

Brother Rice avenges loss to Clarkston in regional

BY DANIEL STICKRATH
STAFF WRITER

Often in life, one is not given a second chance. So when Birmingham Brother Rice had the opportunity to avenge a loss to the team that bounced it from last year's state baseball tournament, the Warriors seized the moment.

Second-ranked Brother Rice (34-3) took advantage of two Clarkston errors to build a 5-1 advantage after one inning and cruised to an 8-1 victory over the Wolves in a Division I regional final Saturday at West Bloomfield.

Clarkston (23-7) had defeated the Warriors 4-1 in last year's regional finals before advancing to the state quarterfinals and the Final 4 in Battle Creek, where it was defeated by eventual state champion Portage Central.

Rice strung together two hits, two walks and had two runners reach base on two Clarkston fielding errors in the top of the first to take a 5-0 lead off Clarkston senior right-hander Bobby Slaughter (5-1).

That was all the room the Warriors needed for Michigan State-bound senior Mike Kirscheneiter.

The right-hander allowed an RBI groundout to Sam Palace in the bottom of the first, but didn't allow a runner past second base the rest of the game.

Everybody can smell Battle Creek, which was the state quarterfinals and the biggest ones," said Brother Rice head coach Bob Riker. "We had incentive because Clarkston knocked us out last year. A lot of times you don't get a second chance, but we got a second chance to face them again this year and I think the guys were determined to go away with a win this time."

Clarkston, which won its first league title since the formation of the OAA a decade ago, couldn't find enough magic to stem the Warriors' two wins in a row.

"You can't give up that kind of a lead, and have two errors in the third inning, and expect to pull out a win against a team as talented as Brother

Rice. They're too talented," said Clarkston coach Phil Price. "We had played so well the past couple weeks, but we put ourselves into a hole we couldn't dig out of."

Rice junior Doug Pickens knocked in two runs when he reached base on a dropped fly ball to left and Max Kelmigian followed with an RBI when he reached base on a fielder's choice for a 3-0 lead.

Following another Clarkston error, Steve Antonioti laced a two-run single to make it 5-0. The Warriors added two more runs in the top of the fifth when Kelmigian reached base on yet another Clarkston error and scored on Tim Kulezyski's RBI double.

Antonioti added an RBI bloop single in the same frame. Vitas Ray drove home Kelmigian with an RBI single in the seventh to account for the final Brother Rice run. Antonioti went 4-for-4 with three RBIs. Dan Lentz had three hits and Kelmigian scored three runs for the Warriors.

While Rice was moving on

BASEBALL

with a talented senior class, Price was saying farewell to a senior class of eight that helped the Wolves become one of the Oakland County's top teams that past few years.

"We have a lot of guys that have been with us awhile," said Price. "Derek Ranck has been with us for three years, Matt Orris four years and Slaughter three years. We have a very talented senior class that has done a lot for this program."

In the first semifinal, Clarkston had no problem dispatching Walled Lake Western, as the Wolves rolled to a 10-0 win in five innings.

Orris, a senior left-hander, allowed a leadoff single to Western's Greg Conner but was in control after that, firing a one-hitter. Orris (10-1) struck out five, walked none and did not allow a runner past second base.

The Wolves grabbed a 2-0 lead in the second inning on a RBI single by Mike Kittie and a RBI triple by Matt Brady.

They added three more tallies in the bottom half of the third when Kittie drove in a run on a Western fielding error. Brady added another RBI single and Derek Ranck ripped a one-run triple.

Consecutive RBI walks by Jon Moehling, Slaughter and Brady extended the lead to 8-0 in the fourth and a two-run single to right by Addison Turk in the fifth ended the game.

Rice had more problems with upstart Berkley (12-19) in the second semifinal, falling behind 6-4 after four innings before scoring six unanswered runs in the fifth en route to a 10-6 victory.

The Bears gave up three unearned runs behind starter Evan Karchon, who gave up only six hits, three earned runs and struck out five until he was replaced Zach Schwartz with one out in the fifth. Schwartz subsequently struggled on the mound, giving up four walks, three consecutive with the bases loaded, and an RBI single as Rice scored six in the frame to take control for good.

Antonioti's RBI single off Karchon tied the game and Dan Lentz drew an RBI walk with the bags packed for the go-ahead run.

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Eaglets oust defending state champions

BY TIM SMITH
STAFF WRITER

With an air-tight defense behind him, Orchard Lake St. Mary's pitcher Mark McDaniel confidently went about the business of mowing down Monroe Jefferson batters Tuesday.

