

Royals, Thurston Show Class With Chips Down

The test of any great team comes when the chips are down.

Grove's Royals of Livonia and Thurston of Redford Township had their backs to the walls in the Greater Livonia Connie Mack League.

It was no die in games which had to be made up after being rained out earlier—for both the Royals and Thurston.

Thurston had two games...the Royals one.

For Thurston, winning both

the games was a must to capture the American Division title.

For the Royals, winning the one game was just as important...to take the National Division crown.

BOTH MET the challenge with flying colors.

Thurston downed the Livonia Optimists, 9-2, in the first game and then wrapped it up in grand style when Steve Kraeger fired a 3-0, no-hit victory over Gates Real Estate of Plymouth.

As for the Royals, the opposition was Garden City East and the Royals took East in style, 6-1.

By winning, the Thurston and Royals teams annexed more than the divisional crown—Thurston with a 15-2 record, the Royals with a mark of 16 wins and two ties, only unbeaten team among the 20 in the Mack circuit.

Both teams earned the right to represent their divisions in state regionals which begin this week. Thurston is going to Flint. The Royals will play in a regional scheduled for either Ann Arbor or Livonia.

THE REIGNS enjoyed by the Royals and Thurston in Mack play hardly came as surprises.

For the most part the same players who helped Livonia Bentley win the Suburban Six League high school title last spring have made up the Royals this summer.

Thurston is pretty much the same alignment of players who sparked for Thurston High last spring when the Townshipers wound up as the co-champs in the Northwest Suburban League.

The Thurston team had the tougher assignment in the make-up department because it had to win twice in order to avert winding up behind Livonia Hubert in the divisional standings.

But with John Munson and Kraeger, the one-two punch of

the Thurston pitching staff in blazing fashion, the Townshipers zipped through their two foes with ease.

Munson fanned four, allowed seven hits and walked three as his mates ran up one run in the first inning, six in the second and two more in the third.

A double by Munson, after Gordie Eszes singled, got Thurston on the scoreboard in a hurry.

In the second inning, Dennis Poppenger singled to start

things. Then Dennis Benedict was safe on an error. Bob Graustein singled, Tom Munson (John's brother) was safe on an error, John King and Eszes singled and Scott Stacy was safe on an error for six runs.

Tom Munson's walk, a free base to King, an error putting Eszes aboard and a single by John Munson finished the Thurston scoring in the third inning.

Kraeger, strikeout king of

the Mack league, added 16 more victims in equaling his season's high and stopping Gates without a hit.

Thurston again scored all its runs in a hurry, counting one in the first inning and two in the second.

Eszes doubled and Stacey singled for a run in the first. In the second, Benedict singled, Graustein doubled and Kraeger delivered a sacrifice fly after Graustein went to third on an error.

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DAVE RICE, a brilliant all-around athlete at Bentley, did the pitching for the Royals in their key game with Garden City.

He allowed only three hits and struck out five and was supported by Mike Perino, who socked a homer, and Joe Berg who along with Rice had two hits in the game.

The Royals broke into the scoring column in the first inning when Berg singled, Perino sacrificed, Jim Erwin was safe on an error and Garry Battles doubled in two runs.

In the third inning, Perino homered and after Al Hernandez and Erwin singled, Battles and Rice both delivered run-scoring sacrifice flies.

Singles by Berg, Rice and Bob Walden finished up the scoring for the Royals, who were pressed down to the final wire in their divisional by Redford's Waralak Tire.

Redford lost only one game all season—and that was to the Royals.

As matters later turned out, that was the game which actually decided the championship.

Day by day, Redford Wonderland Lanes is sitting better at the Greater Livonia Class A baseball league.

Redford made it 9-1 for the second round by beating Soper Clark, 3-1, as Bob Smoots turned in a two-hit pitching gem.

He fanned five and walked only one batter as his mates collected six hits off loser Deno Syrios.

WONDERLWND SCORED once in the second inning when Terry Rothwell walked, stole second and scored on Reg Baringer's single.

