

## HHS drops heartbreaker at Brush; fights hard at home Saturday

Written by Brenda Johnson Brandt

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A heartbreaking 5-6 loss was handed to the Lady Dragon softball team Thursday, Sept. 24 at Brush. After trailing most of the game, HHS scored four runs in the fifth to take the lead, but dropped the game when Brush scored two in the seventh.

In a double-header at home Saturday, Sept. 26, the Dragons lost a 1-11 game to Erie in five innings, then played strong to come within two of Lyons, 9-11.

### **Holyoke 5, Brush 6**

After a triple by Macey Pierce in the fifth inning, Holyoke went ahead of Brush 5-3 for an exciting comeback from their 1-3 deficit.

Coach Ashley Clayton noted the Dragon defense was solid through the fifth and sixth innings to hold the Beetdiggers to just one run in the fifth.

However, HHS was unable to score again after the fifth, and allowed the Diggers to score two in the bottom of the seventh to give Brush the one-point win, 6-5.

“The Dragon softball team played with a lot of heart and intensity, making it a very tough game to lose,” said Clayton.

“However, as the girls gain experience on the field, the mental errors are beginning to eliminate themselves,” said Clayton with optimism.

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“Mental errors have been a struggle for the Dragons,” acknowledged the coach, adding, “It was nice to see those eliminate themselves in this game.”

Jordan Zeiler took the loss on the mound, giving up 11 hits and no walks, with three strike-outs.

Hitting stats showed Makenzie Ault was two for three with a triple and one RBI, while Pierce was one for three with a triple and three RBIs.

Additionally, Laura Gerk was one for four with an RBI, Zeiler was two for three with a walk and Molly Fricke, Ashley Gragg and Chandler Gerk were all one for three.

### **Holyoke 1, Erie 11**

Holyoke faced a tough team in Erie to start off their Saturday home field double-header with an 11-1 loss.

The Dragons had trouble getting their hits to drop in the gaps, and Erie was able to find a gap nearly every at-bat, according to coach Clayton.

Erie also proved to have tough defense, giving up just one error to Holyoke’s three, the coach added.

Despite the 10-point score difference, the Dragons fought strong for five innings. “If the three errors could be eliminated, Holyoke would have been able to take the Tigers to seven innings,” said Clayton.

Zeiler pitched five innings, giving up 13 hits and one walk. “Jordan continues to show tremendous improvement and confidence as she gains more varsity experience,” said Clayton.

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Fricke was one for two with a triple and an RBI in the Saturday morning contest, while Ault was one for three and threw out one Erie runner who was attempting to steal.

Chandler Gerck reached first on an error, and Karci Lockwood walked twice and was the only Dragon to cross home plate.

### **Holyoke 9, Lyons 11**

Holyoke showed its best fight of the season in the game against the Lyons Lions Saturday afternoon, praised coach Clayton. But the local girls ended on the short end of an 11-9 ball game.

The Dragons had a rough three innings to start the ball game, allowing Lyons to score nine runs.

But after the third, HHS turned the game around, holding the Lions scoreless until the top of the seventh.

“The Dragons showed a lot of heart in going on a two-out rally in the bottom of the seventh, scoring five runs,” said Clayton.

Holyoke matched up well with Lyons, but the Dragons were beating themselves throughout the first three innings, explained Clayton.

“Once Holyoke began eliminating the errors and forcing Lyons to make more errors, the game turned around,” said Clayton. “Holyoke just ran out of innings,” she added.

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The coach noted the Dragons showed a tremendous amount of heart, and to come up short was heart-breaking. "However, the fight they showed is something to be proud of," said coach Clayton.

Zeiler pitched for two and two-thirds innings, giving up six hits, five walks and earning one strike-out, as well as nine runs. Pierce went in to pitch in the third, giving up two hits, two walks, two runs and earned two strike-outs in her four and one-third innings on the mound.

Ault had an outstanding offensive game, hitting four for five with two doubles and two triples. She also reached base on an error, had an RBI and had three stolen bases.

Pierce was two for five with a triple and an RBI; Fricke, two for four; Zeiler, one for four with two RBIs; Brittany Durbin, one for four with two RBIs; Marci Vasa, one for four with one RBI; Laura Gerk, one RBI; and Lockwood, three walks.

### **Jayvees lose at Brush**

Holyoke's junior varsity team suffered a 9-15 loss at Brush on Thursday.

Catrina Krueger led the hitting, going two for three with a double, Durbin was one for two and Ashley Vance was one for one. Becca Brandt, Chandler Gerk, Briar Bergner, Vance and Lilian Menjivar all got on base with walks and Brooke Parker made it to first on an error.

### **Upcoming action**

This week, Holyoke will host Wray Thursday, Oct. 1 at 4 p.m. and Yuma on Tuesday, Oct. 6 at 4 p.m.