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# LINDENWOOD

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## Softball team headed to nationals

The Lady Lions softball team won the 2000 NAIA Region V Softball Tournament Saturday, May 6 by defeating No. 1-seed Columbia College in a 4-3 thriller.

LU's road to the title game wasn't easy. After a first-round bye and a convincing second-round win 6-1 over Culver-Stockton, the Lady Lions suffered a devastating defeat by Columbia College 4-1. The loss sent LU to the losers' bracket to face Evangel University.

A noisy hometown crowd awaited the Lady Lions, however behind the dominant pitching of Sallie Henry, the crowds were silenced and LU walked away a 4-2 winner.

The victory was Henry's 13th of the season, and it sent LU back to the winners' bracket. The Lady Lions knew the only way to win the regional was to defeat Columbia--twice.

Lindenwood's defense stepped up on Saturday, turning three double plays behind the stellar pitching of Dawn Cameron. Karen Peer and Michelle Patrico supplied the offense and Lindenwood won 2-0.

Much like their previous two meetings, the championship game between the Lady Lions and the Cougars was a battle. Henry was almost untouchable on the mound, until a seventh-inning Columbia rally plated three runs to make the game close. Third baseman Heather Hoelting erased the Cougars' hopes of a comeback win with a dazzling stab of a ground ball to end the game.

Offensively, Patrico was a star with two triples. But each time she tripled, Peer had singled in front of her--accounting for two Lindenwood runs. And Patrico scored on each of her triples after Cameron bunts.

The victory was Lindenwood's second Midwest Regional Championship in three years. LU's record now stands at 30-10 entering next week's NAIA Softball National Championships in Decatur, AL.

"The way we fought back through the losers' bracket speaks volumes for the character of the young ladies on this team," said Coach Rob Westling. "I want the kids to enjoy the feeling, and then prepare for nationals. They deserve this."

After the regional title game, four Lady Lions were named to the all-Midwest Region first team. They included designated hitter Sallie Henry, outfielder Karen Peer, pitcher Dawn Cameron and Heart of America Athletic Conference Player of the Year Michelle Patrico.

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