Soper tied it when Syrios singled and eventually came home on Al Smith's sacrifice.

That's the way matters stood until the eighth inning when Bob Holmes was safe on an error and was sacrificed to second by Lee Bjerkie. John Hornyak tripled in Holmes and Hornyak scored on Rothwell's fly.

Livonia Hubert stayed in second place by downing Northwest, 8-2, when Jay Schwalm worked a three-hitter, fanned 11 and walked three.

Chip Rose socked a double and two singles and knocked in three runs.

Dan Baron walked, Utych beat out a hit and both scored on Mark Yourbuch's hit in the fifth for what proved the game's deciding run.

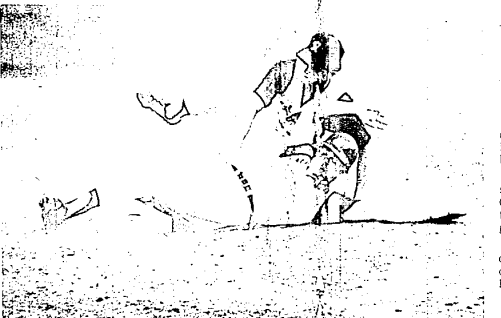
In the final game, Utych was the losing pitcher in the 4-0 game then Steve Johnson worked until the sixth before Tom Dowdy took over and became the losing pitcher.

Southgate won the game in the top of the eighth on an error, single and walk and still another walk on two out.

The only Redford run was scored when Utych tripled after Curt Montney walked in the sixth inning.



BROTHER AGAINST BROTHER. The Himmelsbach brothers, of Farmington, had a head-on confrontation in a game between Northville and Redford at Livonia's Ford Field with the above result. Observer chief photographer Vince Witke caught



the action as Tony, of Northville, slides into third base while Joe, of Redford, grabs the relay and tries to make the tag. Joe makes a stab at his brother but the picture shows that Tony has hooked the bag well in advance.

Redford Tightens 'A' Lead

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Turf Tips, Quips

By Doc Minard

Harness racing fans throughout Michigan and track operators in every section of the nation will be watching the progress of the Wolverine Raceway meeting, which opens Wednesday at the Detroit Race Course, with more than the usual amount of interest.

Why? Wolverine officials are taking one of the biggest gambles since Northville Downs pioneered night racing with parimutuel betting 27 years ago. It will become the first harness racing plant in Michigan to stage all races over a mile strip.

The change from the half-mile to the mile track was announced several months ago and met with a great deal of enthusiasm on the part of drivers, trainers and owners. But the big question is how will the wagering public accept such a startling shift.

Few, if any Michigan fans, have viewed the pacers and trotters at night on a mile track. Matter of fact only those who have attended the Grand Circuit programs in Springfield, Ill. and Indianapolis, the Hambletonian in Duquoin, Ill. and races at the Big Red Mile track in Lexington, Ky. have seen standardbred racing on the big oval.

Wolverine President Frederick Van Lennep and his associates in Castleton Enterprises have been thinking of a switch to the larger racing strip for several years and finally made the decision.

It was done with the thoughts that many of the better stables prefer to have their horses perform over a mile strip. Owners and drivers of those outfits know from years of experience that pacers and trotters race better over the mile.

They know that their horses stay on form for longer periods of time on the bigger track. The reasons? The half-mile strips force the horses to strain legs on the sharper turns and cause more injuries...the kind that may keep a pacer or trotter inactive for a long period of time.

A PRIME EXAMPLE is Fannie Mite, the state's premier pacing mare owned by Bill Longo, of Farmington, who has better 2:00 a half dozen times in the past two years on a mile track. She started one race at Northville Downs and pulled up lame after trying to make the turns.

Fannie does well on five-eighths tracks but she's at her best on the mile. She could cut quite a figure when the Wolverine races begin and you can bet a bob or two right now that it will take a real speedster to best her in the drive down the long stretch.

