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Darien Girls Softball Again Eliminated from States by Southington in 9-3 Loss

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It was a good ride while it lasted.

The Southington Blue Knights scored three runs in the first inning and two more in the second en route to a 9-3 win over Darien in the second round of the Class LL softball playoffs.

Southington — which eliminated Darien from states for the second consecutive season — rode the strong pitching of Iona-bound junior Kara Zazzaro and the hitting of junior first baseman Frankie Ferrante.

Zazzaro struck out 10 Wave batters in six innings before giving way to senior Delaney Picard who gave up two runs in the seventh before nailing down the win by getting Darien's Hailey King to pop up to short for the final out.

Ferrante provided all the offense Southington would need, going 3-for-5 with two doubles and five RBI.

The Blue Knights advance to the Class LL Quarterfinals to face E.O. Smith on Friday.

Darien starter Sophia Barbour took the loss, surrendering nine runs on 12 hits, three walk and three hit batters. The Wave senior hurler was able to keep Southington at bay after a rough start, giving up just one run in innings three through five.

Meanwhile, Zazzaro was untouchable, retiring all 15 batters she faced through five innings. Darien best chance to climb back into the game was in the top of the sixth, as the Wave scored a run on a walk and three hits to make it 6-1 with one out and the bases loaded.

Zazzaro was able to work out of the jam, inducing a popup back to the circle from Cassidy Schiff and then struck out Barbour to end the threat.

Southington countered with three runs of its own in the bottom of the sixth, highlighted by a 2-RBI double by

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Ferrante — her second two-bagger of the game — to extend to a 9-1 lead heading into the final frame. The Wave scratched across two runs and had two runners on base, but that was as close as the FCIAC champs would get.