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## Founders champion gets Creative

BY DAN O'MEARA  
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### MEN'S SOFTBALL

Creative Concepts saved its best effort for the championship game Sunday, and that resulted in it winning the annual Farmington Founders Festival softball tournament.

With the help of an 11-run fourth inning, Creative Concepts overwhelmed Dabco Tool in the men's final at Founders Sports Park, 27-6.

The former University of Michigan third baseman went 4-for-5 with a double and three RBI in the final, and he was one of five players to score three runs.

But his teammates chose him as the MVP more so because of his good glove and slick fielding.

"When it came to double plays, he was making them," Tushman said, adding the team turned 10 in four games. "He read the batters very well, and he went to where the ball was hit."

"Anyone who saw us the whole tournament would know why (Crociata was

the MVP). "We held opponents to low scores, and defense was the key to our tournament success. It wasn't our hitting."

Creative Concepts defeated Big Boy (11-8), Diversified (18-11) and Dabco Tool 8-5 in its first three games, and there was no holding back when it came to the last game.

In the losers bracket final, Dabco Tool eliminated the defending champion Plymouth Whalers, 8-3. The Whalers won last year as Compuware Sports Arena and four of the previous five years as Vellucci, Inc.

Dabco scored first in the final on Tom Herrington's RBI triple, but Creative Concepts answered with five runs in the bottom of the first inning. It added six more in the third for an 11-3 lead.

The outcome was a foregone conclusion after Creative Concepts sent 16 batters to the plate and scored 11 runs on 11 hits in the fourth, making the score 22-5.

Creative Concepts had eight RBI singles in that half inning, as well as a sacrifice fly and a double by winning pitcher Tom Criseman for two more RBI.

"Softball is like that," Tushman said. "It's being disciplined and knowing when to turn it on."

"We have a lot of game experience and some young talent, too. Everyone is right at the top of his game. That's what makes us tough to beat."

"I think we got the nerves out after the first game, and we built our confidence all the way down the line to the championship game."

Scott Dafeo, Criseman, Tushman, Mike Socha, Kevin Galin and Ian Freed had three hits apiece for Creative Concepts, which finished with five in the sixth.

Creative Concepts had 29 total hits, including two each from Scott Botel-

Please see SOFTBALL, D6

### FARMINGTON — FARMINGTON HILLS SPORTS SCENE

#### Hornets blitz Blizzard

The Farmington Hills Hornets-Lee's Coney Island won a softball doubleheader Tuesday from the host West Bloomfield Blizzard, 10-2 and 17-1.

Both were five-inning games. The Hornets improved to 13-1 in the Girls Incredible Fastpitch Softball League.

In the first game, Lee's had only two hits but received nine walks and was hit by a pitch seven times.

The Hornets scored eight runs and had their two hits — a pair of singles by Kristin Schrock and Jenny Musick — in the first inning.

Heather Sinawi was hit by a pitch three times and five in the two games, bringing her season total to 16.

Sinawi and Musick, who had an RBI with her base hit, scored two runs each.

Schrock pitched a two-hitter, walked five and struck out six. Both Lee's was the winning pitcher in the second game, allowing five hits and one walk.

The Hornets had four hits — two by Leeb, who had an RBI and scored a run, Sinawi and Ellen Doughty had the other hits and scored two runs each. Sinawi also had an RBI.

Lee's has one more doubleheader tonight and will play for the league championship 1 p.m. Sunday at Livonia Ladywood. An all-star game will follow at 3 p.m.

#### Twisters begin season

The Michigan Twisters open their 2001 football season 7 p.m. Saturday at Willow Run's Devlin Stadium when they host the Lima (Ohio) Thunder.

Admission for adults is \$5; children 10 and under, when accompanied by an adult, and seniors 60 and older are admitted free of charge.

The Willow Run Athletic Boosters will have drinks and food available. Devlin Stadium is on Holmes Road between Spencer Lane and Midway Boulevard, a block north of Michigan Avenue in Ypsilanti.

The Twisters play the Motor City Cougars at River Rouge High on Aug. 4. Their next home game is Aug. 18 against the Battle Creek Rage.

The Twisters feature quality players from southeast Michigan, including many from the Oberverland area.

They are WR Reggie Brandon of Wayne Memorial, RB Corey Davis of Farmington Harrison, WR John Gadjia of Garden City, WR Frank Nicorommi of Farmington, LB James Chapman of Plymouth Canton, LB Ben Ferguson of Garden City, NG Chuck Lauber of Westland John Glenn, DE Kallil Jaafar of Livonia Churchill and DL Bill Davoy of Westland John Glenn. WR Dave Redmond of Livonia Franklin will begin the season on the injured list.

#### Hockey rosters open

The Farmington Hills Hockey Association has openings for its fall season. Boys and girls born in 1995 or 1996 are eligible. Call the FIHA at (248) 478-8193 and press key No. 2. Registration forms and additional information will be available at the Farmington Hills Ice Arena, 35500 Eight Mile Road.

#### Marlins need coaches

Farmington Hills Mercy is searching for an assistant varsity tennis coach, JV tennis coach, freshman basketball coach, JV volleyball coach and freshman volleyball coach.

Anyone interested in one of the coaching positions should call the Mercy athletic department at (248) 478-2836.

