

Area coaches comment

The following are opinions and comments by area soccer coaches regarding the elimination of the shootout and decision to allow co-champions in boys and girls state finals:

KEN JOHNSON — SALEM

"I never campaigned to end (the use of the shootout method), but I can understand the reasoning behind it. It's a tough thing for the kids. I guess it's a good thing they dropped it because of the kids. It's a lot of pressure on a young person. If you miss the penalty kick, you remember that for a long time. Whereas, if the team loses it's not so bad (in terms of pressure on any one individual). I often feel for the ones who miss. It's tough for the keeper, too."

Johnson, however, favors playing a pair of 10-minute and five-minute overtimes but all under sudden death, possibly adding more overtimes.

"I have the feeling some team would weaken if they had a few more overtimes," he said. "I'd like to see a winner."

NICK O'SHEA — CHURCHILL

O'Shea doesn't think the shootout is the right way to break a tie, but he doesn't believe merely eliminating the shootout is the answer either.

"I think they should play overtime until the game is decided," he said. "I don't think it would take that long."

He would like to retain the mandatory, 10-minute overtimes but play 15-min-

ute, sudden-death overtimes until a team scores.

"If you'll find more open soccer, too," he said. "If you said you were going to play sudden death from the start, teams can't all back."

DON SMITH — CANTON

"(The shootout) is really hard on the players — and the coach, I know that," said Smith, referring to the way Canton won the '88 championship in Class A. "For kids at that level of play, that's just part of the game. I can't picture two teams being satisfied with a co-championship after working that hard to get there."

"You're winning or losing on one shot, but if you haven't scored by then, that's what it comes down to. These are high school kids, some who are going on to college. For heaven's sake, that's what makes winners and losers."

Smith said sudden death from the start of overtime would be a good alternative to having co-champs.

"I think you are kind of in a lot of trouble, because the play would be so much more intense. I think they would go after it a little harder."

The risk of injury after 110 minutes of play was given as a reason for doing away with the shootout, but Smith and Johnson don't see that as a major problem.

"If you sub as much as I do, it probably wouldn't be a problem," Smith said. "I don't see any injuries this year. I think a lot of teams cut down on the slide-tackling stuff."

State tourney calls for a state champion

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ships for the football finals in November, and basketball teams are not limited to the number of overtimes they can play.

The concern at this point is soccer ties are not as easily broken as in other sports. That leads to the suggested overtime changes, which we will take a look at.

As for contradictions, if the MHSAA is going to have a tournament for the intended purpose of selecting a state champion, it should ensure that is the end result.

For the two teams that reach the final games, it seems a muted reward for three weeks of time, travel and effort (specifically the victories needed to reach that point) to see it all end in a stalemate.

FURTHERMORE, teams will continue to resort to shootouts in early tournament games leading up to the state final. If it's a bad method, then why allow it for those games?

Why a shootout in a regional final, as was the case when eventual champion Nymouth Salem eliminated Kalamazoo Central in '87, and not in the most important game of the entire tournament?

When quizzed on that, Roberts was painfully honest when he said the reason is there is no need to ad-

vance beyond the state final. But the obvious contradiction remains.

Area coaches — Nick O'Shea of Churchill, Don Smith of Canton and Ken Johnson of Salem — favor extending the length of the sudden-death periods and playing until the game is decided or playing all of the overtime under a sudden-death format.

Generally, they believe the increased overtime would eventually produce a winner without overstating the athletes and the idea of sudden death from the start would cause the players to feel a sense of urgency.

From our standpoint, we favor playing all overtime periods under the sudden-death format. The two 10-minute overtimes penalize the team that scores first and allows time to create another deadlock.

FINALLY, AS Roberts said, nothing appears in newspaper will ever result in the MHSAA changing a rule. Only MHSAA members, the schools that make up the organization, can do that.

A rule will only be reviewed if there is sentiment from a member school to have it reviewed," Roberts said.

Hopefully, schools in the Observer & Eccentric area believe a state tournament should be a championship event, also.

NFWB topples pair of unbeaten foes

baseball

Two unbeaten in the North Oakland County Connie Mack Baseball League went up against North Farmington-West Bloomfield last week. After their respective meetings, they were unbeaten no longer.

On Tuesday, NFWB edged Royal Oak Norwood 2-1 in a sparkling pitcher's duel at Royal Oak's Memorial Field. On Thursday it was a near repeat, as again the pitchers were in command and again NFWB prevailed, this time by a 3-1 margin over Southfield-Lathrup at North Farmington.

Both Royal Oak and S-L were 8-0 entering those games; NFWB fin-

ished the week with a 10-2 league mark.

AGAINST S-L, NFWB trailed 1-0 entering the bottom of the fifth. Jay Marcoux started off a two-run rally with a single and went to third on Todd Kaluzny's single. Kaluzny stole second, then both runners advanced on Bob Fekete's squeeze bunt. Marcoux scoring, Kaluzny came home on

Rick Rachner's sacrifice fly.

In the sixth, NFWB added a run when Derek DiPaola walked, stole second, went to third on a fielder's choice and scored after getting caught in a rundown when the S-L catcher was called for interference.

Señi Petty ran his pitching record to 3-0 with a four-hitter. He struck out three and walked two.

ON TUESDAY against Royal Oak, NFWB again scored twice in the fifth to eke out the victory. Both pitchers hurled two hitters. Rachner (3-1) got the win for NFWB, striking out five and walking four, allowing one unearned run.

The game was scoreless until the fifth. Indeed, NFWB was hitless until Brian Miller started the inning with a double. Greg Orman followed with a single that scored Miller, with Orman taking second on the throw to the plate. Petty then reached base on an error, putting runners on first and third.

