

# Paluk brothers: 2-of-kind Cards

By STEVE KOWALSKI  
STAFF WRITER

Saginaw Valley State University baseball coach Walt Head retreated to the dugout as rain pelted the Oakland University field, delaying the start of a double-header against the Pioneers.

Head, who was seeking shelter, got bombarded by questions about his brother tandem of Jeff and Brian Paluk.

"It looks like I might have all day to talk," said Head, starting into a steady rain April 24.

When it comes to the Paluks, coaches need time to talk — whether they are referring to success in athletics, the classroom or the kitchen.

As boys, they learned to love baseball following their father to Tiger Stadium, where he was an usher.

Today, they are a winning combination as pitchers and as roommates at the SVSU campus.

Jeff, a 6-foot-4, 210-pound senior, right-hander from Plymouth Salem, is one of the Cardinals' most counted-on veterans.

Jeff won the "Coaches Award" in 1993, going 6-5 with four complete games in 11 starts. He is 10-9 in his career with 99 strikeouts and by season's end could join SVSU's 100 career list for wins and strikeouts.

He even batted once in a Cardinals uniform.

"We usually head 16-3 one time and need one out to end the game, so they asked me to hit," he said.

The seventh inning brought bad luck for North Farmington as the baseball and softball teams succumbed to late rallies by Walled Lake Central Monday.

The Raiders had just scored four times in the top of the sixth to take the lead, 6-6, in baseball.

Two of North's six errors helped the Vikings get two more in their last at-bat.

A wild throw on a pickoff attempt allowed the tying run to score, and Chris Turner singled home the winning run.

"It's just disappointing," North coach Jrv Horwitz said. "It was their game, and we came back. We just can't put people away. A few errors cost us."

The loss meant Mark Lee's grand slam in the sixth inning went for naught. After base hits by Mike Feld and Joey Danilewicz and a walk to Jeff Light, Lee parked a one-out pitch over the left-field fence to put the Raiders on top.

Danilewicz had three hits, and Scott Lord's two hits included a solo homer.

Don Packard had a pair of doubles and scored the winning run for Central.

Paulin succeeds in softball, also

By C.J. RIBAK  
STAFF WRITER

Just six months ago, no one — including Mo Paulin herself — could have envisioned this.

Why would she? Paulin was a major part of Madonna University's volleyball team, a starter on a squad that eventually reached the quarterfinals at the NAIA Tournament.

Becoming a two-sport star wasn't part of her plan.

But then her volleyball coach, Jerry Abraham, accepted the vacant softball coach's position and started recruiting from within the university.

He had only look to his volleyball team to find Paulin, a stand-out pitcher at Farmington Hills Mercy High School.

She had never seriously considered playing softball at Madonna despite her success in the sport at Mercy. If not for Abraham, she wouldn't have.

"The Livonia junior has found it enjoyable and has filled a need at first base nicely. She's batting .438 with four doubles, two triples, a home run and 21 RBI.

"All this after not playing for two years. Not that it's been easy. The biggest adjustment: 'Batting against quicker pitchers; everything seems a lot quicker,' she said.

Paulin has adapted, and the team has benefited. The Lady Crusaders are 51-7 and go into the district playoffs as the No. 1 seed.

"That has made Paulin's decision on playing softball her senior year easier.

"I'm definitely coming back. If my schedule allows it," said the genetics and nutrition major.

said. "I grounded out to the pitcher."

Brian, 6-6 and 215 pounds, is a freshman from Redford Catholic Central who turned down a baseball scholarship to Western Michigan University to play basketball and baseball at Saginaw Valley.

The more heralded of the two Paluks, Brian was drafted in the 51st round of the 1993 Major League baseball draft by the Kansas City Royals.

As for being roommates, each points to the other when asked who is the sloppiest.

"Brian never cleans the bathroom," Jeff said.

"Jeff leaves all his stuff in the family room," Brian said.

But as different as their biographies and cleaning habits are, the pair share one similarity: huge appetites.

"They are champion eaters," Head said. "If they pitched like they eat, they'd go right to the big leagues, without college."

