

Hawks blank Vikes

Jason Hicks is considered a key to Farmington Harrison's baseball fortunes this year.

So his strong showing Monday in the season opener was regarded as a good sign for the Hawks, who blanked Wallied Lake Central 8-0 behind Hicks' five-hit pitching.

The senior right-hander struck out 12 batters while working a complete, seven-inning game. Hicks walked only two.

He also was a key to Farmington's 10-hit attack. Hicks had two hits, two RBIs and scored two runs. Leo Devine was another key player with three hits and two runs for the Hawks, who scored five times in the first inning and capitalized on four Viking errors.

CANTON 6, N. FARMINGTON 2: The Chiefs were swinging for the fences and reaching the opposite side Monday.

Kevin Learned and Mike Sulak hit home runs, and three pitchers combined on a seven-hit effort as Canton defeated the Raiders.

North had taken a 2-0 lead in the top of the third inning on Joe Sturtz' two-run homer, but only the Chiefs, 2-0, scored after that, coming from behind with the help of Learned and Sulak.

Learned hit a solo homer for Canton, which led 3-2 after four innings and Sulak, who pitched the last 1½ innings and got a save, hit a two-run shot to make it 6-2 in the sixth.

Canton's nine-hit attack included a 3-for-4 day by Jeff Kugelmann, who

baseball

also knocked in a run. Learned was 2-for-3, and Sturtz and Vaneoy Hill went 2-for-4 for North, 0-2.

"We played a real good game, but they've got a real good team," said Raiders coach Irv Horowitz, whose ballclub had seven hits but left eight men on base. "We got people on, but we couldn't get the key hit."

Brian Paupore started on the mound for the Chiefs, pitched two scoreless innings and held North to two hits.

Chris Kennedy, the eventual winner, went the next 3½ innings during which time Canton fell behind and then rallied successfully. He allowed three hits but walked only one, and he struck out four.

North's Andy Drake started and worked four innings, taking the loss. Rick Rachtner took over for the last two innings.

NORTHVILLE 8, FARMINGTON 3: The Mustangs hit three home runs off Farmington's starting pitcher, sophomore Chris Schmid.

He helped the Falcons take a 3-0 lead in the top of the fourth with a home run of his own that brought in two runs. Teammate Brian Townsley doubled home the third run of the inning.

Northville, 1-1, rallied to tie in the bottom of the fourth, and the Mustangs got a three-run homer and an-

other solo blast during a five-run fifth. Farmington is 1-2.

TEMPLE 8-14, PLY. CHRISTIAN 7-5: The Eagles had 21 hits on the day, but that wasn't enough to prevent Temple Christian of Inkster from sweeping a pair of non-league games Monday.

The visitors went Plymouth Christian Academy one better in each game, collecting 12 and 14 hits to 11 and 10, respectively, for the Eagles. PCA scored five runs in the fourth to wipe out a 4-0 deficit, and the Eagles led 7-6 after five innings. But Temple scored twice in the seventh to win it.

Manish Nandanani was the loser in relief of Kevin Bruler, who worked the first five innings. Nandanani, 1-1, gave up five hits and walked two in two innings.

PCA's Ben Odom was 3-for-4, scored two runs and stole two bases. Scott Cox keyed the Eagle fourth with a two-run double and added an RBI single in the fifth.

Bryan Davies also had a run-producing double, and Jeff Vos was 2-for-3 with two RBIs and two stolen bases.

Temple was in command of the second game after taking a 9-0 lead in the second inning. Jeff Tharp was the starter and loser, giving up five runs in 1½ innings. Vos pitched in relief.

Nandanani was 3-for-3 with one RBI. Mike Pressley and Tharp had two hits apiece, and Vos knocked in two runs with a single and sacrifice fly.



BILL DRESLER/staff photographer

Joe Sturtz is congratulated by teammates at home plate after belting a two-run homer to open the scoring and give North Farmington the initial lead. Canton came back to win 6-2.

Patriot pitcher stars in 4-2 upset of Salem

By Steve Kowalski
staff writer

A year ago, Ed Gruenwald's after-school activity involved washing cars.

This spring, Gruenwald, a senior pitcher at Livonia Franklin, would rather mop up on opposing hitters. He got off to a good start Monday, tossing a four-hitter at visiting Plymouth Salem as the Patriots upset the Rocks, 4-2.

Franklin evened its overall record at 2-2 and Salem fell to 1-1. Both teams are 1-1 in the Western Lakes Activities Association.

Gruenwald played on Franklin's junior varsity team in 1986, but as a junior decided to wash cars part-time. On the mound, he doesn't consider himself an overpowering pitcher. In fact, Gruenwald might have trouble breaking a car's windshield. "I don't have much speed on the

ball," said Gruenwald. "I have a curve ball that drops, a curve that slides to the side and kind of a fast ball. If you want to call it that."

Rocks' hitters, including standout Todd Marion, might have called some of Gruenwald's junk a four-letter word. Marion, who has verbally committed to play next year at the University of Michigan, reached base once in three trips to the plate. Gruenwald struck out seven Salem batters and walked one.

"I WAS SIX feet ahead of the ball," said Marion, who hit the ball on the ground all three appearances. Said Franklin coach Gerry Cullin: "Ed keeps that 'curve' around the plate all day, and the batters will beat it in the ground or pop it up."

Salem starter Fidel Cashero also pitched well, allowing only three hits before leaving with two outs in the sixth inning.

The hard-throwing senior left-

hander struck out 14 batters. But lack of control and poor fielding cost him in the fifth inning, when Franklin scored three runs to take a 3-2 lead.

Cashero walked the first two Franklin batters, Mick Minard and Steve Olson in the fifth. Minard scored the Patriots' first run and Olson advanced to third when Joe Ransley laid down a sacrifice bunt and second baseman Steve Woodard could not handle Cashero's throw to first.

Tim Napier, who had three RBIs, brought home both Olson and Ransley with a line drive single to left field. All told, Franklin manufactured three fifth-inning runs on two walks, two hits, two sacrifice bunts and two Salem errors. Napier

knocked in an insurance run in the sixth, driving home Olson, who had walked.

Salem coach John Gravin compared Cashero's performance to Marion's no-hitter he threw last Friday in a win over Northville.

"I HATED Marion on Friday for doing such a good job and he (Cashero) did an almost comparable job," said Gravin. "Cashero pitched well enough today to beat anyone in the state. We just didn't come to play behind him and that was a shame for this kid. We had some opportunities but nobody stepped to the forefront. Nobody."

Some fielding blunders by Frank-

lin gave Salem a 2-0 lead after 4½ innings.

In the third, Brad Wright, who reached base safely on an error by Minard, scored when he stole third base and the throw from Franklin catcher J.J. Swindall sailed into left field.

Bob Files, who relieved Cashero in the sixth, scored Salem's second run on a wild pitch by Gruenwald.

But it was a case of missed opportunities for Salem, which stranded five runners. Chris Adams and Mike Stout were left in scoring position for the Rocks in the second inning, and Files was stranded on second to end the game.

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— John Gravin
Salem baseball coach

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