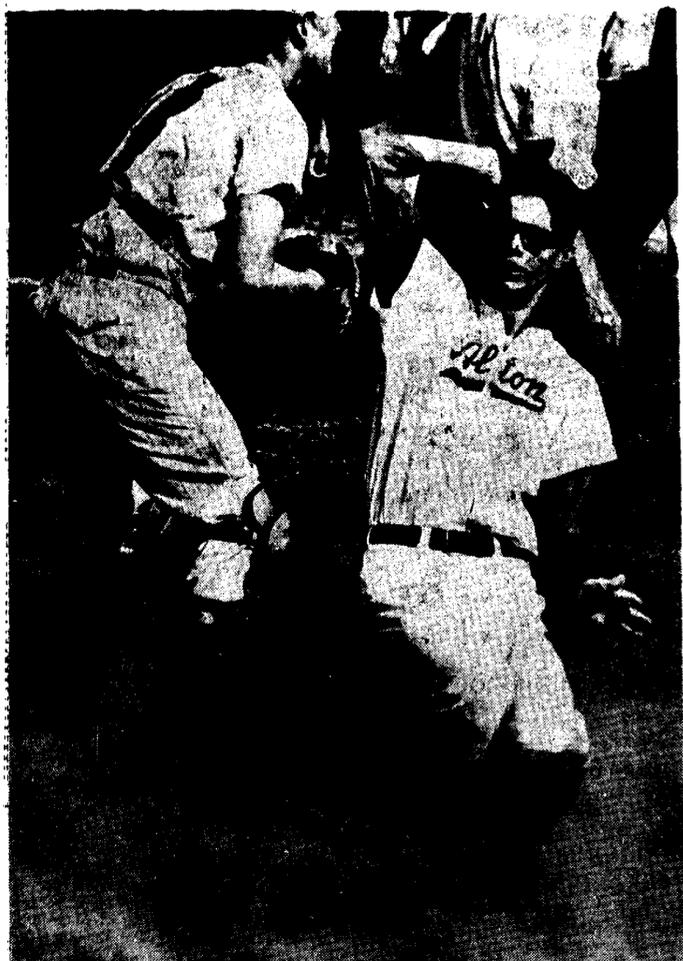


# Alton Beats Griffin, 2-0, Lands in State



**SCORING INSURANCE RUN** — Dan Conner of Alton slides safely across the plate in the third inning against Springfield Griffin in Wednesday's sectional championship game. Conner scored on John King's single to left. The Springfield catcher is Quint Burkhardt.

By JIM BELL  
 Telegraph Sports Writer  
**STAUNTON** — When the roll is called up yonder (Peoria), Alton's exciting baseball Redbirds will be there!

Riding on the strong right arm of Gary Hagen, who came within two outs of pitching his second no-hitter of the season, the Redbirds rubbed out Springfield Griffin, 2-0, to win the Staunton Sectional championship here Wednesday.

It was their 21st victory against only five losses and earned them the enviable right to be among the elite eight teams that will assemble in Caterpillar Town for the widely-sought state title, June 5-6.

The Redbirds are pitted against Highland Park (13-

9), winner of the Glenbrook North Sectional, in Thursday's quarter-finals of the state meet.

Griffin, although highly-respected and remembered for its state title bid last year, was no match for the 6-foot-3 Alton ace who just wasn't about to be denied, come fire or famine.

The heartbreaking part about his exhibition was that he failed to match pitching mate Rick Reidt's no-hitter against Pittsfield Monday, which would've given Mr. Whip and Mr. Zip back-to-back gems.

But nobody (including young Mister Hagen) was crying about it afterward. Like elated Alton Coach Wayne Tyler expressed beforehand, "We'll take 'em anyway we can get 'em, especially from here on out."

What's more, the Redbirds turned the trick against the Cyclones' ace lefthander, George Rudis, a 6-1 curveballer considered to be Capitol City's best.

But the Redbirds, who harbor no particular love for portlanders, hit him safely in every inning except the sixth.

Coach Dick Murawski had already used his best righty, Ed Gvazdinkas (pronounced Vaz-dinkus), in Tuesday's winning spat against Nokomis. Gvazdinkas played shortstop against the Birdies.

Alton broke into the scoring early when John King led off the second inning with a single to dead center, and advanced on the same play when center-fielder Joe Stritzel muffed the pick-up.

Third baseman Randy Bailey

was awarded first base when catcher Quint Burkhardt was struck out eight and walked two.

Rudis, seeing his record lowered to 6-2, was touched for eight hits besides two runs, fanned six and only walked one.

Conner and King bore the brunt of Alton's hitting attack. Conner going three-for-three and King two-for-three.

FOOTNOTES — How lucky can one get? Alton again won the pre-game flip of the coin and elected to be the "home" team, which it has been for all six of its tournament games. . . . Even though Hagen failed to match Reidt's no-hitter against Pittsfield, he did insofar as time spent. Both games required identical times, one hour and 35 minutes, despite two Griffin hits. . . . The loss ended Griffin's season with a respectable 17-8 mark. . . . Six major league clubs were represented by bird-dogging scouts assigned by the Yankees, Cardinals, Senators, Indians, Athletics, Redlegs and Dodgers. . . .

The Redbirds' appearance in Peoria will be their first since 1966 when they advanced to the semi-final round before suffering defeat. . . . Comparing the two teams, this year's present team, "is stronger on pitching but shorter on hitting."

GRIFFIN (9)		ALTON (1)	
Player	Pos.	Player	Pos.
Lacy	2B	Hagen	P
Stritzel	CF	Conner	2B
Burns	IF	Griffin	2B
Burkhardt	C	Griffin	CF
Semank	1B	Gvazdinkas	SS
Rudis	P	Brennan	3B
Shaugnessy	RF	Brennan	3B
Brennan	3B	Grady	CF
Totals		Totals	
AB	33	AB	33
R	8	R	2
H	17	H	8
E	6	E	0
B	2	B	0
K	1	K	0
BB	0	BB	0
SO	6	SO	0
IP	9.0	IP	9.0
ER	2	ER	0
LOB	8	LOB	0
U	1	U	0
P	1	P	1
W	1	W	1
L	0	L	0
S	0	S	0
B	0	B	0
GRiffin	W	GRiffin	W
ALton	L	ALton	L
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