

# Falcons edge Cougars

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Garden City's season-long Achilles' heel was its inability to get big hits at the right time. The Cougars got those hits Saturday against host Farmington and held the Falcons to just five hits of their own. But errors, passed balls, stolen bases and other problems allowed the Falcons to earn an 8-7 win in a Division I regional semifinal game. "We didn't play defense," Cougars coach Steve Herman said. "We gave up runs and it cost us today. They hit the ball well. They were up for the game; I'm sure." The Falcons were up for the game and up to face Justin Ockerman, who took the loss in his final high school game. "But we'd faced (Redford Catholic Central's) Charlie

## BASEBALL

Haeger during the week, and we hit him pretty well," Farmington coach Pete Finn said. "That gave (Farmington) confidence going into the game." Farmington rocked Ockerman for seven runs in his 3½ innings, although only two of the runs were earned — a first-inning RBI double by Tony Luttman that scored Preston Picard and a solo homer by Chris Chesney in the third inning. Ockerman (5-5) gave up just four hits and four walks while striking out three. But he also had two wild pitches and didn't get any help with four passed balls and a couple of stolen bases. Marco DiMichele relieved Ockerman in the fourth and picked off a runner to get out of an ugly

fourth inning for Garden City. He held the Falcons to one hit, one run and two walks. "We did it on baserunning," Finn said. "We know Ockerman had a good move to first, so we stole on the catcher (Matt Gordon). We must have had four or five stolen bases." The run that eventually won the game for the Falcons had nothing to do with stolen bases, just solid fundamental baseball. It came in the top of the seventh as Bob Houchins walked and went to third on a hit-and-run by Ian Pardonnet through a wide-open hole at second. Nick Hippler dropped a sacrifice bunt that scored Houchins and gave the Falcons an 8-6 lead. It proved to be a big run as Dan Graham hit a solo homer — his second of the game — to cut the lead to 8-7 with two out in the bottom of the seventh. But Pardonnet struck out Jason Samborski to end the game and the Cougars' season. "I'm a little disappointed we let a big lead go," Finn said. "We had a couple of errors and gave up the homer. You can't make mistakes like that." The Cougars (18-12) cut a 7-3



It's a safe call: Farmington's Brian Bosler was first called out, then safe when the umpire realized catcher Matt Gordon dropped the ball (visible above Bosler's arm).

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Key play: Farmington's Nick Hippler puts down an RBI squeeze bunt that scored Bob Houchins with the eighth run in an 8-7 regional victory over Garden City.

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