

American Legion Berlin 6 South Windsor 3

Berlin Defeats South Windsor

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MIDDLETOWN

— As his teammate James Paldino lay at the plate, injured when a pitched ball deflected off the handle of his bat and struck him in the left eye, Patrick Dornfried received the news that he was replacing the fallen shortstop.

Facing a full count in his first at-bat of the American Legion state tournament, Dornfried didn't let the opportunity slip away.

On the first pitch he saw from South Windsor's Sean Lopata, Dornfried sent a double down the left field line. The hit highlighted a three-run top of the fifth inning and helped Berlin to a 6-3 victory over South Windsor Sunday at Palmer Field.

"That hit really gave us some energy and sparked us," Berlin coach Rob Manzo said. "We told him to look for a fastball and go up attacking."

Berlin got another runner on an error, then Adam Romegialli tripled to right-center, scoring Dornfried and Joe Balowski. Romegialli came home when second baseman Erik Donofrio overthrew third base, giving Berlin a 6-1 lead.

"They really got some timely hitting," South Windsor coach George Yates said. "If you replay that situation 10 times [with Dornfried at the plate] he is not going to hit it that hard again."

Paldino was taken by ambulance to Middlesex Hospital, where his eye was evaluated for possible retina damage, Manzo said.

Berlin will play Simsbury in a winners bracket game today at 1 p.m. South Windsor played the night game and was eliminated by Madison, 5-4.

Dornfried admitted there were some nerves as he stepped to the plate.

"Everyone told me to look for a fastball and that it was coming; the plan was to swing at the first pitch," Dornfried said. "I wanted to do it for Jamie [Paldino]."

