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Sports

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Posted on : 2012/10/10 22:20:00

The Trenton Lady Bulldogs rode the pitching brilliance of senior Scotlin Hurley on Wednesday night to a 1-0 victory over St. Joseph Benton, in the sectional round of the Class 3 softball state playoffs at Heritage Park in St. Joseph, in a game heard LIVE on Hot Country Z 101.7 and www.kgozfm.com. In many ways, Benton had the better of the play, but the Lady Cardinals failed to get early clutch hits to get on the board. Hurley started the trend of pitching her way out of trouble early, striking out Bailee Miller to escape a two-on, two-out jam in the top of the first:

[Click here to listen to Scotlin Hurley's first inning ending strikeout](#)

Benton's most significant threat of the night came two innings later, with runners on second and third and no out in a scoreless tie. Hurley escaped with a strikeout of Justice Vannaman, and a 1-2-3 double play grounder hit after a one-out walk loaded the bases.

Trenton scored the only run it would need in the bottom of the third inning, with Scotlin Hurley reaching on an infield single and stealing second base, leaving senior first baseman Avery Whitaker with an RBI opportunity:

[Click here to listen to Trenton take a 1-0 lead in the third inning](#)

Benton threatened again the fourth, but another Hurley strikeout with runner on first and second ended the frame:

[Click here to listen to Scotlin Hurley's fourth inning ending strikeout](#)

Hurley would settle down and find her [shut-down] game from there, retiring nine of last eleven batters she faced. Only a fifth-inning walk to Cassidy Ellis and a two-out double in the seventh by Kenzie Musser broke the string. With Musser on second and two outs, right fielder Justice Vannaman represented the final hopes for a Cardinal comeback:

[Click here to listen to Scotlin Hurley's game-ending strikeout](#)

Hurley scattered seven hits in the shutout effort, while striking out nine Cardinal batters. The win improves Trenton to 24-3 on the season, and moves them into one final home game on the season, a Class 3 state quarterfinal against Grain Valley on Saturday at Mark Griffin Memorial Field at Trenton High School. The game-time will be announced on Thursday by THS Athletic Director Kris Ockenfels. Grain Valley advanced with a 6-3 sectional win against Nevada.

Trenton head coach John Cowling said the speed that created the only run of the night for Trenton came back to one of the strengths of the Bulldogs, from every girl in the lineup:

[Click here to listen to THS coach John Cowling](#)

Cowling went into detail on how THS worked out of the tough jams early:

[Click here to listen to THS coach John Cowling](#)

That is Trenton Bulldog head coach John Cowling. Other softball sectional finals from last night, involving area teams, were, in Class 1: King City over DeKalb 10-0, Stanberry over North Harrison 12-1, Knox County over LaPlata 13-0, and Northeast of Cairo over Meadville 8-4. In Class Two, it was

Brookfield over Bishop LeBlond 13-2.