

2000 CLASS AAA STATE GIRLS' SOFTBALL TOURNAMENT
Warner Park – Chattanooga, TN

Game 15

Soddy Daisy 4, Hendersonville 2

Hendersonville falls in 11th

Lady Commandos drop two extra-inning title games

By MAURICE PATTON
Sports Writer

CHATTANOOGA — In a meeting of two evenly matched teams, even one missed opportunity can make the difference.

Hendersonville knows the feeling after yesterday's 4-2, 11-inning loss to Soddy-Daisy, which repeated as Class AAA softball champ.

Trailing 2-1 in the 10th, the Commandos (45-14) tied the game with Jenny Herndon's triple that scored Jennifer Anderson.

But Hendersonville couldn't get Herndon home with the winning run, and Soddy-Daisy came up with two runs off Lauren Parker in the 11th.

"I think we ran out of rabbit's feet," Hendersonville Coach Andy Griffin said following his team's fourth extra-inning game of the tournament. "We didn't get any breaks. They did what they had to do to win, and we had our chances, but we didn't produce when we needed it."

Hendersonville beat Soddy-Daisy 2-0 on Thursday to advance into the championship game, but lost to the Lady Trojans 3-2 in 11 in-

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nings in a game that ended around 3:15 a.m. ET yesterday to set up the second title clash at 2 p.m.

"I'm sure that had a little to do with [our play], but I think we still had the same goal in mind," senior pitcher/outfielder Mandy Miles said of the long day Friday and having to come back yesterday less than 12 hours after losing to Soddy-Daisy (48-6).

Miles pitched all 11 innings of the first championship game loss, then threw three innings in relief of Parker before Parker returned to the mound in the ninth.

Down 1-0 in the sixth, Hendersonville tied the game when Kristen Lucas doubled home Kari Crandell. That score held up until the 10th when Soddy-Daisy took another one-run lead.

After Herndon's triple, Crandell drew a walk and moved to second on an infield groundout by Lucas. Parker was hit by a pitch to load the bases, before Miles and Terra Bailor were retired.

"We had three good sticks coming up there," Griffin said. "I was thinking, if we could get contact out of the infield, we were going to win it."

Class AA: Usually in a double-elimination tournament, the team that emerges from the winners bracket holds the upper hand.

But by the end of yesterday af-

ternoon, David Lipscomb had lost control and the Class AA championship as Gibbs became just the second squad to claim a crown after losing in the opening round of the eight-team event.

Continuing their offensive assault, the Lady Eagles downed Lipscomb 9-1 for their third straight Class AA crown.

Slated to play at 5:30 p.m. Friday after winning their first three games, the Lady Mustangs (37-6) didn't hit the field until nearly 9 p.m. due to a rain delay and suffered a 9-0 loss that forced yesterday's game.

"We had sat around all day [Friday], and we knew we only had one more game to win," Lipscomb senior Kristen Tidwell said. "It was tough to get ready. I think we may not have been as prepared as we needed to be."

Yesterday's game followed the same pattern as Friday's, as Gibbs (39-9) roughed up Tidwell for a couple of first-inning runs. However, Gary Davis didn't go long with her yesterday, as she only pitched 1 1/3 innings before being pulled.

"None of my pitches were working — none of them," admitted the Lipscomb University signee, who fell to 17-3 with the loss. "I wasn't hitting my spots."

"She didn't have her location," Davis said. "But you can't expect her to be the perfect pitcher every time out." ■