

Falcons give Panthers a battle before going down

By STEVE KOWALSKI
STAFF WRITER

Farmington High senior left-hander Mike Williams did all he could in a 4-3 eighth-inning loss Saturday to Redford Union in a Class A district semifinal baseball game at RU.

Williams held strong hitting RU to three runs on four hits through seven innings.

Even more unexpectedly, the right-hitting Williams hit a two-run home run over the left-center field fence in the fifth inning off the Panthers' junior pitching ace, Brian Berryman.

"He's got power, and I got it up where he likes them," said Berryman.

But with RU ahead 3-2 and Williams due to lead off against Berryman in the bottom of the seventh, Farmington coach Kevin Kamsman called for Ron Salomonson to pinch-hit.

It was the best move of the day.

Salomonson, who sat the first 6 1/2 innings because of missing practice on Wednesday, led off with a single and scored the eventual tying run on Jake Sikosky's sacrifice fly.

"Mike is hitting .170 something and we had the chance to have our best hitter at the plate," Kamsman said. "Who would you rather lead off? Mike or Ron?"

The Panthers persevered, however, scoring the game-winning

run off Salomonson in the eighth on an infield error. Salomonson struck out the first batter he faced and RU sophomore Billy Morris also fanned but reached first base when the third strike ended up at the backstop.

Morris went to third base on Jason Mitchell's single and scored when Tom Crowley's ground ball was thrown wildly to second base on a fielder's choice error.

RU advanced to the final, in which it lost to Farmington Hills Harrison 12-8.

The loss ended Farmington's season at 15-14 overall. The future looks promising, with 12 of the 17 players on Farmington's

postseason roster being underclassmen.

The Falcons were underdogs against Berryman, one of the top junior pitchers in the state.

"At this level, you never know," Kamsman said. "Berryman's a good pitcher and we expected a low-scoring game. It came down to who wanted it most and who made the least mistakes. Obviously, we didn't do everything we wanted to do but they've played a lot better as the year went on."

Berryman was the winning pitcher, setting down the side in

order in the eighth despite the shaky seventh inning. Berryman scattered five hits and would have left in favor of left-hander Mike Björke had he allowed another in the eighth.

Berryman struck out seven batters, walked three and helped his chances in the fourth when he picked Phil Carson off second base after Carson doubled up the gap.

"He was pitching until he got a man on base (in the eighth)," RU coach Rick Berryman said. "I didn't want to go with Björke because he was to pitch the next

game. Brian just pitches and does the best with what he's got that day."

RU took a 1-0 lead in the first inning.

Leadoff batter Steve Smith walked and after a bunt single by Berryman, scored on a wild throw.

Morris added a two-run single in the third inning. Chris Tappay started the inning with a walk and Smith was safe on an error.

But the Panthers could add only a double by Tappay the rest of the way against Williams, who struck out seven.

Baseball from page 1C

Adam Smerecki are the three Harrison freshmen starters.

"It was a combination of them being good players and we're in good, and they've done a good job," Harrison said.

"We weren't expecting to do much but coach said we had a pretty good shot if we worked hard in tryouts," Ghanam said.

"The team really hit well and I felt confident going in to pitch. If it was a tight game, I would have been more nervous because I'm a

noobie. At the beginning of the year, the upperclassmen called me 'Rook,' but we proved we belong."

Jake Lawson pitched the first 5 1/2 innings before being lifted when RU broke through in the sixth.

RU finished the season 27-6 overall and battled until the end despite the early and big deficit. Tom Crowley had an RBI single, Larry Narkiewicz a two-run double and Steve Smith an RBI

triple in the sixth. Brian Berryman increased the Panthers' chances in the seventh with a two-run homer over the fence but Ghanam got the next two batters to end the game.

"More than anything our pride is hurt," RU coach Rick Berryman said. "I feel bad. It's one game, it's a loss, but I'm still proud of the good season. We just came up flat. But we played hard and didn't give up."

Eaglets defeat Trojans in district

Despite a 6-19 record, Orchard Lake St. Mary's is still alive in the state Class C baseball tournament.

The Eaglets, behind the six-hit pitching of Steve Andriak, won Saturday's Madonna University Park district with a 6-3 triumph over Livonia Clarenceville.

The Eaglets now advance to the regional semifinals this Saturday (June 11) at Riverview Gabriel Richard.

Jim Bush led the OLSM offensive attack, going 3-for-4, including a solo homer in the fourth inning off Clarenceville starter and loser Mark Juncal.

Brian DeCaire and Chris Fryer each had two hits for the Trojans, who bowed out with an 11-15 record.

Clarenceville advanced to the final with a 15-3 five-inning mercy rule win over Detroit Benedictine.

time, as winning pitcher Robby Ashton allowed two hits over four innings.

Juncal knocked in four runs, including a three-run triple in the third inning. DeCaire contributed a triple, double and four RBIs, while Ali Nehme added two hits and three RBIs.

In the other semifinal, Orchard Lake St. Mary's blanked Lutheran High Westland, 3-0.

Softball from page 1C

"That's one thing that has bothered us all year. We make a crucial mistake, and that leads to a crucial error. You can't afford to give away four or five outs."

Harrison left six runners stranded over the next three innings, and losing pitcher Becky Thursam escaped a bases-loaded jam in the sixth.

Schneider's RBI single provided an insurance run in the seventh. Hence Ouellette's single and scored Amy Kelman with the lone run for North (11-16).

"Becky Thursam threw a lot of offspeed and kept them off their toes," Brubaker said. "I expected more big hits from them, but Becky pitched a good game and limited them to one extra-base hit."

"I wish we could have done more offensively, but LaCrosse to her credit has developed into one of the area's best pitchers."

Harrison is a good team and maybe it was a slow day for them,

because they didn't seem as fired up as they were a couple weeks ago. But they still came out and did the fundamental things."

Marlins oust Falcons

The Marlins (17-14) reached the championship game with a 12-5 win over Farmington in the second game Saturday.

Mercy broke a 5-5 tie with a four-run fourth inning in which Kathy Mittervich, Heidi Wahl and Erin Wiehe had RBI singles.

With regular pitcher Alana Heikkinen still unable to pitch because of a knee injury, the Marlins posted 13 hits off Farmington freshman Maureen Carolan.

Wiehe was 3-for-4 with two RBIs overall. Heather Jonna and Wahl had two hits and two RBIs apiece. Kim Sanders two hits and one RBI. Wahl also scored three runs.

Jonna pitched a complete game for Mercy and helped her cause with a two-run double. She scat-

tered six hits, fanned five and walked none but hit three batters.

Jenny Sever and Katie Lukasec had two hits and one RBI apiece for the Falcons (6-21).

Farmington rallied to tie 5-5 with the help of four Mercy errors in the fourth. Sever and Suzanne Major each had one RBI in the inning.

The Marlins regained the lead in the bottom half, and Piper Metz hit a two-run homer and Wahl an RBI single in a three-run sixth.

"For three or four innings, we were right there," Farmington coach Julie Inzell said.

"The girls worked hard every day this week to get ready for today. When you have a record like ours, you can do a lot of sitting back, but I was real happy with the way the girls worked and tried new things."

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