Crusaders attempt to defend NAIA sectional crown

The Observer/THURSDAY, MAY 2, 1996

ay C.J. RIMAN greens morrow The snow hasn't even stopped falling and it's playoff time

falling any re-already. I'm not talking Red Wings hockey here. I mean college soft-hall - in particular Madonna University, which opens the defense of its NAIA Sectional Tournament title this afternoon.

Tournament title this afternoon.
The Crusaders, 28-12 through
Tuesday, will host the College of
Mount St. Joseph's (from Cincinnati) in a best-of-three sories,
starting today with the first
me at 2 pin, at Massey Field
in Plymouth.
The two teams haven't met
this season - Mount St. Joseph's
had a 17-6 record through Mondy
- but lesst year, Madonna
eliminated St. Joseph's in the
Sectional final.

Sectional final.

The Lady Crusaders are in the proper form for a tournament run. Since a 2-0 less to North-

It would have been appropriate for Madonna University's baseball team to celebrate the completion of its pair of double-headers with St. Francis (III.) with an ice cream sundae. Say, a bean as pill.

The Orusaders divided the four games, winning the second of each doubleheader after the losing the first. They finished the weekand 24-19.

Mark Serra's fine relief work, 42/3 innings of two-hit ball that raised his record to 3-4, in the second game Sunday helped Madonan record a 10-6 victory.

Saturday's win went to Jason Dubey, 2-1, who gave up a run in the only inning he worked but was the benoficiary when Madonan scored twice in the betam of the eighth to take a 6-5

SOFTBALL

wood University April 13, they have wen 10 of 12 games. An obvious reason for the success is the emergence of the Madnna offense. Four times in the last eight games, the Crusaders have surpassed 11 runs scored in a game. They had managed that just three times in the previous 30 games.

Also, coach Jerry Abraham has Also, coach Jorry Abraham has shown no rolutance to rolutance to rolutance to rolutance continues to be the staff acc; also has a 12-7 record with 18 starts, 121 1/3 innings pitched and 53 strikeauts, all team highs. Her earned run average of 2.89 is second to Janell Leschinger, who's 7-1 with a 2.01 ERA.

The rest of the mound crew: Angie Van Doorn (4-4, 2.89 ERA) and Lynda Weichel (3-0, 3.18

Madonna splits pair of doubleheaders

ERA). All of them have at least 28 innings of work this season.

Last weekend, the Crusaders went three-of-four games, sweeping Heidelberg College Sunday12-4 and 14-8 and aplitting with Siens Heights Saturday, winning 10 and tosing 5-4.

In Sunday's wins over Heidelberg, Madonna collected 16 hits in the second game and 17 in the first. Jamie Heins led the attack in the second game and 17 in the first. Jamie Heins led the attack in the second game, going 4-for-4 with a home run and five runs batted in.

Jeanie Baxter (from Redford St. Agatha) added three hits and three RBJ, Jonnifor Pinter had two hits and an RBI, Dawn Shaffer and Michelle Birchmeier (Redford Thurston) each had two hits and Stacey Piontkowski had a two-run deuble.

In the apener, everyone contributed. Pinter and Baxter coch drove home three runs, Pinter going 3-for-3 and Baxter getting two hits. Melissa McGue and

and drove in a run.

Four errors contributed to
Madonna's defeat in Saturdoy's
opener. Starter Dan Pydyn, 4-2,
was nursing a 2-1 lead into the
seventh but couldn't get that
final out as 5t. Francis erupted
for five runs,

Birchmeier contributed three hits apiece, McGue getting a pair of RBI and Birchmeier one, and Courtney Senger and Christy Riepelle had two hits

Christy Riopelle had two hits cach.
Leachinger was the winner in the second game, allowing four carned runs on six hits and a walk, striking out four. In the opener, it was Streng carning the win, surrendering six carned runs on 13 hits and four walks, with two strikeouts, in seven

innings.

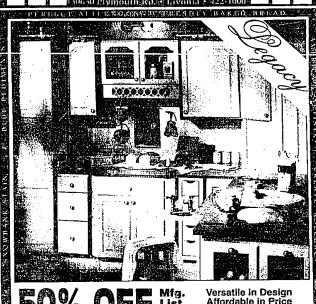
Saturday's double-header with Siena Heights was highlighted by Streng's mound performance in the first game. Streng was close to perfect, giving up just one hit and one walk in posting the shutout.

Madenna got its only run of the game in the first inning, and Jamie Vickers did all the work in supplying it. Vickers slugged a solo home run, one of only live hits for the Crusaders. McGue

In the second game, the Saints overcame a 4-0 Madonna lead by scoring three runs in the fifth and two more in the sixth. Three Crusador errors a ided thejs demise; Van Doorn was the lessing pitcher, giving up nine hits and a walk, but just two carned runs, with five strikeouts in seven innings.

McGue had a hit and two RBI and Birchmeier chipped in with two hits.

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Hillebrand to 4-3.

Quinn had a pair of hits, one his 10th double of the season, while Shrewsbury accounted for the Crusaders' lone run with his eighth home run. Taylor and Delane Voletti also had two hits.

win.

Midonna scored eight in the first to grease the way to Sunday's win and Serra came on when starter Eric Butler was touched for three runs in the second and third innings.

Pete Quinn had a pair of singles and drove in two runs while Anron Shrewbury drove in two with a single plus a sacrifice fly mid to the first game Sunday, at least that drouped starter doel lillichrand to 4-3.

Quinn land a pair of hits, one

Starter Craig Benedict was removed in the aixth inning of the second game Saturday. Job the sixth inning Saturday.



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