On Petty's attempt to steal second, the catcher threw the ball into center field, allowing Orman to score. Royal Oak scored its only run in the bottom of the fifth, without the aid of a hit.

NFWB plays at Clawson Tuesday and at Wayne Ford Wednesday.

Re/Max posts upset

Livonia Re/Max pulled off the unexpected when it upset previously unbeaten North Farmington-West Bloomfield 5-2 in Little Caesars Connie Mack baseball Tuesday.

Re/Max, 4-6, got a complete game from winning pitcher John Jensen, who held the first-place team in check.

Steve Owens knocked in two runs, including the game-winner, and Jeff Mispoulpolis tripled and scored on a hit by Dave Chisholm.

Brian Wisniewski and Mike Weiss had two hits apiece. Defensively, center fielder Chris Day gunned down the potential tying run in the sixth inning.

South Farmington became the league leader, with a 10-0 record, after beating Re/Max 9-2 on Thursday. NF-WB was 9-1 going into Thursday's action.

S. FARMINGTON 13, NORTHVILLE 3: Rob MacDonald went 2-for-4 and collected six RBI Tuesday, while Mike Dorocak, 2-0, pitched a complete game for South.

MacDonald's two-run single in the third inning helped increase the lead to 7-3. His grand slam keyed a six-run fifth that put the game out of reach. Joe Jentzer went 3-for-4 for the winners with two RBI. His sacrifice fly knocked in Jason Lichtman with the winning run in the second inning.

Dorocak gave up three hits in the first inning, in which Northville scored all three of its runs, but he held the opposition to two rest of the way. Dorocak struck out six and walked two.

S. FARMINGTON 11, DET. RENAISSANCE 2: South got outstanding pitching from Joe Whitefoot and Leo Devine, MacDonald and Jentzer were the hitting heroes on Saturday, June 25.

Whitefoot turned in a complete game, five-hitter to boost his record to 2-0. His masterful performance included seven strikeouts and one walk.

Devine was 3-for-4 with two RBI, including a solo homer, and MacDonald, who was 2-for-4 again, belted a three-run homer to break the game open in the fourth inning.

South scored five runs in the fourth and increased its lead to 9-1. Jentzer was 2-for-3, both hits being RBI singles.

Coach Dave Turquist noted the outfield of Scott Wladischkin (center), Bill Bortera (right) and Brian Townsley (left) did a good job of handling fly balls under extremely windy conditions that accompanied the day's 104-degree temperature.

Mantle club soars

baseball

South Farmington's Mickey Mantle baseball team returned from its tournament trip to Wisconsin a rejuvenated ballclub.

After reaching the quarterfinals of the Stars of Tomorrow tournament in LaCrosse, Wis., on June 24-25, South destroyed two league opponents in games played early last week.

Farmington dropped a 20-2 bomb on Allen Park on Tuesday, a victory that followed a 17-3 thrashing of Redford on Monday.

Kevin Young was 4-for-5 and drove in five runs against Allen Park. He had two doubles, one that accounted for two RBI, and a bases-loaded triple.

With South pounding out 22 hits, Dave Miracle was 3-for-4, Joey Venturini 3-for-5 and James Alexander 3-for-3.

MIRACLE HIT a two-run homer and had a three-base hit, Alexander drove in one run on each of his hits. In addition, Ben Underwood and John Benninger went 2-for-3 with one RBI apiece, and P.J. Green batted 2-for-4.

Starting pitcher Paul Pirronello earned the victory, going three

scoreless innings and allowing only two hits. He struck out four and walked one.

Chris Schmidt worked the next three innings, and Young finished up in the seventh.

Underwood pitched a four-hitter for six innings against Redford. He had one strikeout and issued four walks while getting the win. Eric Miller struck out two batters in the last inning.

Young was a key hitter in that game, too, knocking in four runs on two hits. He delivered a two-run single and followed that with a two-run double.

SCOTT LAKATOS belted a two-run homer and Pirronello a two-RBI double. Alexander was 3-for-4 and had one RBI, and Venturini, who was 2-for-3, drove in two runs with a sacrifice fly and a double.

South, which collected 14 hits in Monday's game, had a 12-3 record after beating Allen Park.

LC's Looney lassoes collegiate foe

Steve Looney went 3-for-4, collecting a homer, double and single in leading Little Caesar's to a 10-4 victory Wednesday over Walter's Appliance in a Livonia Collegiate Baseball League game at Ford Field.

Caesar's, the league leaders with a 14-3 record, took advantage of five Walter's errors.

Art George, a Redford Thurston High product now playing at the University of Evansville, added a solo homer in the first inning.

Looney then followed with a solo blast in the second.

Caesar's then broke the game wide open with five runs in the top of the fourth to take a 9-0 lead before coasting home.

Walter's starter Joe Mackiewicz, who worked 3½ innings, suffered his first loss in four decisions. (The loss drops Walter's into a fourth place tie with Wendy's of Ann Arbor at 8-9 each.)

Steve Witt, with relief help from Rob Jamula, was the winning pitcher.

TOM HOLZER FORD (11-6) of Northville squeaked out a 5-4 victory over winless South Lyon Londo in the first game of a double-header Wednesday at Ford Field.

Paul Newitt's over-the-shoulder catch at the fence secured the victory for Holzer.

Offensively, Rick Tavormina and Kevin Ritter each collected two hits for the winners. Andy Fairman clubbed a solo homer with Ritter, Scott Peterson and Keith Dukiewicz each knocking in runs.

Hillsdale College's Chris Willerer, who worked seven innings, was the winning pitcher. He struck out seven, walked two and allowed just three hits as Holzer remained in second place, three games behind Caesar's.

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