Along with the mile track, Wolverine will hold the Big Perfecta, as one of its betting interests. Unlike the Hazel Park runners, where management has vetoed the popular Big P, Wolverine officials have a strong belief that it will build up betting interest...just as it did during DRC meeting.

Wolverine will have 10 races nightly, with daily double

Good Start, No Finish

A fast start...but an unhappy finish...so it was for Redford Township's All Stars in the district Pony League baseball tournament.

Redford got off to a royal beginning by blasting Southgate No. 2, 9-0, and then beating Southgate No. 1, 4-3.

But with the title near at hand, Redford dropped a pair of games to Southgate No. 1, 4-0 and 2-1, in the finals.

As a result, Southgate moves on to the next round of action at Hamtramck.

But the game never became official. With Garden City batting in the fifth and two outs, the rain came down so hard the ump's had to halt the proceedings for the night.

Thus everything that transpired in the game—including the ejection of Berryman—went down the drain.

This Is One Time Rain Makes A Manager Happy

Manager Rick Berryman of Redford's Wonderland Lanes is thankful it rained when it did Wednesday night.

Berryman was doing the pitching for the Lanes against Garden City in a Class A game.

But after each side had scored two runs in the first inning, one of Berryman's players started to argue with an umpire.

As all managers should—and do—Berryman interceded for his player and some pushing took place. The manager finally got ejected.

The regular season concludes with Redford and Detroit ITM, as round winners, expected to engage in a play-off for the overall title.

The Class A winner advances to a district play-off and hopefully to the state and the national ABC tournaments at Battle Creek.

Redford Tightens 'A' Lead

Day by day, Redford Wonderland Lanes is sitting better at the Greater Livonia Class A baseball league.

Redford made it 9-1 for the second round by beating Soper Clark, 3-1, as Bob Smoots turned in a two-hit pitching gem.

He fanned five and walked only one batter as his mates collected six hits off loser Deno Syrios.

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No Practice, But Golfer Gets An Ace

Livonia's Jerry Healy proved that it always doesn't take a massive amount of practice to make perfection.

Healy, of 31526 St. Martins, aceed the 120-yard 16th hole with a nine-iron at Whispering Willows Golf Course.

It was only Healy's second trip to the links this year.

His perfect shot hit the edge of the green on the fly, bounced twice and plunked into the cup.

It was Healy's first ace and only the third hole-in-one recorded at the Livonia municipal course.

The ace gave Healy a 54 for the round.

Livonia All-Stars Crowned E Champs

The Stars, in their second class with Griffin, scored in the first inning when Kevin Palmer singled, stole second and scored on Ken Arnold's single.

In the fourth, the Stars scored three times, Kolb and Ron Vanderlinden singled and Oliver walked to fill the bases.

Lynn McAdam singled in the run and two more came, when Jeff Waterstone and Palmer drew walks.

Waterstone had two doubles and a single, while Phil Skeer singled twice and drove in one run and Arnold had a pair of hits, plus two RBIs, in the Stars' first win in the series.

Boys Hold Softball Tournament

A neighborhood softball tournament organized by play leader Greg Coleman of the Livonia Parks and Recreation department for 14 and 15-year-olds saw the Coolidge team come out on top.

Results: Coolidge over Webster, 2-0; Hoover over Garfield, 4-1; and Grandview over Hilltop in the first round. Coolidge then beat Hoover 7-2 in the semi-finals and went on to beat Grandview 2 to 1 in the finals.

Zornow Aces

Carl Zornow of Plymouth knocked in the second ace of his golfing career Sunday at the Hilltop Golf Club.

Zornow, 55, of 11965 Beck Rd., aceed the 157-yard 13th hole with a seven-iron.

The hole-in-one helped Zornow to a 67 for the round.

His playing partners, who witnessed the ace, were Bob Walters and Charles Griswold, also of Plymouth.

Hilltop was also the scene for Zornow's first ace. He got a hole-in-one there three years ago.

Zornow works at Fisher Body Division's Livonia plant.

Jim Hanaford and Art Wheeler were his playing partners.

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