wildcats adjustments helped them to get to Taylor, the Green Wave had to adjust on the mound. Unfortunately for the Wildcats he was able to do that.

Taylor escaped a third inning jam against the Wildcats giving up only two runs. He then blanked Kalida over the next four innings as Newark Catholic was able to defeat Kalida 4-2 in their Division IV state semi-final game at Cooper Stadium.

Newark Catholic (29-4) advanced to the Division IV state finals Sunday against Tipp City Bethel, a 1-0 winner over Windham in the second game Friday. Kalida saw an excellent season end at 19-8.

Taylor (13-0) had a 3-0 lead after the Green Wave scored twice in the third inning Friday. Although he struck out six Wildcat batters in the first two innings he also surrendered three hits. In the third inning he alone gave up three hits and a pair of runs to the Wildcats.

“We had time to adjust in the batting cage and you could see the result of that in the first four batters,” Kalida coach Jim McBride said. “We adjusted and hit the ball better, but he still had a dominating performance in strikeouts.”

“We have a drill we call short stroke and you have to keep reminding them that pitch is coming there at 80 to 85 MPH and you don’t have time for the big looping swing. Now you do the short stroke and the ball comes rifling off the bat.”

Senior Ryan Hoffman was the first batter to crush a Taylor pitch when he sent a ball over the centerfielder’s head for a double. Brandon Recker then sent a shot up the gap in right-center that hit the

warning track and bounced over the fence for a ground rule double.

Ross Guisinger followed with a double off the right field wall and Kalida was suddenly down 3-2.

That’s when Taylor settled down as he didn’t allow another Wildcat runner to cross the plate although it wasn’t easy.

After Guisinger’s double, Aaron VnderEmbse walked to put runners at first and second base. Kalida attempted to bunt the runners over twice, but were unsuccessful on each attempt. Taylor escaped the jam with two strikeouts and a fielder’s choice groundout.

“That’s why he is 12-0,” McBride said. “We had Taylor on the ropes and runners at first and second base and no outs. We tried to bunt the runners to second and third and were unable to do it.”

“That’s where the execution did not happen. That’s the only disappointment I have from this game. We needed to move the runners and it did not happen and that’s the one thing that bothers me.”

After the VonderEmbse walk, Taylor got 11 straight outs before hitting Ryan Buss in the sixth inning with two outs. During that span Taylor recorded six of the outs himself with strikeouts. He had 16 strikeouts for the game and walked just one.

“I just kind of reached back and threw like I know how and throw strikes,” Taylor said. “I just didn’t want to put it over the plate for them because I knew they could hit it. They proved they could hit it.”

“I just had to put it in spots and make them chase it. That was what pitching coach Brad Athey said to me. He said we were going to keep throwing off speed, so they couldn’t tee off on anything.”

“It was big to get out of that inning,” Newark Catholic coach John Cannizzaro said. “The three

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balls they hit were very solid. They were strong hits in a big ball park.

“After the third inning he started hitting his spots better. He started locating the ball better. I was very impressed with a lot of the things they did. They are a very well coached team and I have a lot of respect for them.”

While Taylor dominated the Wildcat lineup Kalida starter Ross Guisinger didn't fare as well.

Guisinger (8-1) gave up a first inning run when Taylor doubled with one out and Tyler Moore followed with a single to left field.

The Green Wave also had Guisinger in trouble in the second inning as Jason Hess tripled with one out. Hess was tagged out after a run down in which a Newark Catholic batter failed to get a bunt down.

Jordan Larry then walked and stole second base before Matt Grieb walked. After both runners moved up on a wild pitch and the teams survived a 23 hour rain delay, Guisinger came back to get a fly ball to end the threat.

However, the Green Wave would knock Guisinger off the mound in the third inning.

Tommy Pellet opened the inning with a single and took second on a wild pitch. Taylor then walked and Moore reached on a fielder's choice on a groundball to third that forced Pellet.

R. L. Eisenbach then walked to load the bases before Mat Lott smashed a single to left to score two runs. That ended Guisinger's day on the mound and Ryan Hoffman came on to get a double play to end the inning.

“He just didn't have it today,” McBride said of Guisinger. “He just didn't get his pitches in where he wanted to. He was working behind too much and

then they were sitting on the changeup or the fastball.

“Ryan Hoffman was able to come in and hold them right where we wanted him to.”

Hoffman fared better as he gave up just one run and had five strikeouts. He pitched out of a jam in the fourth as Kalida was able to cut down a Newark Catholic runner at the plate.

In the sixth, the Green Wave were able to add a run as Hess opened the inning with a bloop double down the right field line. He took third on a fly ball to right before a single by Mark Elwell plated the run.

“At the state level, you need to get pitching, defense and execution,” McBride said. “We played pretty solid defense and we got ourselves out of several jams, Ross did, Ryan did and the defense did. We just didn't execute a couple of times.

“It was a valiant effort by the Putnam County boys. I'm very proud of this team. They exceeded a lot of peoples' expectations this season. They have nothing to be ashamed of. That is a program that has won four of five state championships and we tip our hats to them.”

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Kalida	002	000	0	-	2	7	1
WP-Taylor (13-0). LP-Guisinger (8-1)							