

Ouch!

Athens downed in regional play

By Jim Hughes
staff writer

The winningest baseball team in the eight-year history of Troy Athens High School had its vision of a Class A Regional championship shattered Saturday as Utica Ford came away with a 6-4 win at Royal Oak's Memorial Park.

The Red Hawks, winners of the Kinnard, a week earlier, fell victim to three unearned runs in the third inning and left 14 runners on base through seven innings.

The loss left the Red Hawks with an 18-10 record, which set a school baseball record for most wins in a season.

"It was a very successful season," Athens coach Glenn Baird said. "We won a district, which is the first for a Troy baseball team, and we started out 10-0. It was just a very enjoyable year."

"OF COURSE, we'd still like to be playing, but we didn't get any breaks in a state tournament, or any tournament for that matter, you have to get some breaks, and we didn't."

Athens ended the game with the tying runs on base. Phil Shaler drove a ball to deep right field, and the running catcher, Utica Ford fielder, accounted for the final out of the game.

"The kid made a nice running catch," Baird said. "If that ball drops in, we win the ball game. He just made a nice play on a well-hit ball."

Scott Watson, who was victimized for three unearned runs, was saddled with the loss. He pitched all seven innings, allowed 10 hits, walked one and fanned three. Watson finished the season with an 8-1 record and a 1.21 earned run average.

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IN THE FOURTH, Shaler walked, stole second and third, and tried to make it a clean sweep with a theft at home. According to Baird, Shaler was called out at the plate, even though the Ford catcher dropped the ball on the attempted put out.

"It was a disputed play," Baird said. "The catcher dropped the ball, but the umpire called Phil out."

After Ford scored one in the fifth, the Red Hawks scored one in the bottom of the eighth. Kirk Lawitzke, Fraizer and Watson each singled to account for the final out of the game.

Ford scored single runs in the sixth and seventh inning before the Red Hawks bottom-of-the-seventh-inning rally fell short.

Lawitzke singled, and Scott Boland and John Watson walked to start the inning. John Merama hit into a fielder's choice (with the put out at third base) which scored Lawitzke. Following a stolen base, Boland made a bid to the Red Hawks into the final, and a 1.21 earned run average.

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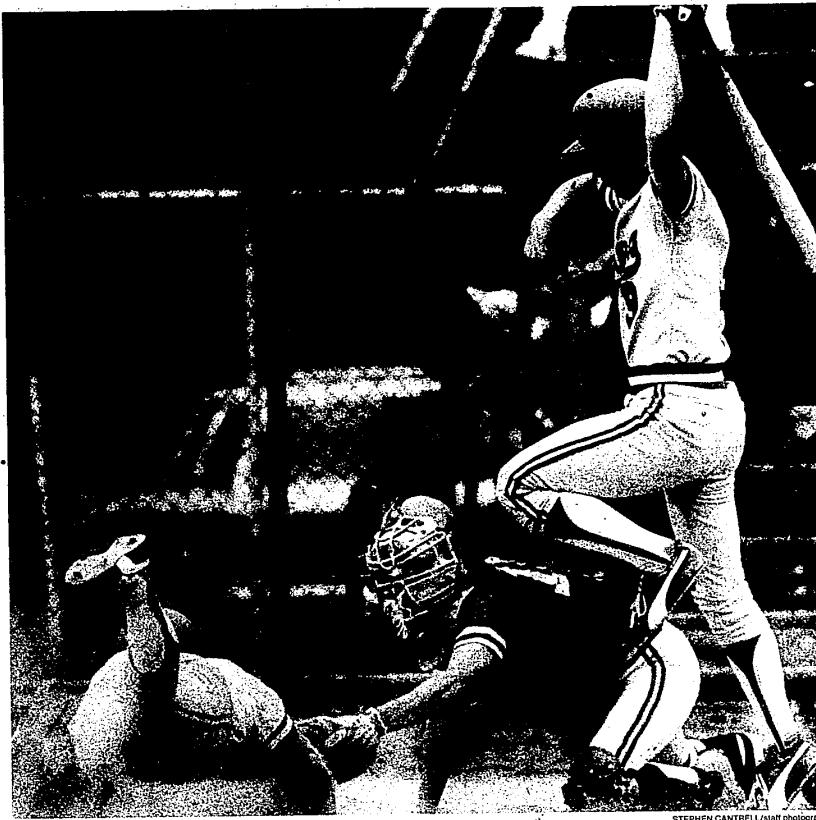
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STEPHEN CANTRELL/Staff photographer

Athens baserunner Phil Shaler attempts to steal home against Utica Ford catcher Bill Brandon while teammate Chris Zinty looks on. Shaler was called out on a disputed play at the plate. Athens' frustration were compounded as Ford won the regional semifinal game, 6-4.

Area recreation softball standings

FARMINGTON HILLS PARKS & RECREATION SOFTBALL STANDINGS

Women's Industrial A

Recent Results

McFrock's Saloon

Dunleavy's

J.E.E. Transmission

Manufacturer's

Jacques Seafood

J.W. Saloon

Contain Air

Miller Auto-Warren

Bottleheads

Mercury Lounge

Drakehouse

Hill Auto Elec.

Kravy's

Darin Lilly's

Recent Results

Contain Air of Michigan 4, Hill Auto Electric 3;

Joanna's Lounge 15, Kravy's 7; Miller Auto-Warren 5; Drakehouse 10; Bottleheads 11;

Darin Lilly 8.

Recent Results

Footline 18, Dunleavy's Irish Saloon 4; LaPlata's Raiders 6

Mr. Rock 5

Footstop 4

Farm Cycle World 3

Joanna's 10

Roedrumpers 1

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