

Bases-loaded homer lifts Falcons past Hawks

Farmington High's Randy Meier pitched and batted his Falcons to an exciting 8-4 victory over district rival Farmington Hawks last week on Farmington's field.

Meier, a junior, was the winning pitcher, but his most important contribution came at the plate in the bottom of the sixth inning when he belted a bases-loaded homer to settle the non-league contest. Meier, who went two-for-three at the plate, hit his homer off Harrison pitcher Brett Horrovec. The clutch, a live drive, traveled more than 300 feet and landed in a ditch along Orchard Lake Road.

"Randy's a tremendous athlete, but baseball's his strong suit," said Farmington coach Richard Roy. "He should have a great year for '88."

"It was just one of those things," said Harrison coach John Herrington, whose team was leading 5-3, going into the Farmington sixth. "Farmington has some good

hitters, and they hit the ball real well. We made three errors which put men on base before he hit the homer, and that kind of lifted me off a little bit."

In the Farmington sixth, Dick Radatz reached first on an infield error, and pinch-hitter Rob Patrick was hit by a pitch. Kevin Kananman's sacrifice attempt was booted, and the bases were loaded.

Then Vic Pauline reached first on an infield error with Radatz scoring. That set the stage for Meier's heroics.

Harrison had the tying run on second base in the top of the seventh. Paul Rogind led off the inning with a double. Two outs later, Kyle Krupsky reached first on an error, and Tim Harmsa stepped to load the bases.

Meier walked Fred Blackmer to force in a run, but Kals Nizgren popped out to end the threat.

Farmington had eight hits, but com-

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SPORTS

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mitted six errors. Meier was charged with two earned runs, and was tagged for six hits.

It was a good day all around for Farmington's baseball team. In the reserve con-

test, Farmington recorded a triple play in defeating Harrison 13-7.

In other recent games, Farmington split a double header with non-league Northville High last Saturday, dropping the first

game 5-4 and winning the nightcap 6-3. Farmington's Andy Ponke struck out 15 and helped his cause with a three-run homer in the second game.

Farmington, now 2-2, plays next at home on April 27 against non-league Southfield-Lathrup. The Falcons have another home non-league against Detroit Redford on April 29 before opening their Inter Lakes League season at Livonia Stevenson on April 30.

Harrison, now 2-1, begins its Western Six League season on April 28 at home against Livonia Churchill.

Franklin-N. Farmington

North Farmington baseball coach Jerry Maxwell was discouraged with the results of the North-Livonia Franklin game, even though Franklin won the Northwest Suburban League contest, 8-2.

"It was a heck of a lot closer than it sounds," said Maxwell on his first season

as North's varsity coach. "We had eight hits. Franklin had six. But we had a lot of men die on base, and they knocked their runners in. That was the difference."

Maxwell started Mark Bentley, who pitched 2 1/2 innings, giving up five runs on five hits. He struck out none and walked two. Bob Fredericks threw 4 1/2 innings of relief and was touched for two hits, including a three-run homer by Larry Urban. Fredericks fanned two and passed two. Franklin scored two runs in the second inning and added three in the third.

North scored a run in the third when Andy Salinas singled, and scored on Bentley's single, and scored on Kevin McCrum's sacrifice fly. The Raiders added a run in the fourth. John Patlak tripled and scored on Mike Thomas' single.

North Farmington takes on Livonia Stevenson in a double header at home on Friday. The first game begins at 10 a.m.

Vacation blues hit coaches

Farmington falls in tri meet

Farmington High scored 45 points and finished third behind Livonia Churchill (73 points) and Redford Union (71) in a three-school track meet held last Tuesday on Churchill's cinders.

"I think we lost that meet in Florida," said Farmington coach Gerald Young. "We were missing 20 kids. They were on vacation, probably down in Florida. All three teams were shorthanded, but we had

the smallest squad there."

Farmington senior Brian Stenzloff continued his excellent season by winning two events, the 100-yard low hurdles in 1:17 and the long jump at 26.0. He also finished second in the 220-yard dash and third in the 120-yard high hurdles.

Farmington sophomore Harold Rutia finished second in the mile run. Rutia ran a heck of a mile for a 10th grader. Young

said, "He finished right behind Churchill's Wietecha, who's a 14th grader."

Farmington's only other first place came in the two-mile run where Arno Set finished in 18:07.2.

Farmington's 800-yd relay (Willie Nuttall, Kim Watake, Mitchell and Vance Gutierrez) took second in 1:38.4. Stuart Glatfelter took second in the half-mile. Vance Gutierrez finished second in the long jump behind Stenzloff, and Kevin Hansen finished second in the shot put.

Farmington's Mike Danna, who has had good in the hurdles, pulled a muscle in the highs and didn't run in the lows or in the 100-yard dash.

Redford Union's Jim Lalonde was another double winner, taking the 220 in 24.0 and the 100 in 10.2. Churchill, which won eight of the 18 events, had another good performance from sophomore David

Churchill-RU-Farmington

100 Res-Redford Union 1:36.9. Farmington: Willie Nuttall, Kim Watake, Mitchell, Vance Gutierrez; 1:38.4.

100 Res-Palmer (Churchill) 2:03.2. Stuart Glatfelter (Farmington), Coleman (Churchill), Kingsbury (Redford Union).

120 High Hurdles-Hanna (Churchill) 1:51. Mike Danna (Farmington), Brian Stenzloff (Farmington), Austin (Churchill).

150 Mile Run-Wietecha (Churchill) 4:34.8. Harold Rutia (Farmington), LaChance (Churchill), Jim Brown (Farmington).

200 Dash-LaLonde (Redford Union) 10:2. Watson (Redford Union), Vance Gutierrez (Farmington), Mitchell (Farmington).

400 Dash-DeFlora (RU) 3:21. Zrag (Churchill), Sarkaly (Redford Union), DeKrell (Redford Union).

800 Dash-Hardies-Brian Stenzloff (Farmington) 1:57. Hanna (Churchill), Williams (Churchill), DeRoche (Churchill).

2-Mile Run-Arno Set (Farmington) 18:07.2. Jones (Churchill), Wintrey (Churchill), Martens (Churchill).

