

Spartans at head of the class

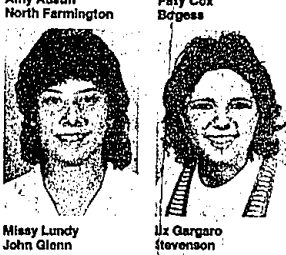
By Chris McCosky
staff writer

OK, YOU'RE the coach of this year's Observerland All-Area football squad. Here's some things you may want to know about your team:

Your two pitchers have a combined win-loss record of 32-8. In 230 innings of work they have struck out 253 batters. Their combined ERA is just over 1.00.

Your catcher is hitting .464, has a cannon arm and is a solid team leader. Your infield has a combined batting average of .407 and a fielding average over .900. You're outfield is hitting .397 and knocking in an average of 23 runs per player.

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Actually, we, the Observer sports staff, have the luxury of selecting the coach for this All-Area team. The coach we select gets to wear the title "Coach of the Year" for 1984.

We listed the nominations — Leo Cagle, Livonia Stevenson; Rob Willette, Plymouth Salem; Joe Epstein, Livonia Franklin; Jerry Abraham, Bishop Borgess; Vic Koss, Westland John Glenn and some others.

ROOS didn't have an overabundance of talent on their football team this season. He had a very young club. The team struggled at first, losing five of its first nine ballgames. Roos kept his team together. They didn't panic.

Suddenly, they reeled off nine straight wins. The Rockets made a strong run in the state tourney. The Rockets swept through the Dearborn district tournament before bowing to Bishop Borgess in the regionals.

The Rockets' 19-8 season is a tribute to the pride of the young team and the patience of Observerland's 1984 Coach of the Year, Vic Koss.

Here's the 1984 All-Area football team:

PITCHERS

Lisa Bokovoy, Livonia Stevenson: The toughest thing to remember about Bokovoy's is that she's only a junior. She is a most dominant player, as her statistics will attest.

The first team all-state choice was 19-2. Her ERA was 0.53. She struck out 161 batters in 131 innings and walked just 19. She buried two no-hitters, five one-out hits and five two-out hits.

Her rising fastball has been clocked at 70 mph. And, she's also tough at the plate. She hit .518 this season with six home runs and 37 RBI.

Nancy Rzepka, Bishop Borgess: Her stats aren't quite as impressive as Bokovoy's, nor is her fastball, but this senior is as fierce a competitor as you'd want on your club.

She was 13-6 with the Spartans, with a 1.90 ERA. She posted 92 strikeouts.

Rzepka, a three-sport standout and honor student, was named Borgess Woman Athlete of the Year — the most prestigious award given to a Borgess athlete.

INFELDERS

Linda Leo Loeffler, Livonia Stevenson: This personable senior is everything a coach could want in a catcher. She hits .464, she fields well (.958 fielding percentage), she throws well (nailing four of the seven runners who dared to steal), and she is a general on the field.

A tribute to the type of competitor Loeffler is, she improved her batting average 130 points since her junior year and her field average 129 points.

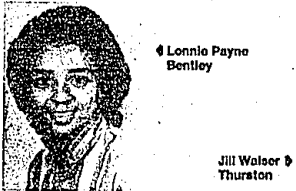
See Sheeran, Redford Union: This senior was a major offensive weapon for the Panthers, hitting .352 with 21 runs scored, and 14 RBI. She was also a solid fielding first baseman with a .953 fielding percentage. She made only one error all season, handling 145 chances.

See Austin, North Farmington: There have been few high school athletes with more raw ability than this senior. She excelled in three sports for the Raiders as well as in the classroom.

The shortstop hit .492 this past season, had three doubles, four triples and two home runs. She knocked in 28 runs, scored 31 more, and stole 13 bases. At shortstop, she made just nine errors in 90 chances (.900).

Her career batting average at North was .405. She struck out just six times in 195 at bats. Austin holds every career offensive record at North Farmington.

"She's the best female athlete ever at North Farmington," said her coach Dennis Mikel. He's not exaggerating.



Lonnie Payne Bentley

Patty Cox, Bishop Borgess: This petite senior gives new meaning to the word shortstop — she's a tiny young woman (short) who stops everything. She is quite a player. She had a .953 fielding percentage making 131 putouts. She also contributed offensively, hitting .312 with 38 walks, an important stat for a leadoff hitter.

"Patty was the finest all-around player on our team," said coach Jerry Abraham. Cox started every game for Borgess the past two seasons.

Missy Lundy, Westland John Glenn: This junior third baseman is the Mike Schmidt of this all-star team. This is our power hitter.

Lundy hit .295 for Vic Koss' team, with nine doubles, two triples, three home runs, and 28 RBI. Twice in two years she has collected two home runs and six RBI in one game.

"Missy was fearless at third base. She fielded the bunt perfectly and had a big 10 arm," Koss said.

OUTFIELD

Lonnie Payne, Livonia Bentley: The last of three talented juniors on this squad, Payne is a punishing hitter. She hit .472. She is also a fleet-footed outfielder with a .941 percentage.

"Lonnie is a team leader," said Bentley coach Bob Dean. "She is the type of player that is always willing to help out the other players whenever she can."

Liz Gargaro, Livonia Stevenson: Another power hitter. This senior ripped five doubles, two triples and four homers for the Spartans while hitting at a .385 clip. She is also a sure-handed outfielder making just two errors all season, both throwing errors.

Gargaro knocked in 29 runs and scored 20. She was a second team all-state selection.

Jill Walser, Redford Thurston: The best way to describe Walser is, she covers center field like a blanket. You will not be productive hitting the ball to center field when this attractive senior is out there.

"She comes to play every game," said coach Ron Loeck. Walser, who is a professional model, batted .333 with four triples and 20 RBI for the Eagles.

ALL-AREA SECOND TEAM

Pitchers: Tracy Luckia (Livonia Franklin) and Kathy Garrett (Westland John Glenn). Catchers: Laurie Day (Livonia Bentley).

First base: Chris Bruce (Redford Thurston). Infield: Karen Denike (Farmington), Tracy Greenwood (Livonia Franklin), and Sue Scott (Farmington Our Lady of Mercy).

Outfield: Kim Rivard (Livonia Ladywood), Carol Klotz (Bishop Borgess), and Jill Phillips (Livonia Franklin). Designated hitter: Denice Tackett (Plymouth Salem).

HONORABLE MENTION

Farmington: Jill Walserman, Michelle Inghis; Bishop Borgess: Janet Ball, Teresa Brown, Karen Cesarz; Ladywood: Kayn Masak, Janet Masak; Bentley: Laura O'Leary, Cheryl Perry, Schmidt, Gail Neel, Beth Compton; Stevenson: Cathy Gage.



Jill Walser Thurston

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