

Hard work pays off for Kennedy, Sox

By **TERRY TOOHEY**
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YEADON — A mini-slump in the last four games of the regular season made Upper Darby center fielder Doug Kennedy take a little different approach before the Blue Sox took on the Media Knights in the opening round of the Delco Baseball League playoffs Saturday.

Kennedy arrived at Kerr Field around 11:30 a.m., some 2½ hours before the game, to take some extra batting practice. He also switched to a bat with a bigger barrel.

It worked. Kennedy's RBI single in the top of the sixth inning was the difference as Upper Darby knocked off Media, 4-3, to take a 1-0 lead in the best-of-3 series.

Game 2 is set for 2 p.m. today at Delaware County Community College.

"Doug came through with a big hit when we needed it," Upper Darby skipper Dave Jerdon said.

Kennedy's two-out single off lefty Ed Kerstetter chased home Jamie Schild with the winning run.

The hit was a killer for the Knights in their Delco League playoff debut.

"Doug had a great at-bat," Media manager Greg Baron said. "He stuck in there against a tough lefty. It was a situation we wanted. It was a left-hander on a left-hander and he poked in through."

Upper Darby pitcher Dave Ciccone made than run stand up with a perfect seventh inning, only his second 1-2-3 inning of the

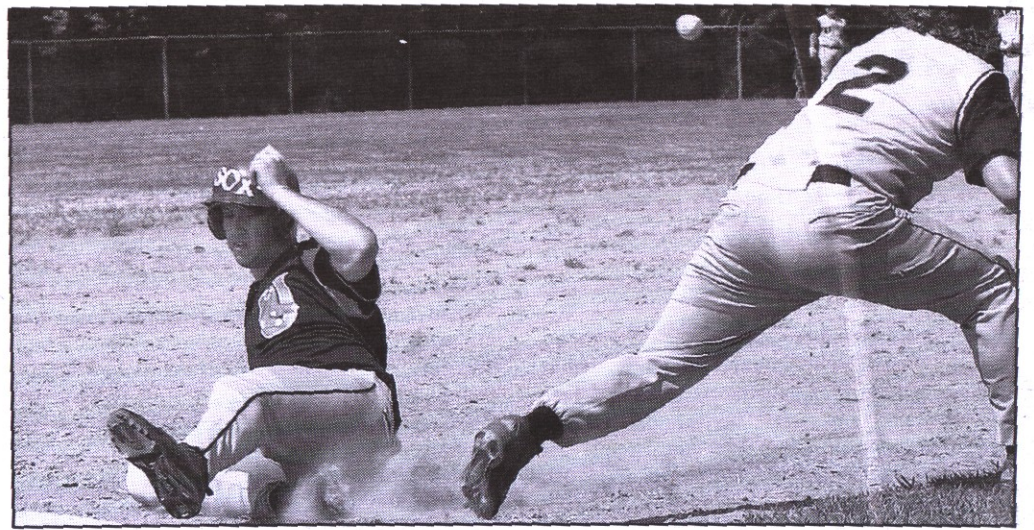
Upper Darby 4, Media 3												
MEDIA					UPPER DARBY							
	ab	r	h	bi		ab	r	h	bi			
Monaco ss	4	0	0	0	Ciccone p	4	0	1	0			
McGarry lf	3	0	0	0	Schild ss	4	2	2	1			
Bradford 1b	3	0	0	0	R. Itri 1b-2b	3	1	1	2			
Spero cf	3	1	2	0	Corsanico c	3	0	1	0			
Cooper dh	2	1	0	0	D. Kennedy cf	3	0	1	1			
Illgas c	2	1	1	1	J. Grafstrom rf	2	0	1	0			
Young 3b	3	0	0	1	Schuck pr	0	0	0	0			
Patroni rf	3	0	1	0	Zarzuela ph	1	0	0	0			
Boyle 2b	3	0	0	0	Jerdon 1b	0	0	0	0			
					Livory lf	0	0	0	0			
					D'Urso 3b	3	1	1	0			
					J. Kennedy 2b-rf	2	0	0	0			
Totals	26	3	4	2	Totals	25	4	8	4			
Media						010 200 0-3						
Upper Darby						200 101 x-4						
E-young, Schild, Itri, D'Urso, J. Kennedy, Corsanico. LOB-Media 6, Upper Darby 11. 2B-Illgas, Ciccone, Corsanico. HR-Itri. SB-Schuck, Patroni. CS-Livory. S-Illgas. DP-Media 1 (Boyle, Monaco, Bradford).												
Media	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO						
Curran	3 1/3	5	3	3	5	1						
Paul	1	2	0	0	2	0						
Kerstetter, L	1 2/3	1	1	0	1	1						
Upper Darby	IP	H	R	ER	BB	SO						
Ciccone, W	7	4	3	0	1	6						
HBP-By Ciccone (Bradford). Umpires-Marty Watson (home plate), Allie Steven (first base), Dennis Dunn (third base). T-2:02.												

game.

"I didn't get loose until the fourth inning," said Ciccone, who had offseason shoulder surgery to repair a rotator cuff and labrum problem, and remove bone chips. "Some days it takes me a little longer to get loose."

On those days, Ciccone did as he did to the Knights — he nibbled on the corners until his shoulder loosed up to the point. Once his shoulder did loosen up, his velocity returned.

Ciccone recorded half of his six strike-



Times staff / PAULA E. DOYLE

Upper Darby's Rob Schuck slides into third base safely as Media's Mike Young tries to field the throw during Saturday's Delco League playoff game.

outs in the final three innings. He fanned Joe Illgas to get out of a bases-loaded, two-out jam in the top of the fifth inning and whiffed Mike Young to start the seventh.

Media got to Ciccone early for three unearned runs, one in the second inning and two more in the fourth to take a 3-2 lead.

"Opportunities were given to us, we just didn't capitalize on them," Baron said.

Upper Darby had trouble scoring after Rob Itri belted a two-run homer with one out in the bottom of the first inning. Media's Ryan Curran, Kevin Paul and Kerstetter combined to give up just one run until Kennedy stepped to the plate in the sixth inning.

"I was disappointed in the way we played," Jerdon said. "We have to make plays and we have to hit with guys on base. Nothing against Media, they played tough, but this is their first year in the playoffs. We've been there a couple of years in a row now and we have to get hits when we have

men on base."

Jerdon was most disappointed in the fourth inning, when the Blue Sox scored one run to tie the game, but left the bases loaded. Kerstetter came in for Paul and coaxed Itri into an inning-ended 4-6-3 double play.

As fate would have it, though, Ciccone was just starting to warm up. He kept the Knights at bay until the sixth inning when Schild reached base on an error and catcher Nick Corsanico drew a two-out walk to bring Kennedy, who was 0-for-2 with a walk, to the plate.

Kennedy delivered.

"There was a big hole between first and second because they were holding the runner at first base," Kennedy said. "I was looking for something inside, something I could hook into that hole. He threw me something down and in and I was able to put it in the right spot."

Terry Toohey is the assistant sports editor of the Daily Times.