

# Local star part of baseball goodwill tour

By KEN VOYLES

It was a once in a lifetime possibility and Jim Ross wasn't about to pass it up.

In fact, Ross, a graduate of Livonia Bentley, missed his graduation ceremony and his senior prom for the chance to go to the Philippine Islands. Ross, 13 other American high school baseball players from across the country and three coaches were chosen to represent the United States in the Philippines on a goodwill tour for 2½ weeks. Ross was the only Michigan youth to be selected.

The team left for the islands June 15 after a week of practice in San Francisco, Calif. While in California, the squad lost two of three games against all-star teams. In the Philippines, the contingent won all seven games played.

Ross has no misgivings about missing the rush of graduation activities. "It was the best experience I've ever had in my life. I'm glad I went and I will remember it forever," said Ross. "I'm sorry I missed my graduation, but the trip was great."

Ross played two years of baseball at Bentley and was named to the all-Oakland team by area coaches this season. He was a mainstay on the

bulldog pitching staff and reared a 163 mark during his two varsity seasons. His batting average this year was .407.

During the tour, he played outfield because the squad already had four pitchers.

The games themselves were anti-climactic in view of the overall trip, said Ross.

The Philippine squads such as Far Eastern University, Cavite and Calubang were no match for the American unit, which won by such scores as 12-1, 13-1 and 10-1. However, twice the team came close to defeat and just slipped by its opponent, 3-1.

The weather was a major factor during the visit to the islands. It rained every other day and the humidity took its toll on the Americans' performance. "We got used to it after three or four days," Ross said.

"The weather was so bad a number of times that it was hard for us to even jog out onto the field to play. The games themselves were normal baseball games," continued Ross. "The games were really not as important as the trip itself."

"We got to tour by ourselves and walk around Manila where we played most of our games. I think everybody on the team had a good time."

"We saw some of the country when we went away from the city to play but most of the time we stayed in Manila. We were scheduled to play every day, but the rain usually gave us some days off," explained Ross.

The team arrived in the islands after a 23-hour flight to the sounds of bands playing, crowds cheering and reporters galloping about. After the flight, the team was given a day of rest to recover from jet lag before playing its first contest.

"I think the place ride was the biggest part of the trip. That and the city of Manila itself. We got to know the city really well."

"On days when we didn't play, we would walk around the city and get to know as much of the area as possible. We had a fairly free reign of the city," Ross said.

Ross mentioned the presidential palace, the congressional building and the American Embassy as sights that impressed a great deal.

Ross, who has played baseball for nine years, was chosen for the team in February. He accepted and then started to raise \$1,000 which was needed to make the journey.

He combined money that he had in the bank, some money from his parents and money from the Livonia

Optimist Club to obtain the cash.

"Some of the players were chosen because they went to a baseball camp in Florida. Others were recommended by various coaches. I had attended the camp last year," said Ross. "I was very surprised, though, when I received the letter. It was an experience that I really didn't want to miss."

## Farmington splits weekend games

Farmington's American Legion League baseball team started off last weekend well, defeating league-leaders Royal Oak Friday night and Novi on Saturday. But they collapsed on Sunday, dropping a pair of games to Auburn Heights.

It took a big comeback in the last of the seventh inning to beat Royal Oak. With one out in the seventh, and trailing Royal Oak 2-0, Tim O'Malley walked and Billy Lehman followed with a single. Rob Silverstein also drew a walk, loading the bases. The next player fanned, but Marty Bona came through with a base hit, cutting the Royal Oak lead to 2-1. Bill Philip then delivered a clutch hit, driving in

two runs and giving Farmington the victory, 3-2. Kevin Delp was the winning pitcher as he went the distance, surrendering six hits and one walk, while striking out three. Philip had two hits to go with his two runs batted in. Delp also contributed two hits.

Steve Zerito put in a strong pitching performance on Saturday, as Farmington defeated Novi, 4-1. Zerito gave up just three hits and two walks, while fanning seven Novi batters. Farmington got on the board in the first inning as O'Malley tripled. Tom Blakeslee walked, and Delp grounded out, bringing in O'Malley with the first run of the game.

Mark MacDonald hit his third home

run of the year in the second to put Farmington in front, 2-0.

Ross is now looking forward to playing baseball at a major university. He plays for two summer teams, Burger King and Crowe in the Connie Mack and Adray Leagues.

"I'd like to make baseball my life if I think I can do my best, and be good at it," concluded Ross, who will turn 18 in late November.

Fortune turned against Farmington on Sunday, as it lost two, 5-3 and 13-8. Craig Misch took the loss in the first game, giving up four runs, three of which were unearned. Marty Bona's three-run homer in the sixth accounted for all of Farmington's runs.

In the second game, Auburn Heights scored 12 runs in the first inning and coasted from there. Marty Kelly took the loss. Philip, Bruce Hulscher and Dave Schultz each had two hits and two RBIs.

### NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED BUDGET

Oakland County Community Mental Health Services Board For Fiscal Year 1978-79

In accordance with the Michigan Mental Health Code, Sec. 226 (d), the Oakland County Community Mental Health Services Board will hold a public hearing on its proposed budget request for the fiscal year beginning October 1 next, for submission to the Michigan Department of Mental Health.

This hearing will take place on Friday, August 4, 1978, at 2:00 P.M., the next regular meeting of the Board, and will be held in Committee Room A of the Board of Commissioners Office, Oakland County Service Center, 1200 N. Telegraph, Pontiac. A copy of the proposed budget request will be available at the administrative offices of the Board, 1200 N. Telegraph, Pontiac, for public inspection during regular business hours.

Publish: July 13, 1978

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