

# Southwestern Scores Single Runs in Five Of Seven Innings, Eliminates Marquette 5-2 in Class 2A Regional

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer  
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PIASA – Piasa Southwestern scored single runs in all but the first inning to help the Piasa Birds to a 5-2 win over Marquette Catholic Friday afternoon at Southwestern High in the IHSA Class 2A girls softball regional final.

The Birds took an early lead in the second, starting with singles by Megan Bailey and Josie Boullion. Bailey then scored on an error by the right fielder to make it 1-0 for Southwestern. The Birds then extended their lead in the third, starting with a one-out walk to Mayci Wilderman, a Bri Roloff single and a walk to Molly Novack. A Bailey sacrifice fly to left scored Wilderman to make it 2-0.

The Explorers pulled to within 2-1 in the top of the third, starting with a lead-off single by Kiley Beth Kirchner, and one out later, a Taylor Whitehead single. A Sydney Ehrman RBI single scored Jada Johnson to halve the lead.

Southwestern restored its two-run lead in the fourth, starting with a lead-off double by Bailee Nixon, a sacrifice bunt by Hannah Nixon and an RBI single by Sydney Baumgartner. A Boullion RBI single in the fifth scored Roloff, but in the top of the sixth, a leadoff Kirchner triple and a Johnson sacrifice fly which scored Kirchner made it 4-2. Again, the Birds restored a three-run lead in the home half of the sixth on a two-out double by Wilderman that scored Hannah Nixon with the game's final run.

Whitehead and Bailee Nixon went all the way for their teams, with Nixon striking out seven on the day, while Whitehead fanned five.

Southwestern improves to 22-2 and moves on to a sectional semifinal at Litchfield against the winner of Saturday's Pittsfield regional winner, either Petersburg Porta or Williamsville. Tuesday afternoon in a 4:30 p.m. start. The Explorers end their season 20-9.