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## Bats lead the way in Pine-Richland softball's playoff quest

By Jerin Steele April 16, 2023



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As the halfway point of a 16-game Section 1-6A slate neared, the [Pine-Richland](#) softball team put itself in the mix for a top-six section finish and a spot in the playoffs.

If the Rams find their way in, it'll likely be with the powerful aluminum sticks they carry to the plate.

[Pine-Richland](#) boasts a deep lineup and that was on display April 12 when they scored 13 runs against [Mt. Lebanon](#).

Unfortunately for the Rams, the Blue Devils also had an outstanding day at the dish and earned a 15-13 win.



The place.

"I like the kids' attitude. They don't give up," Pine-Richland coach Sam Hartzberg said. "We were down a few times (against [Mt. Lebanon](#)) and kept coming back. We just have to clean up a few little things and keep the kids' spirits up. I know they can do it."

The Rams hit four home runs in the Mt. Lebanon game and did not strike out once. Two of the home runs came off the bat of junior third baseman Mackenzie Gillis.

Maddy Myers, a sophomore, belted a three-run homer over the center field fence in the fifth inning and Calle Henne followed with a two-run homer later in the inning.

Myers' home run was the first of her varsity career and she also had an RBI double and a single. She went from being a junior varsity player last season to carving out a role as the starting left fielder and leadoff hitter.

"It's really cool, and I feel like I've grown a lot this year," Myers said. "I enjoy playing, so I think it's great that I've been able to work my way onto the varsity team. It was great to hit that home run. It was a really good feeling."

Henne, a sophomore, was named a team captain this year. She finished 4 for 5 with five RBIs.

She felt the game was a breakthrough for a lineup that's all underclassmen.

"In the past we had struggled at times adjusting to different pitchers, but (against Mt. Lebanon) we did a good job with communication," Henne said. "Once one girl went up to bat, they told the next one what to expect. It was teammates helping each other. I follow Marissa DeLuca in the batting order, so she would tell me what to look for. Without that, I wouldn't have been able to hit the way I did."

Henne has a good mentor at home. Her older brother, Owen, is the starting shortstop for the Pine-Richland baseball team. The younger Henne is primarily a catcher, but she also plays shortstop when DeLuca, the starting shortstop, is called upon to pitch.

"After every game, I end up sitting in Owen's room talking for sometimes over an hour," Henne said. "We'll talk about my game and his game. This year, as I've stepped into a captain's role, he's really helped me. He's been playing varsity for three years, so he knows how to lead a team. Any time I need advice on what I should do in a specific situation, I know I can go to him."

Every batter for Pine-Richland reached base at least once against Mt. Lebanon.



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section play. Then they start the rematches, scheduled to start with [Butler](#) on April 19.

All nine teams in Class 6A are in the same section for 2023.

"It's definitely a team goal to make the postseason and once you get there, you never know what could happen," Hartzberg said. "You saw that last year. We're going to try to stay in the hunt. It's a really tough section. We'll just keep pushing forward."

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