State softball tournament: Redfield survives late scare to advance to Class B consolation championship

Castlewood plays

By Jason Lopez Martinez, Aberdeen Insider Reporter · June 6, 2026 in Featured, News, Sports Reading Time: 5 minutes



Redfield second baseman, left, Layla Hardie/centerfielder Hayden Gall celebrate after recording an out during the consolation semifinals against Florence/Henry on Friday, June 5 at the Class B state softball tournament at Players Complex in Aberdeen. The Pheasants won 7-6 to advance to the fifth-place game. Freeman Courier photo courtesy of Jeremy Waltner.

For six innings, Redfield looked comfortable.

The Pheasants were aggressive on the bases, sharp at the plate and in control behind sophomore pitcher Octavia Paulsen. After a difficult opening-round loss to McCook Central/Montrose a day earlier, Redfield responded with the kind of performance it had hoped to bring to the Class B state softball tournament on Friday, June 5 at Players Complex in Aberdeen.

Then came the seventh inning.

Florence/Henry scored five runs in their final inning and suddenly turned what had been a comfortable lead into a one-run game before Redfield escaped with a 7-6 victory at the Class B State Softball Consolation Semifinal.



"We had that 7-1 lead," Redfield coach Bradley Cihak said. "Just limit the errors, find it out and don't try overdoing anything at this moment."

MORE: State Softball Tournament: Redfield stumbles in loss to McCook Central/Montrose

The victory marked Redfield's first win at the state tournament, and with it, the Pheasants advanced to the consolation semifinals.

A day after struggling offensively in a 13-0 loss to McCook Central/Montrose, Redfield looked like a different team.

"We came out and hit the ball," Cihak said. "We ran hard. We stole bases hard. Just a team effort. The team energy was a lot higher and a lot better today."

After a slow start, Redfield finally broke through in the fourth inning.

Kylie Hermann delivered an RBI single to open the scoring before the Pheasants added another run later in the inning for a 2-0 lead.

The offense continued to apply pressure with aggressive baserunning. Ella Rude-Peterson collected three hits, while Charli Jungwirth, Kinley Smith and Mady Morrissette repeatedly created opportunities on the basepaths. Redfield finished with 10 stolen bases.

The Pheasants extended the lead to 4-0 in the sixth inning before adding three more runs in the seventh to seemingly put the game away.

Meanwhile, Paulsen was dominant through most of the afternoon, hitting multiple strikeouts.

The sophomore allowed just one run through six innings and limited Florence/Henry's scoring chances.

"Probably just my fastball," Paulsen said when asked what was working. "We really wanted to beat this team, so I was really trying my hardest out there."



Members of the Redfield Pheasants put their team sticker on the consolation finals bracket after their win over Florence/Henry Friday, June 5, in the Class B State Tournament. Aberdeen Insider photo by Allie Hoekman.

Cihak credited Paulsen's performance as the difference-maker.

"She threw a great six innings for us," Cihak said. "I told her, 'You're gonna get a chance at state tournament, come out and show us what you've got.' Six innings, she did that."

But the Falcons weren't done.

Trailing 7-1 entering the bottom of the seventh, the team loaded the bases and began stringing together extra-base hits. Elizabeth Reiter's hit cut the deficit dramatically, and Kaylee Vavruska followed with an RBI double as the Falcons suddenly found life.

"I went and told the girls that we all got to believe," Florence/Henry coach Robert Reiter said. "The first hitters found their way on base, and then we got some hits strung together."

The rally eventually brought the tying run to the plate before Redfield finally secured the final out.



For a program making its first state tournament appearance, the win represented more than just survival.

"Feels great," Cihak said. "It's great to get this first tournament win."

Paulsen agreed.

"Awesome," she said. "We've been trying to be up here for a while now."

The Pheasants play Freeman-Freeman Academy on Saturday, June 6 for fifth-place.

Elk Point/Jefferson continue underdog push as championship games set

The surprises continued Friday at the Class A state softball tournament as No. 8 seeded Elk Point/Jefferson punched its ticket to the championship game with a 7-4 victory over No. 4 seed West Central at Players Complex.

After stunning Madison in the quarter finals, the Huskies knocked off another high seeded behind four-RBI performance from Cera Schmitz. Schmitz had a three-run home run in the first inning before adding an RBI triple in the fifth inning to help Elk Point-Jefferson secure the program's first state championship appearance.

"This is huge," Huskies coach Amber Otkin said. "We have a really good group of seniors, so we wanted to make it there for them. It's big because it's never happened in school history for softball, especially being the eight seed."

MORE: Aberdeen Christian shooter embraces last shot at state trap tournament

Elk Point-Jefferson will face Dakota Valley on Saturday June 6th, for a title game after the Panthers defeated Tri-Valley 10-6 in the other semifinal. Dakota Valley coach, Jason Anderson, credited his team's chemistry after overcoming a late challenge from the Mustangs.

"We can't be a bunch of individuals on the team," he said. "We've got to be one team united."

In Class B, Castlewood rallied past Hanson 12-7 to advance to the championship game. The Warriors trailed 7-6 entering the bottom of the sixth before erupting for six runs, highlighted by a two-run triple from Cydni Kudrna. Sophia Kudrna added three hits, including a solo home run.

"It's where they wanted to be at the end of the year," Castlewood coach Craig Horn said. "They know what it feels like to lose that one, so it's very satisfying right now, but we've got some work to do."

Castlewood will meet McCook Central/Montrose in the Class B championship after the Fighting Cougars rallied from an early four-run deficit to defeat Gayville-Volin 15-7.

Friday scores

Class B

Semifinals

Castlewood 12, Hanson 7

McCook Central/Montrose 15, Gayville-Volin 7

Consolation semifinals

Freeman/Freeman Academy 13, Avon 4

Redfield 7, Florence-Henry 6

Class A

Semifinals

Elk Point-Jefferson 7, West Central 4

Dakota Valley 10, Tri-Valley 6

Consolation semifinals

Beresford 4, Madison 1

Sioux Valley 15, Lennox 5

Class AA in Sioux Falls

Semifinals

Sioux Falls Jefferson 4, Sioux Falls Roosevelt 0



Sioux Falls Washington 8, Harrisburg 4

Consolation semifinals

Brandon Valley 10, Sioux Falls Lincoln 5

Rapid City Stevens 9, Sioux Falls O'Gorman 3

Saturday games

Class B

Seventh place: Florence/Henry vs Avon, 10 a.m.

Fifth place: Redfield vs. Freeman/Freeman Academy, noon.

Third place: Hanson vs. Gayville-Volin, 2 p.m.

Championship: Castlewood vs. McCook Central/Montrose, 4 p.m.

Class A

Seventh place: Madison vs. Lennox, 10 a.m.

Fifth place: Beresford vs. Sioux Valley, noon

Third place: West Central vs. Tri-Valley, 2 p.m.

Championship: Elk Point-Jefferson vs. Dakota Valley, 4 p.m.

Class AA in Sioux Falls

Seventh place: Sioux Falls Lincoln vs. Sioux Falls O'Gorman, 10 a.m.

Fifth-place: Brandon Valley vs. Rapid City Stevens, noon.

Third place: Sioux Falls Roosevelt vs. Harrisburg, 2 p.m.

Championship: Sioux Falls Jefferson vs. Sioux Falls Washington, 4 p.m.