220 Dash-LaLonde (Redford Union) 24.0. Brian Stenzloff (Farmington), Marcell (Churchill), Wilks (Churchill).

1-Mile Relay-Livonia Churchill 3:23.5. Redford Union.

400 Relay-Livonia Churchill 4:3. Redford Union.

Long Jump-Brian Stenzloff (Farmington) 26.0. Vance Gutierrez (Farmington), Jeff Lemanski (Farmington), Fanlay (Redford Union).

Shot Put-Petech (Redford Union) 66.7. Kevin Hansen (Farmington), Sweeney (Redford Union), Kand (Churchill).

Discus-Kielly (Churchill) 144.4. Petech (Redford Union), DeWitt (Churchill), Sweeney (Redford Union).

High Jump-Chapel (Churchill) 62. Mikhelich (Churchill), Kline (Churchill), Bennett (Redford Union).

100 Low Hurdles-Bentley (Redford Union) 13.6. Good (Churchill), Martens (Churchill), Tracy Curtis (Farmington).



Kevin Hansen shows a look of concentration before heaving the discus. The discus is a new event in both boys and girls track this season, sanctioned by the Michigan High School Athletic Association. (Staff photos by Bob Woodring)



Jeff Lemanski puts every ounce of strength into his long jump effort which was good enough for a third-place finish at Tuesday's triangular meet.

Pre-season schooling prepares young umpires

By TOM BAER

All right, all you Southfield Little League mothers and fathers, listen up. If your kid takes a called third strike during a game this summer, and you're about to hurl some parental abuse at the teenage umpire who called it, think again. That umpire may be just a teenager, but he's probably been to school—umpires' school—and actually may know what he's doing.

Southfield's Little League is one of the few sandlot baseball organizations which attempts to train its would-be umpires before the season starts. Right now more than 20 new umpires are finishing a required training course conducted by the Southfield-Lathrup Officials Association.

That organization supplies all the umpires for the Little Leagues in Southfield and Beverly Hills, as well as the Southfield Pony Club leagues and the recreation slowpitch softball leagues. More than 60 umpires, including those now attending the school, will be funneled into those programs when the season starts.

Leo Ramnick, who heads the officials association, requires all first- and second-year umpires to attend the training sessions, which he teaches.

"I've been involved in Southfield's Little Leagues for about 13 years, and all those years I've argued that if you don't have a good umpire, you don't have a good ball game," Ramnick said. "It doesn't matter how good the players are. Without proper umpiring, you can't have proper baseball. It's a major part of the game."

"THERE'S ALWAYS been a problem with umpires in Little League ball," Ramnick admitted. "Little League is probably the toughest sport to officiate. You have a lot of managers who don't know baseball, and you have a lot of fans who don't know much about it either. All they know is that their nine-year-old kidne is out there playing ball."

Many new umpires are high school students looking to earn the \$7 per Little League game umpired during the summer. A few others are parents or older persons who just want to stay involved in baseball.

Most prospects have baseball backgrounds as players. A good knowledge of the game and its rules are important qualifications, according to Ramnick. Every prospect gets a rule book and a baseball rulebook. Ramnick holds classroom sessions and then goes over game-type situations on the field.

"We don't have texts on the rules," he said. "I don't believe in that. We have ball sessions. What do you do if such-and-such a situation comes up? Then we go through the rule book and the baseball case book, and we reason it out."

"I call the rule book 'batroom reading.' You sit down, read it and you learn it."

PROPER APPEARANCE and demeanor are important for umpires, according to Ramnick.

"We want them to look and act like umpires," he said. "None of our umpires come out in cutoffs or shorts and without socks. They have uniforms with red shirts. Some umpires wear blue, but we wanted to be different, so we wear red

"Good appearance is important. Maybe it'll set a good example for the kids and the fans."

What else does it take to be a good umpire?

"It also takes a good cool head," Ramnick said. "You have to have a kid who won't be afraid if a 46- or 45-year-old manager gets mad and starts yelling. We find a lot of kids with a good knowledge of the game, but they fall apart when someone starts yelling at them."

"We try to teach them what to do in certain situations—like what to do when managers and fans become irate. A good umpire is supposed to keep his cool, and show that he is running the game."

That "good cool head" is also handy when umpiring the city-sponsored recreation softball games. Ramnick tries to use older, more experienced umpires for those games.

"I can get pretty tough in some of those industrial slowpitch softball leagues," he said. "Some of those guys don't play such good ball, but it's a very emotional thing with them. They tend to get very upset if things don't go their way."

Ramnick tries to put all Little League umpires on a rotating schedule so "you don't see the same umpire night after night."

"If you work the same team night after night, you tend to get too friendly with the people there, and you can't do your job properly," he said.

Ramnick's umpire's school, now in its second year, has been so successful that he said he's thinking of expanding it to include training for recreational football and basketball officials.

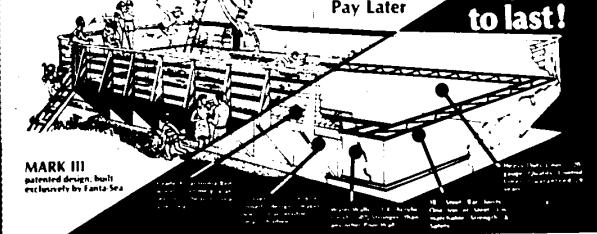
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