

Prep baseball players prepare for season

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record and the fifth-place finish in the Inter Lakes League.

Farmington has five experienced players back, including catcher Dave Hall (357 last year) and outfielder Dave Schultz (500 in 10 games). Both are seniors.

Senior John Dunn, a left-handed pitcher, compiled a 2-4 record with low earned run average last year. "He didn't have much luck," Swystun said. "He was doing the job, but we didn't play our best games when he was pitching."

SWYSTUN HAS three other pitching prospects in the Bruce brothers, senior Brian and junior Jamie, and junior Jim Whitworth, who hit .440 on the junior varsity last year.

Senior infielders Tom Heenan and Steve Rutkowski have some experience. Junior Steve Downey, who didn't play last year, is after the catcher's spot, and junior Duane Rupp can pitch and play third base.

Sophomore infielders Greg Koinis and Joe Hamilton may find themselves in the starting lineup early in the season. "I'm going to start them because I have 10 guys in Florida right now,"

Swystun said. "Besides, Greg and Joe have been looking good."

Farmington begins its ILL season on April 18 at home against Walled Lake Central. Waterford Township and Livonia Stevenson share the ILL baseball crown.

Swystun, who teaches drafting at Harrison High, has coached junior varsity baseball at Harrison and Farmington before taking over as head coach at the start of last season.

Harrison coach John Herrington did some switching last season, giving some underclassmen a chance to play.

Now he hopes their experience will help the Hawks better their 7-12 overall record and their third-place finish in the Western Six League.

That record is deceptive — Harrison lost six games by one run.

"THIS COULD be one of the best teams we've ever had," Herrington said. "Hopefully, with our experienced players, we can turn around some of those one-run games."

Herrington's pitching crew consists of seniors Mike Tetreault, Kurt Parry

and Bryce Morrison, and junior John Recker. All can play other positions when not pitching, and Morrison could end up as the team's catcher.

Senior third baseman Pete Tompson "shows good power," according to Herrington. Dale Sklar, a junior right fielder, hit .590 last year. Other prospects are Jerry Salasino, Mark Alcantara, Art Hancan and Jim Macielak.

"Our pitching and our infield will be strong this year," Herrington said. "One problem is that we have no experienced catcher. We've converted infielders, Macielak and Morrison, and

they've been looking good."

Harrison's diamond is "the best it's ever been," according to Herrington.

"The spent a lot of money and worked a lot on it last summer," he said. "They had dozers in there and graded it. I know we have good drainage now because the water's not sitting on it like in past years."

Harrison travels to Northville High on April 23 to begin the Western Six League season. Livonia Churchill won the WSL crown last year, and Plymouth Canton was second.



Mike Kourtakis warms up at Harrison High. (Staff photo by Randy Horst)

Marathon moves back to area

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Founder's Festival, John won the 15,000-meter run and Ed was first in the 10,000-meter.

And last Sept. 9, the brothers finished in a virtual tie for first in the fifth annual three-mile cross country race at Marshbank Park in West Bloomfield. Both came in 20 seconds ahead of their nearest competitor.

BOTH JOHN AND ED took up running while attending West Bloomfield High School under the tutelage of Lee Averill, the Laker cross country and track coach.

"I took it up in high school and right

away my brother — he was in ninth grade — had to get into it, too," John said. Both were stalwarts on Averill's track and cross country teams and Ed became the only state championship track winner under Averill by winning the Class A mile run in 1974 in 4:15.7, a school record.

Both John and Ed have been running ever since. Ed earned a scholarship at Eastern Michigan University when he graduated in 1974. John earned a letter at the University of Michigan for the six-mile run.

John is the more experienced of the two in the longer marathon events, having raced in about 15 of them to

Ed's three or four.

Both have raced in the prestigious Boston Marathon, which this year is the day after the West Bloomfield race. John's best finish at Boston came in 1976, when he placed 50th with a time of two hours, 35 minutes. "It was one of my better runs," the elder Grabowski said.

Both are presently in training for the marathon on Sunday. They run about 10 miles a day.

"That means if we run 20 miles one day, we can take the next day off," John joked. Days off from training are seldom for the Grabowskis — maybe one day of rest a week.

THE YOUNGEST GRABOWSKI, Tom, is currently on the West Bloomfield track team and, like his brothers, is being coached by Averill.

"He's consistent," John said of his former coach. "Do what he tells you, and you'll do all right."

So far, the Grabowskis have been doing more than just all right.

Entries for the West Bloomfield marathon are due today at 5 p.m. Entry fee is \$5. Forms are available at the Parks and Recreation office, 3325 Middlebelt in West Bloomfield.

Additional information may be obtained by calling the P&R at 334-5660.

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