Not that he's complaining. Jeff is 2-2 with 30 strikeouts in 36.7 innings pitched this season. Brian is 3-1 as both a starter and reliever with a 2.63 earned run average.

They have helped the Cardinals to a 28-10 overall record.

The Paluks' parents, Mike and Laura, attended each of Brian's home basketball games and try to make it each time one is pitching. Of course, they stop at the grocery store first.



GUY WARDEN/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

**Brothers act:** The Paluk brothers, Jeff (left) and Brian, are roommates at Saginaw Valley and teammates on the baseball team.

"We have this big chest freezer," Jeff said. "We couldn't do without it, especially when mom and dad bring up eight or nine loaves of bread."

Brian turned 18 last October and still doesn't have to worry about his weight but the eating got Jeff into some trouble this year, ballooning to 225.

"I had to cut down around Christmas and eat a couple of salads," said Jeff, who will graduate next year with a degree in management.

Brian had a 3.6 grade point average his first semester, despite having to balance basketball and

baseball in his free time.

He shot 61.4 percent from the field, averaged 4.8 points and 4.0 rebounds and was nominated for freshman of the year in the GLI-AC. This despite sometimes having to work on his pitching with the baseball team after finishing basketball practice.

"Both are mentally tough, tougher than their mother," Laura Paluk said. "I'd walk to the end of the earth for them but sometimes I wished they'd play other positions. Sometimes I'll be sitting in the bleachers saying novenas, with my head in my lap."

and 3-5 overall.

## BASEBALL

Lee pitched 5 1/2 innings, allowing five runs on four hits. Darin Glasner struck out the last batter in the sixth and took the loss.

The Raiders are 1-4 in the Lakes Division and 2-7 overall.

**NORTHVILLE 8, HARRISON 3:** The visiting Mustangs got to Harrison starter Ed Kennedy for three early runs and never trailed Monday.

Kennedy, who allowed three hits and five walks, pitched to four batters in the second before Dave Hensel entered in relief.

Hensel blanked Northville until giving up a two-run homer in the seventh that gave the Mustangs a 5-2 lead.

"He's really a short relief man, and he had to play long today," Harrison coach John Harrington said.

Jake Lawson and Kennedy hit solo homers in the sixth and seventh innings for the Hawks, 4-1 in the Western Division.

**GLENN 7, FARMINGTON 0:** Senior right-hander Bryan Morrison pitched a complete game for the Rockets, who snapped a two-game losing streak. He allowed five hits but walked none.

Farmington starter Mike Williams worked three innings but had to leave the game after being hit on his pitching hand while batting.

Bryan Besco and Jake Henry hit two-run singles for the Rockets, 3-1 in the Lakes Division and 6-3 overall.

Farmington's Nick Letra and Dale Dumas had two hits apiece. The Falcons are 1-3 in the Lakes.

**LUTHER WESTLAND 2-4, CYRIL 1-6:** Host Livonia Clarenceville and Lutheran High Westland split a Metro Conference twin bill Monday.

Steve Falch pitched a four-hitter, striking out four and walking three in going the distance as Lutheran High won the opener, 2-1.

Marty Hodge had the game-winning RBI double in the fifth.

Mark Juncal's two-out RBI single scored Bryan DeCaire for Clarenceville's lone run.

Steve Parks, who went 2-for-4 and allowed only four hits over six innings, was the losing pitcher.

Clarenceville won the nightcap as Kyle McSorley's two-out single scored Juncal with the game-winning run in the sixth.

Juncal (2-3), who pitched the final three innings, picked up the victory. He allowed just one unearned run and struck out five.

All Nehalem led Clarenceville with three hits, while Juncal added two.

**REDFORD CC 2, G.P. SOUTH 2:** Redford Catholic Central upped its overall record to 9-3 with a non-league victory Tuesday at Gross Pointe South.

Senior catcher Juan Sanchez paced the victors, clubbing a two-run homer in a 3-for-3 performance. Brad Rainko added an RBI single.

Dave Susalich and Chris Misalich each added two hits for the Shamrocks.

Winning pitcher Dave Kapke scattered seven hits over seven innings. He struck out four and did not walk a batter.

