

WCMS softball

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Reno battled off two potential strike threes before slapping a single into left field. She moved to second on a sacrifice by Bella Cantrell, then took advantage of a napping defense to get closer.

Reno pulled off a delayed steal of third, watching two quick throws back to the pitcher before she had retreated from her lead at second. On the third throw back, Reno took off for third, swiping the bag without a throw. Her hustle was rewarded when Shelby Roberts roped a two-out single into left field, making it 1-0.

In was part of a two-hit night for Roberts, who Damon credited with setting the table for the Lady Pioneer offense.

"Shelby had a huge night offensively. She did what a lead-off batter should do, she got on base and scored," said Damon.

Juju Pyburn continued to keep the offense rolling in the third, piping a shot to the fence in right for a triple. Halo Armstrong followed with a single, giving the Lady Pioneers a 2-0 lead.

Hollis gave up a lead-off double to start the fourth, with the runner moving to third on a sac fly on the next pitch. Hollis buckled down with a runner 60



Alyssa Mosley sprints to third during Monday's game. Mosley and the Lady Pioneers pulled into a tie atop the CTC standings with a 4-0 victory over Franklin North.

Jeffery Simmons photo

feet from scoring, striking out the next batter on three pitches before forcing a comebacker she fielded and threw to first to keep Franklin North off the board.

Warren County added some cushion to its lead in the fourth, getting back-to-back singles from Mea Starkey and Roberts to put runners on the corners

with one out. Hollis helped her own cause with an RBI groundout, hitting behind the runners to second to score Starkey.

Pyburn followed with a single of her own, allowing Roberts to fly around from second to push the lead to 4-0.

The clutch hitting was a boon on a night when Warren County struggled

to have a breakout inning it had become accustomed to this season.

"Madison, Juju and Halo all hit the ball well, but we didn't string hits together and left a lot of runners on base," said Damon. "We'll have to execute a little better to get the ball in play when we have runners in scoring position."

Hollis closed the game with back-to-back fielder's choices after allowing a single and walk.

Warren County made the return trip to Franklin North Tuesday night, with the game deciding the CTC regular season champion. The result was unavailable at press time. Check Friday's *Standard* for more details.

Busch wins at Bristol

BRISTOL (AP) — Kyle Busch was all smiles and Kyle Larson was all scowls.

Busch passed Larson with five laps remaining at Bristol Motor Speedway on Monday to win his second straight Cup Series race, culminating a rain-delayed weekend when temperatures dipped into the high 30s.

Busch celebrated by thrusting his arms in the air and with a traditional bow to the crowd on top of his No. 18 Toyota while the snow began falling — a fitting end to a long weather-stalled weekend.

Busch said after the race that he didn't have the best car, but "we had the best car right at the end."

The loss left Larson, who led a race-high 200 laps, extremely frustrated.

"I feel like every time I race here I almost get a win," Larson said of his second-place finish. "I've been beat by Kyle (Busch) about every time I race here, too, so that gets frustrating after a while."

It was Busch's 45th career Cup Series win, moving him ahead of Bill Elliott into sole possession of 16th place.

It also was his seventh win at Bristol, while Larson has yet to win at the half-mile track.

Coincidentally, Busch won with the aid of long-time nemesis Brad Keselowski, who wrecked with 30 laps left, bringing out the caution flag.

Larson appeared to have the car to beat on Monday, running well ahead of the pack on long green flag runs. But after Busch took on tires during the yellow flag stop, he knew he was back in the race with 22 laps to go. He finally caught Larson with five laps left, bumped him out of the way and scooted by.

Larson made a late charge but couldn't catch him.

"When it comes down to crunch time you gotta go," Busch said.

Asked if Keselowski had moved up on his list of favorites, Busch laughed and said, "That's pushing it too far."

"I kind felt bad for him, maybe that much," Busch said, pinching his thumb and index finger close together. "But it certainly helped our cause. So it was much appreciated, let's go with that."

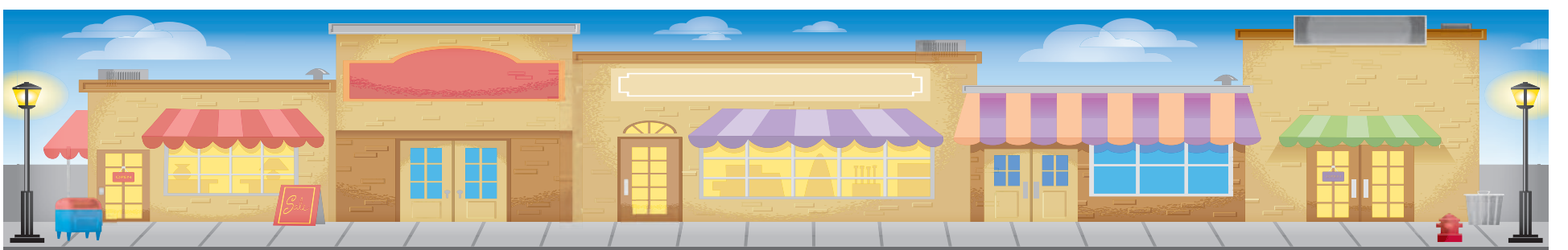
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