

Rehnborg, Sellers qualify for district in doubles

PORT CLINTON — At least two Norwalk players extended their season Friday during the first day of the Division II sectional tournament.

St. Paul and Edison also competed Friday.

For the Truckers, Wes Sellers and Steve Rehnborg qualified to the district tournament as a doubles team with two wins.

The duo gained a bye in the first round.

They then beat Port Clinton's Adam Whitlock and Tom Polachek 6-0, 6-3 and Vermilion's Barry Friedman and Kevin Haponek 6-0, 6-0 in their next two chances.

Rehnborg and Sellers will play Perkins' Shawn Babiuch and Tim Perin in today's semifinals.

"Wes and Steve continue a streak at Norwalk," Truckers coach Dave Rehnborg said. "We have had somebody qualify for the district tennis tournament



S. Rehnborg



W. Sellers

every year since 1983 when Chris Bleile and Carl Hinckley qualified for districts and went on to the state tournament in doubles. This is quite a streak and we are glad to see it continue.

"Win or lose they (Sellers and Rehnborg) will play again, either for first place or for third and fourth. They are playing for first thru fourth place. The higher they are on Saturday, the better the draw will be for districts."

Also for Norwalk, Chris Higgins defeated Clyde's Cory Whitaker 6-2, 6-2 in the first round, before being cut off at the pass by Port Clinton's Nick McLean 6-1, 6-0. McLean was the third seed in singles.

"Chris won his first match, which was his first ever match at singles," Rehnborg said. "He played very well. In the second round, he played the No. 3 seed and again played well."

Eric Dryden captured wins over Port Clinton's Jeremy Leary 6-3, 4-6, 6-1 and Oak Harbor's Matt Conley 6-0, 6-2 in the first two rounds. Dryden then fell to St. Mary's Mark Posta 6-0, 6-0. Posta was the second seed.

"Eric had a marathon first match winning in three sets," Rehnborg said. "His second match, he won easily. In the third round, he ran into Mark Posta, the No. 2 seed from St. Mary's who is a three-

TENNIS

time state qualifier. Eric had a good tournament."

Doug Dials and Ryan Houghtlen garnered a first-round bye. The tandem notched a 6-3, 6-4 win over fourth seed Marcus Pullano and Justin Goff.

But Dials and Houghtlen lost to Clyde's Ed Cleveland and Matt Culbertson 7-6, 4-6, 6-4.

"Doug and Ryan may have played the best tennis of all," Rehnborg said. "They had two tough matches. In the first, they upset the No. 4 seeds from Perkins. They had lost to them in three sets very early in the year, but they beat them in straight sets yesterday. In the third round, they lost a tough three-set match. All three sets were very close and could have been won by either

team. They played their hearts out, like they do all the time, and that is all a coach can ask.

And Kyle Bowers dropped his first round match to Port Clinton's Ben Buch 6-3, 6-0.

"Kyle ran into a great player from PC," Rehnborg said. "It was Kyle's first loss on the year, but he will be back."

Action continues today at 9 a.m.

Meanwhile for St. Paul, Alex Theisen, in singles, and Rob Myers and Adam Reichert, in doubles, gained one win.

Theisen downed Vermilion's Mike Strauss 6-1, 6-1, before losing to McLean 6-1, 6-0.

Myers and Reichert beat Bellevue's Brian Boos and Adam Dendinger 6-2, 6-0 in the opening round. The St. Paul duo then lost to Vermilion's Barry Friedman and Kevin Haponek 6-1, 7-5.

Also, Sean Gerke lost to Edison's

Anthony Whitt 6-2, 6-0; Nick Holmer fell to St. Joe's JT Mauric 6-2, 6-3 and Brandon Adelman and Scott Hazelwood lost to St. Mary's Kyle Kelley and Ryan Brady 6-0, 6-0 in the first round.

For Edison, Whitt, Nicholas Poggiali and Jesse Schwanger all posted at least one win at singles.

After stopping Gerke, Whitt lost to Perkins' Charlie Frankel 6-2, 6-2; Poggiali beat Bellevue's Shawn Smith 7-6, 7-5 and lost to Posta 6-0, 6-0 and Schwanger defeated Huron's Chris Pell 6-2, 6-1 and St. Joe's Justin Carmack 6-1, 6-1 and lost to McLean 6-1, 6-2.

Both doubles teams for the Chargers lost in the first round.

Eric Bickley and Matt Miklovic lost to St. Joe's Jeff Young and Nick Wobser 5-7, 6-3, 6-3, while Michael Lux and Trevor Harlow dropped a 6-4, 6-4 to St. Mary's Joe Bayer and Bryce Ehrhardt.

Byrd stymies Cleveland for 7th pitching victory

CLEVELAND (AP) — Paul Byrd became the AL's second seven-game winner, pitching the Kansas City Royals past the Cleveland Indians 6-2 Friday night for Tony Pena's first victory as manager.

Pena, who was named Royals manager Wednesday, won at the ballpark where he had one of his greatest moments as a player — a game-winning homer in the 13th inning of Game 1 of the 1995 AL division series against Boston.

Byrd (7-2) allowed five hits in eight innings and beat the Indians for the second time in six days to join Chicago's Mark Buehrle for the league lead in wins. He threw a season-high 125 pitches.

Byrd threw a first-pitch strike to 24 of 32 batters, and wasn't hurt by a season-high four walks.

Joe Randa and Chuck Knoblauch homered off Chuck Finley (2-5), and Mike Sweeney connected against David Riske in the ninth as the Royals beat the

INDIANS pitcher C.C. Sabathia is robbed at gun-point / Pg. A-10

Indians for the fourth straight time. Kansas City swept Cleveland at home last weekend.

Byrd, who beat Finley on Sunday, has already surpassed his win total of last season. The right-hander was 6-7 for Philadelphia and Kansas City in 2001.

Finley, making his 500th career appearance, gave up four runs — three earned — on five hits in 5-3 innings. Entering the game, he had allowed only three homers, none since April 21.

Finley tied a season high with six walks and is winless in his last four starts.

Pena, a backup catcher for Cleveland from 1994-96, lost his first two games as manager, but had another memorable night at Jacobs Field.

The Indians showed some of Pena's career highlights, including

his playoff homer, on the video screen in center field during the game.

Knoblauch gave the Royals a 4-2 lead in the fourth with his third homer after striking out in his first two at-bats.

He added an RBI groundout in the eighth to put the Royals up 5-2.

Finley struck out two in the first, then gave up a single to Sweeney and Randa's second homer, a 419-foot shot into the Indians' bullpen in right-center.

The Royals took a 3-1 lead in the third, loading the bases on a throwing error by third baseman Russell Branyan and two walks. Neifi Perez scored on a passed ball when Finley and catcher Einar Diaz got crossed up.

Cleveland got a run in the bottom half when center fielder Carlos Beltran broke back on Matt Lawton's flyball, then had it bounce off the top of his glove as he charged in, allowing Ricky Gutierrez to score from first.

GETTING OVER THE HURDLE



LOU REDA/REFLECTOR

Plymouth's Samantha Huston (right) and South Central's Katelyn Gainok battle in a hurdle race recently. Plymouth and South Central, along with St. Paul, New London, Western Reserve, Monroeville, Crestview and Mapleton, continue Firelands Conference league track and field action today at New London. Meanwhile, Willard and Norwalk, in the Northern Ohio League, and Edison, in the Sandusky Bay Conference, will be also be competing in league meets today at Gallon and Edison, respectively.

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