

Varsity Softballers Jump Into Conference Lead

by Anthony Beard

The Whirlie softball team has jumped out to an early 2-0 conference record, those wins coming over Kannapolis, and strong defending champion, Dudley.

Offensively, the team is led by Whirlie senior, Teresa Arnold. Arnold has been up to the plate 16 times. She has walked three times, and

collected eight hits for a .615 average. Pam Rice, playing short field, has a .363 batting average, and has pitched in 3 2/3 innings for a 1.92 Earned Run Average.

Emily Cooke was "discovered" pitching at batting practice. Her 1.67 ERA ranks among the best in Division-7, and the Whirlies have not lost a game that she has pitched.

Linda Rizzo's pitching debut ran into a rocky road her first time out against Page as she allowed six earned runs in 3 1/3 innings. She has since been moved to the outfield where she has played exceptionally well.

Felicia Ford is featured in the RBI department. Her .370 batting average has fielded her six RBI's to lead

the club in that category. Lisa Milligan and Pam Rice have four each.

Grimsley could not have asked for a more dependable lead-off batter than Kris Gross. Her on-base average is .588, and the Whirlie senior has a .354 batting average. At short-stop, Gross has made only three errors thus far.

Another surprise in recent weeks has been the presence of sophomore Beth Byrd. Her consistent play in the outfield and her two for five performance from the plate has earned her the respect of her opponents.

Grimsley has scored a total of twenty-four points in five games. That is an average of just under five runs a game.

Unpredictable Whirlie Sluggers Stay In Thick Of Division 7 Race

by Anthony Beard

Grimsley's baseball team has struggled most of the season. Dropping their first four games, the Whirlies managed a mild turn-around and won two out of their next three games. They find themselves at 2-2 in Division-7 play.

The season started on March 13 with a rout by Burlington Williams, 9-0. The next non-conference opponent was Southeast Guilford, and four runs in the top of the fourth inning spelled doom for Grimsley as they fell 7-5.

Williams invaded the Grimsley field on March 16, and again the Bulldogs prevailed, this time narrowly, 5-2. The first conference

game was with Ragsdale four days later, and the Tigers extended the Whirlie loss string to four games with a 6-2 Tiger win.

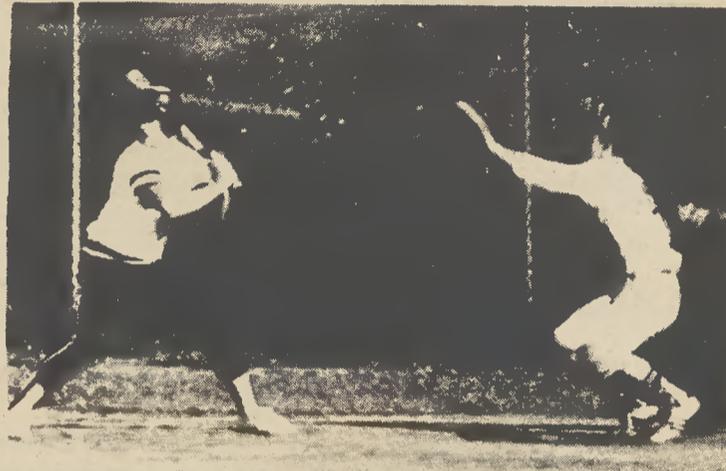
Head coach Raymond Johnson made several lineup changes for the following game against Kannapolis. Kyle Neve was moved from second to first base, and Craig Bugbee filled in the vacated spot at second. Maurice Jolly was benched a game, and since his return, he has upped his average to .214.

Willie Bayes hurled a two-hitter against Brown, and Rod Elkins drove in two runs with two hits as the Whirlies whitewashed Brown 5-0. "This is the way we should be playing at this stage of

the season," said Coach Johnson of the victory.

Next was Grimsley rival and conference powerhouse, Dudley, in a game played in the cold at Jaycee Park. Four unearned runs and seven Whirlie errors proved the difference in this game, as the Panthers nipped Grimsley 7-6. Panther right-fielder, Todd Evans, electrified the fans with a home-run to right field in the fifth inning.

In a determined fashion, the Whirlies demolished West Forsyth, 12-4. Rod Elkins and Andre Blount collected four hits each, pacing a 17-hit Whirlie assault as Grimsley evened their conference record at two.



Rod Elkins laces a two-run triple against Reynolds in a recent game at Jaycee Park. The Demons defeated Grimsley, 5-4. [Garnett photo]



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