#### FSC registration open

The Farmington Soccer Club has room for additional players for its fall soccer season.

Registration forms are available at both Farmington libraries and the Costick Activities Center.

For more information call Fred Nassar at (248) 426-7146.

#### Rockets football camp

The Farmington Rockets have scheduled their fourth annual instructional football camp from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 4, at Farmington High School.

The camp is for youths between the ages of 8 and 14. The cost is \$25, which includes lunch and a T-shirt. To register call Rockets President Gary Cline at (248) 477-7871.

## Ex-area prep stars win Festival road-race titles

BY DAN O'MEARA  
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After being close to winning in the past, Matt Daly and Jessie Lair moved to the front of the pack in this year's Farmington Founders Festival road race Saturday.

Daly, an 18-year-old from Livonia and a June graduate of Redford Catholic Central, was third two years ago in his only other appearance in the four-mile run.

### RUNNING

He was the overall men's winner with a 20:38 time, finishing 15 seconds ahead of his friend and former CC teammate Dan Jess of Farmington Hills.

West Bloomfield's Lair, 19, was the women's runner-up last year in her first race, but she pulled away from the competition this time and won it in 24:50.

"I was pretty excited because that never happened," Lair said. "I always wanted to win a road race, but I've always been second or fourth."

"Since I was second last year, I was excited (about her chances). That was a goal I had. It was definitely motivation."

Lair, who graduated a year ago from Southfield Christian High School, won by six seconds over Nancy Schubring, 40.

Last year's winner, 51-year-old Nancy Cassel of Northville, was fifth. North Farmington runner Nicole Moundros, 17, was third and Katy Bundy, 16, fourth.

"I kinda forgot what (Cassel) looked like," Lair said. "I didn't know if she was there. I wasn't really looking for her, and I really had no idea who else was going to be there."

Lair, who runs cross country and track at Calvin College in Grand Rapids where she is an art major, said she went out too fast at the



STAFF PHOTO BY ELIZABETH CARNEZIO

Women's champ: West Bloomfield's Jessie Lair, 19, wipes away the perspiration after capturing the Farmington Founders Festival female title.

start. However, she managed to maintain her pace.

"There was one lady around me for the first half mile," she said. "No one else was ahead of me the rest of the race. But I didn't know if anyone was right behind me."

"I was scared the whole way, because I was afraid someone was going to come up and pass me."

"Toward the very end, when I turned the corner for the last quarter mile, I looked back, and there was another woman right behind me. So I ran as fast as I could from then on."

It didn't matter that Schubring is 21 years her senior, not with a race victory at stake and the memory of Cassel's win still fresh.

"I wasn't that surprised," Lair said of Schubring's challenge. "When I turned around, I thought she was like my age. I didn't know she wasn't until afterward."

Lair, who qualified for the NCAA Division III cross country meet last fall, believes she is a better runner with a year of college competition behind her.

"It helped me improve a

Please see ROAD RACE, D6



STAFF PHOTO BY ELIZABETH CARNEZIO

Men's winner: Former Catholic Central runner Matt Daly, 18, of Livonia was first across the finish line.

## Cobras chase 2nd World Series crown

The 16-year-old NFWB Cobras travel baseball team took a big step toward winning a second national title.

The Cobras did so by winning a regional tournament in Welland, Ontario, with a 6-0 record, qualifying them for the National Amateur Baseball Federation World Series in Nashville.

The national provided an exciting week of baseball for the Cobras, who won their last three games by a total of three runs.

"These kids from Michigan really showed the other teams what physical and mental toughness is all about," NFWB manager Dan Petry said. "We went into the tournament with

### BASEBALL

13 players while most national-level teams carry at least 20 on their rosters. But our kids know they can compete against any team in the country and have for years."

The Cobras began the tournament with a 12-1 victory over Fraser, Mich. Nick Vitahis set the pace by going 3-for-4 at the plate.

Brendan Rosenbergh, Matt Petry, Evan Rodriguez and Dan Lentz collected two hits apiece. Ben Darga got the pitching win while Andy Wingert closed out the game on the mound.

Neil Sternberg was the winning pitcher with relief help from Lentz in an 8-2 win over Akron, Ohio. Doug Pickens, Vitahis and Petry had two hits, and Pickens drove in three runs.

The Cobras continued to roll, shutting out the New York Yankees, 8-0. Petry pitched a complete game, scattering six hits.

Kevin Zerbo swung the big bat, going 4-for-4. Pickens had two hits, including his seventh home run of the year.

Rodriguez and Rosenbergh also chipped in two hits. The fourth game was an extra-inning thriller with Youngstown, Ohio. After falling behind 3-0, the Cobras tied the game, which stayed that way until the

opponent scored in the top of the 10th.

The Cobras responded with two runs in the bottom half on Dan Graham's bases-loaded double to end the game as a 5-4 victory.

Vitahis, Wingert and Lentz handled the pitching duties with Lentz picking up the win.

In the next game, Graham struck out 13 Canadian batters as the Cobras also edged Ottawa by a 5-4 top.

The win put NFWB on top of the winners bracket, setting up a rematch with New York, which bounced back after its earlier defeat.

The championship game was a pitch-

Please see COBRAS, D2