At one point, McDaniel retired 13 in succession, and the Eaglets made the most out of just three base hits to post a 4-0 victory in a Division II state quarterfinal game at Saline High School.

The victory enabled St. Mary's (20-11) to advance to the semifinals for the first time since 1998. The Eaglets will play Comstock Park (26-7) at 10:30 a.m. Friday at Bailey Park in Battle Creek.

"It's a landmark (win)," said an elated McDaniel shortly after finishing the shutout. "I'm a third-year varsity member and never got this far. We got knocked out in the districts both

times. Hopefully, we can go to Battle Creek and win two more games."

McDaniel needed only 61 pitches to defeat the defending Division II state champions. In a three-inning stretch, he needed a combined 14 pitches to retire nine batters.

"Between him and Brandon Larson, they've been our go-to guys this whole tournament, and we hope it stays that way," St. Mary's coach Jeff Willis said.

According to McDaniel, the solid defense sparked the win. "Everyone made the plays," he said.

Particularly solid was second baseman Mark Sison, who registered seven putouts, including all three batters in the fifth.

But others also excelled: freshman catcher Jon Castine gunned down a Jefferson runner attempting to steal second; center fielder Nick Brennan threw out another runner who overran a base; right fielder Jeremy

Leber made an impressive catch while charging toward the line.

"That's what we've been telling ourselves all year," Willis said. "You have to play error-free baseball and don't beat yourself. If you do that, usually the results are going to be in your favor."

On the offensive side, the Eaglets' only baserunner in the first, when a third strike slipped past the Jefferson catcher.

But things changed in the fourth after Dan Gendron boot- ed Brennan's routine grounder.

With Brennan running on the pitch, third baseman Brandon Larson laid down a sacrifice bunt and found himself on base after the underhand flip was dropped.

After Castine hit a ground ball to the right side of the infield to move the runners to second and third, Kyle Miller scored Brennan with a suicide squeeze bunt. The only real threat St. Mary's realized the ball had against Ryan Sontag

was the fifth, when three more runs scored to open up an insurmountable lead. All of the Eaglets' hits came in that inning. McDaniel walked with one out and took credit on the Eaglets' first hit of the game, a double to left by designated hitter Chris Rachfal.

One out later, and with Sontag needing just one more strike to get out of the frame unscathed, Brennan scorch- ed a liner to right to score McDaniel. Rachfal scored on a wild pitch, and the final run came in on an RBI single by Castine.

The fact the Eaglets manufactured runs against the hard-throwing Sontag did not come as a surprise to Willis.

"Between our district and regional, we've seen all kinds of stuff," he said. "We've seen a hard-throwing lefty from Avondale; we've seen a lefty from Harper Woods Notre Dame. We know we can win by the small ball or by hitting the baseball."

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


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U9 (Born after 7/31/94)	6/15/2003	9:00 - 10:30 A.M.	6/16/2003	5:00 - 6:30 P.M.	
U10 (1 Team) (Born 8/1/93 & 7/31/94)	6/15/2003	11:00 - 12:30 P.M.	6/16/2003	6:30 - 8:00 P.M.	
U11 (2 Teams) (Born 8/1/92 & 7/31/93)	6/15/2003	1:00 - 2:30 P.M.	6/20/2003	5:00 - 6:30 P.M.	
U12 (2 Teams) (Born 8/1/91 & 7/31/92)	6/15/2003	3:00 - 4:30 P.M.	6/19/2003	7:00 - 8:30 P.M.	
U13 (Born 8/1/90 & 7/31/91)	6/15/2003	5:00 - 6:30 P.M.	6/19/2003	7:00 - 8:30 P.M.	
U14 (Born 8/1/89 & 7/31/90)	6/16/2003	9:00 - 10:30 A.M.	6/20/2003	9:00 - 10:30 P.M.	
U15 (Born 8/1/88 & 7/31/89)	6/16/2003	7:00 - 8:30 P.M.	6/21/2003	11:00 - 12:30 P.M.	
U16 (Born 8/1/87 & 7/31/88)	6/17/2003	9:00 - 10:30 A.M.	6/21/2003	1:00 - 2:30 P.M.	
U18 (Born 8/1/85 & 7/31/86)	6/17/2003	7:00 - 8:30 P.M.	6/21/2003	3:00 - 4:30 P.M.	

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