Titans look to clinch conference crown at Xavier

Just 3½ weeks ago, the reason seemed mired in mediocrity— again — for University of Detroit's haseball team.

seemed mired in mediocrity egain – for University of Detroil's baseball team.

The Titans have always seemed to be pretty good, but never quite good cough. They were \$1.24 last year down to be pretty good, but never quite good to the property of the prop

"It thought we might come on right then."
Miller is a noted optimist, but his feelings proved accurate. From that weekend in Notre Dame until Tresday's double-header split with Michlegan State at U-D, the Titans were 13-— including a 12-2 MCO record that all but wrapped up first place in the MCC's Eastern Division. One win in U-D's final four games at Xavier this weekend, or a Notre Dame loss, clinches the title.
The Titans must still survive the MCC tournament, which begins Wednesday in South Bend, to get into the NCAA tournament. But that coo-

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ildence Miller could sense 31% weeks age has US Diffug high, making been as olde-on fevorite in the double of the country of t

It doesn't surprise me. 1 aiwaya me. that confidence."

PAT MILLER is another surprise, eithough the junior righthander from Redford Union (he's one of five RU grads on U-D's team) had other motivational sources. For one, he happens to be the coach's son. Pat was bothered by a sore elbow his entire sophomore season. His best pitch is a sinking fastball, but the soreness had reduced it to 79-81

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BUT EVEN the contributions from unexpected sources like Wujczyk and Pat Miller isn't the whole story. Of the team's top seven hitters, four are sophomores and one

inteers, four are sonomores and one is a freshman.

Among that group are starting shortstop Rick Tavormina, from Westland John Glenn (365, six doubles, two triples, 12 RBB; starting catcher Mike Stefanski, from RU (360, six doubles, one triple, 17 RBB;

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mph. And as his fastball slowed, his record swooned. He was 3-2 last year with a 7.13 earned run average, after going 3-1 with a 4.61 ERA as a freshman. Sullivan, from Livoula Churchill (288, five doubles, one triple, two homers, 24 RBI). All three are sophoyear with a 7.13 earned run average, after going 3-1 with a 4.81 ERA as a freshman.

His mount failures combined with his status as the coach's son to make the season miscrable. He had surface the season miscrable and the season miscrable and the season miscrable and the season manuface and spurs were removed. He didn't play at all last summer, and his status for this season was questionable.

Except to his father/coach. "He told me, For us to have a good year, you have to help us," Pat said. "There was a lot of pressure. I had to prove myself that I wasn't on the team just because of my dad. I didn't think (my teammates) accepted me. "That was the hardest thing, provided the season of the team in wins. He has a 5-1 record with a 3-40 ERA, and his fast-ball is back up in the 5-8-8 mph range.

BUT EVEN the contributions

mores.
There's more, Senior leithanded

outh Canton, is 4-1 with a 4.40 ERA; sophomore lefthanded pltcher Doug Fitzer, from Farmington Hills (and Birmingham Brother Rice), is 2-5 with a 4.11 ERA; and junior second

was hitting .287 with six doubles, a triple, a home and 25 RBI before going down with a severe knee inju-ry suffered against Notre Dame last weekend.



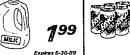


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