# Mercy pitchers spark DH sweep

Farmington Hills Mercy had a pair of superb pitching performances Monday and swept a softball doubleheader from visiting Madison Heights Bishop Foley, 6-2 and 11-1.

Debbie Drickian struck out eight and didn't allow a walk while scattering five hits in the opener.

The Marliners never trailed after taking a 3-0 lead in the first inning. Kathy Mistravich, Glenda Lee and Heidi Wahl had two hits and one RBI each.

Heather Jonna also tossed a five-hit victory in the nightcap, striking out seven and issuing just one walk.

Eric White led the 12-hit Mercy attack in the five-inning mercy, going 3-for-4. Wiehe and Lee (two hits) had two RBI apiece.

The Marliners are 7-7 overall.

**HARRISON 9, LAKEVILLE 1:** The Hawks looked the right-run mercy rule after five innings Saturday in tournament play at Oxford.

Amanda Ault fueled a six-run fourth with a grand slam, which was followed by a Jenny Mylinski solo homer.

Amy Geary, Becky Mack and Kelly LaCourse had two hits apiece. Mylinski had two RBI, Stephanie Schwalm and Mack one each.

Eric LaCourse continues to give the Hawks excellent pitching. She tossed a one-hitter, striking out nine and walking two. That put her record at 6-3.

On Sunday, Harrison played well but lost 6-0 to Orionville-Brandon, the No. 1-ranked team in Class B, and defeated Linden 7-1.

"They're as fine a softball team as I've ever seen," said Harrison coach Mike Teachman of O-B (10-0).

The Hawks had only two hits but a half-dozen other well-hit balls, according to Teachman. The Blackhaws had six hits, but only two left the infield. O-B employs a running game, and its other hits were bunt singles.

"Their first two batters are left-handed, and they either slap or drag all the time," Teachman said.

Sure Michael and Goodman both had three hits for Marian and Bussas helped her cause with two hits. Rebecca Gosner had two hits for Adams.

The nightcap ended in the top of the fifth after the Highlanders scored six runs in the fourth. Michaeli had three hits, Ellen Kozlowski and Re Gafadalo two each for Marian.

## SOFTBALL

Kristen Kenlar's three-run homer was the big hit for Harrison (6-4). Schwalm had two hits again as did Ault, Mylinski and Kathy Schneider. Amy Geary had two RBI.

The Hawks were supposed to play Monday at Northville, but the game had to be postponed when the umpires failed to show.

**CENTRAL 10, NORTH 6:** Walled Lake Central scored five runs in the top of the seventh inning Monday to steal a victory from host North Farmington.

The Raiders led 5-0 after four innings, but the Vikings tied with a five-run fifth. North got a single run in the sixth to retake the lead.

Amy Kaiman went 3-for-4 for the Raiders, and Allison Stein, who started the game with a solo homer, had two hits and two RBI.

Renee Dolak reached base once with a hit, was hit twice by pitches and scored a pair of runs. Renee Ouellette and Becky Thurman had one RBI apiece.

Michael Chorney was the losing pitcher, allowing eight hits and four walks. North is 2-2 in the Lakes Division and 5-8 overall.

**GLENN 21, FARMINGTON 6:** The visiting Rockets had 22 hits and turned a 6-0 lead into a rout with 12 runs in the fourth inning. The game ended in a mercy rule.

Lynn Little was the winning pitcher and helped her cause by going 4-for-5 with two RBI. Jami Grifal had three hits and six RBI.

Farmington is 0-4 in the Lakes Division and 1-7 overall. Glenn 2-2 and 8-6.

**MARIAN 7-2, ADAMS 3-12:** A rally and the mercy rule decided the games Tuesday between Birmingham Marian and Rochester Adams. Marian is 9-10, Adams 12-2.

In the opener, Marian came back from a 3-0 deficit after giving up three runs in the bottom of the first inning.

With the contest tied 3-3 in the top of the sixth, the Mustangs came up with four runs to pull ahead. Cathie Goodman's two-run double was the key hit.

Winning pitcher Erin Bussas benefited from Marian's 14-hit attack. She allowed five hits in a complete-game performance, four in the first inning.

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