

## BASEBALL

BY STEVE KOWALSKI  
STAFF WRITER

Before Redford Catholic Central's freshman left-hander Kevin Thomas could throw a pitch in Tuesday's Class A quarterfinal baseball game, the umpire made him step off the mound and remove a white T-shirt he was wearing beneath his blue jersey.

Thomas won't win any body-building contests, but his fastball sure made an impression on Plymouth Salem.

Thomas allowed no hits in two innings of relief as the Shamrocks held on to defeat the Rocks, 8-3, and advance to the semifinal round of the state tournament.

What made the hard-throwing Thomas tougher to hit was that he was following senior right-hander Justin Stankewicz, a side-

armer who relies more on control than speed.

With one out in the sixth, Salem senior shortstop Bill Styles reached first base against Thomas on an error, but Thomas got the next two batters to pop out.

Jeff Mackiewicz walked with one out in the seventh and advanced to second on a ground out by Ryan Rumberger, but Thomas caught senior Mike Brannan looking at a called third strike to end the game.

Thomas, who also delivered a key three-run triple up the right-center field gap in a five-run fourth inning, seemed more in awe of being interviewed after the game than the pressure he faced during the game.

"This is neat," he said, watch-

ing a reporter scribble his answers on a note pad.

The Shamrocks have another freshman, catcher Dave Viane, at the other end of their battery.

Viane, who played most of the season on the Shamrocks' junior varsity, contributed to two of the Shamrocks' runs.

He laid down a sacrifice bunt that led to the first CC run by Mike Homant in the third inning, and delivered an RBI single with no outs in a five-run fourth inning.

"I'm just trying to do my part to help the team out," Viane said.

## Happy trails to you

CC junior varsity coach Al Moran plays for an over 55 men's softball team sponsored by National Trails, a bus service out of Southfield. Moran was hoping to line up a bus for the Shamrocks to ride to Battle Creek for the Final Four.

It would be a welcomed change for the Shamrocks, who usually pile in vans for road trips.

"Maybe we can go in style," Salter said.

## Juniors to battle

Salter said he plans on using junior right-hander Chris Karney in Friday's semifinal game against Rochester Adams. The Highlanders are expected to send their ace, junior right-hander Chris Wasen, to the mound. Wasen wasn't used in Tuesday's 4-2 quarterfinal victory over Warren Mott.

Thomas would be available for long relief and could probably start after pitching just two innings against Salem.

Salter said Karney was unavail-

able to pitch Tuesday after throwing seven innings in a 9-2 regional victory Saturday against Southgate Anderson.

"Karney's arm was sore and it takes a longer time to recover," Salter said.

## Bottom's up

The bottom four batters in CC's order, Jason Couture, Thomas, Homant and Viane, drove in a combined six runs.

Couture gave the Shamrocks some insurance with a two-run double in the bottom of the sixth. Homant reached base each of his three trips to the plate on two walks and a single. He scored after each of his walks.

## Finally, a test

The 10 hits Salem collected in five innings against Stankewicz were more than the senior right-hander allowed combined in two earlier state-tournament starts against Detroit Cody and Southwestern.

Stankewicz, who improved to 8-4, knew the Rocks would be a challenge.

"I had to be ready for them, they were good hitters, one through nine," Stankewicz said. "I was throwing as hard as I can and they were hitting it."

## BC for CC

CC assistant coach Ed Hamacher led the Shamrocks in a post-game cheer.

"Who are we?" he yelled.

"CC," the players responded.

"Where are we going?"

"BC!"

That's BC as in Battle Creek, not Boston College.

## 1st loss for top team

Decision Consultants and Hines Park Lincoln-Mercury split a Livonia Collegiate Baseball League double-header Sunday at Madonna University Park in Livonia.

Tim Wakefield threw a three-hitter, helping Hines Park win the first game, 4-1. Decision Consultants won the second game, 9-8, scoring an unearned run in the bottom of the seventh inning to break an 8-8 tie.

The split leaves Decision alone in first place at 5-1. Hines Park fell to 4-3.

In the first game, Dan Pyllyn suffered the loss, scattering eight hits with six strikeouts. Brian Besco and Dino Rovinelli led the Hines Park attack with solo home runs.

Decision's only run came in the first inning when Aaron Jones doubled and came home on a single by Craig Petersen.

In the second game, Derek

Besco gave Hines Park an 8-5 lead with a two-run homer, but Decision scored four unanswered runs for the victory.

Eric Butler led off the seventh with a double. A Hines Park error advanced Butler to third base and he scored on Eric Marcotte's single.

Petersen had a two-run single. Scott Carden went 3-3 with two RBIs. Jeff McGavin was 2-3, both doubles, with a run scored.

Joel Hillebrand was the winning pitcher, going 3½ innings in relief of starter Steve Williams. Hillebrand allowed two runs on six hits with four strikeouts.

On Friday, Mike Borkowski threw a one-hitter, leading Decision Consultants to a 10-0 five-inning mercy victory over Dearborn Adray.

Petersen led the seven-hit attack with a two-run homer. Josh Reeber was 2-2 with two runs scored and an RBI.

## Family from page 1C

With a runner on second base in the fifth inning, CC coach John Salter called on Aaron as a pinch hitter. After fouling off the first two pitches, Aaron went down swinging on the third.

"I knew where my dad was going (to tell the Salem pitcher) to throw it — down and in," Aaron recalled. "The third pitch, he called for a pitch they named the Beast. I swear it broke two different times. It was a tough pitch to hit."

Although Salem lost on the scoreboard Tuesday, Ryan Rumberger enjoyed a 3-for-4 day at the plate.

Dale Rumberger probably knows how to get Ryan out as

well, but he's glad he was giving signs in the third base coach's box when his son was up and not calling pitches from the opposing dugout.

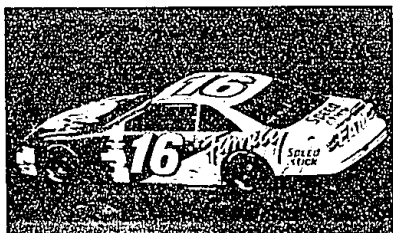
Dale isn't proud of calling the pitches that led to his son's strikeout.

"I didn't think it was fair for Salter to put Aaron in that situation," said Dale Rumberger, who moved his family from Westland to Plymouth in 1992. "I knew how to get him out, I was coaching him since little league. I told Aaron when he started at CC, 'These are two great programs and eventually we'll run into each other. And it'll be a situation where I'll have to try to win the game.'"

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