

Plymouth Elks Win Class D Inter-Cities Crown

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Winning sure is wonderful... but for Dwayne Becker, a vending machine operator by profession and a sandlot baseball manager during the summer... the victory his Plymouth Elks scored over Dearborn Heights, 3-1, to take the Inter-Cities Class D title meant more than words can say.

"I've been handling kids baseball teams around Plymouth for 13 years," Becker declared as he joined in a celebration with the Elks, mostly first graduates from Plymouth High School.

"I started in Little League... moved to Babe Ruth... then to Colt and now to the older boys

with whom I have been associated for a couple of years.

"Last season, the Elks didn't do well. We were just 6-3. Last spring, most of my boys played on the varsity at Plymouth High and they had a pretty poor season."

"BUT IT HAS been different this summer. You could just see the great improvement that came over virtually every player."

"And to me, that's the most important thing of all... helping a boy, or boys, get better out there."

For the most part, the Elks will have outgrown the Class D

Conkle Mack League action by next summer.

"But we're planning to stay together," Becker said. "We want to enter the Free Press League in Livonia... assuming there is a Free Press League."

There have been some rumors that the league might be dropped which, said Becker, "would be a tragedy."

THE ELKS, in capping the '69 season with the Inter-Cities crown, wound up with a 15-6 record.

Nick Valenti, the team's top pitcher with an 8-3 mark, appropriately buried the title win-

ner against the Heights. He allowed three hits, fanned eight and walked two.

Nick expects to enter Michigan State University a few weeks hence.

The Elks had to come back from a 1-0 deficit after Dearborn Heights scored an unearned run in the first inning on a three-base error and a fly out.

But then in the third after Horio Schryer walked, Bruce Bauman clubbed a homer to make it 2-1 for Plymouth.

Bauman didn't play at Plymouth high in baseball last spring. He was too busy in track, pole-vauling to a spot on the Observer's All-Area 1969 Track Squad.

serverland.

"IT'S REALLY something, being able to take all the high school teams from the spring and put them into Conkle Mack Leagues like we had during the summer."

"The high school teams just don't have the time to accomplish too much. They constantly are bucking the weather."

"But in our summer program, we can give the boys a chance to play in 20 or 25 games... and some even get to play twice that number when they perform on Free Press League teams."

It appears certain that during the winter, Becker's vending machines will pour out a lot of happiness... especially for Becker himself.

Churchill Has Grid Staff Of 5

Coach Ken Kaestner will have a full staff on hand at Churchill High begins preparations for its first varsity season next Monday.

Kaestner announced the membership of his staff Monday and indicated all will be on hand next Monday in issuing uniforms Thursday morning.

Larry Joiner, recently promoted to Churchill athletic director after compiling an excellent football record at Bentley High, will serve as one of the assistants to Kaestner.

Roger Freyer has been named assistant football coach and head baseball mentor. Bruce Ford has transferred from Emerson Junior High to become

junior varsity coach and Bob Armstrong, a recent graduate of Eastern Michigan University, will serve as assistant junior varsity coach.

HEIGHTS also tied the score in the fifth. With a runner on second, a single to center followed. But Walter Lee's perfect throw to Dale Rumberger cut down the Heights' man at the plate.

The final Elks' run scored in the bottom of the fifth when Schryer doubled after Dennis Becker walked.

Don Gullekson had a pair of hits for the winners. Manager Becker had other praise for his charges.

"They were a bunch of kids who never knew when to quit. They hustled all the time," Becker also lauded the summer baseball program in Op-

Redford In Nationals

Bjerke walked and Holmes lefted a sacrifice fly. Fahey had three hits, three RBIs and scored twice in the game. Geno Syros, Tom Becker and Kirk Taylor pitched for the losers.

THE SERIES with Baltimore for the regional title actually was climactic because Redford, by winning its first three games had qualified for the nationals at Johnstown since both the regional winner and runner-up go to the tourney.

Redford had started in dynamic fashion by downing powerful Baltimore, 5-1, and then taking Birmingham, 4-0.

Then came what proved a two-day game and the "key" to the tourney, Redford was up against Newark, O., with the winner assured, going to Johnstown.

The game started on Saturday and Newark took a 3-2 lead and held it when rain interrupted the action in the sixth inning as Redford came to bat.

The action was picked up at that point and the extra rest the Redford players enjoyed proved helpful. They started Sunday's part of the game with four straight runs and it was what the Townshippers needed to win, 6-3.

DENNIS PRIMEAU opened the Redford sixth with a walk. Bill Howe and Leo Bjerke followed

with singles. That brought in Primeau to tie the game at 1-1. After Bill Holmes was hit by a pitch, Joe Himmelspach walked to force in Howe with the lead run. Then Kirk Taylor followed with a two-run single.

Fred Holdsworth, taking over the pitching in the game from Dennis Carol, who had worked on Saturday, held Newark hitless and scoreless the rest of the way while fanning three and walking two.

Three errors had led to the Newark runs on Saturday. Redford counted once in the second when Holmes was safe on an error and Himmelspach, Taylor and Carol walked.

In the fourth Carol singled and Leo Bjerke doubled.

DALE BJERKE hurled the victory against Baltimore, loaded with seven professional prospects. He scattered seven hits, fanned four and walked two.

Redford scored twice in the first inning when Leo Bjerke homered after Bill Fahey singled. In the seventh Dale Bjerke's double and Howe's single made it 3-0.

In the seventh, Leo Bjerke walked. Holmes singled and Kirk Taylor singled then in after Dan Sweeney sacrificed the two runs.

HOLDSWORTH with last-inning relief help from Carol stopped Birmingham in Friday's second game.

Again Redford scored twice in the first inning. Walks to Primeau and Howe and as error to Fahey loaded the bases. Leo Bjerke's fly scored one run and Holmes' single the second.

In the fifth, Primeau and Howe again walked and Primeau raced home on Bjerke's single. Fahey tripled and Holmes doubled for the fourth Redford run in the eighth.

In the Birmingham ninth, a single and walk put two aboard before Carol came in to retire three men.

Western Michigan University opens its 1969 football season on Sept. 13 at Kalamazoo by meeting its oldest rival, Central Michigan. In the 62-year-old series, Western Michigan has won 30 games, lost only 10 and tied one.

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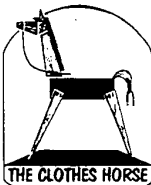
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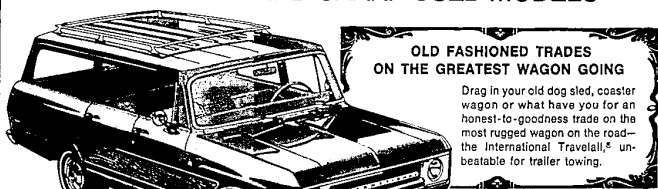
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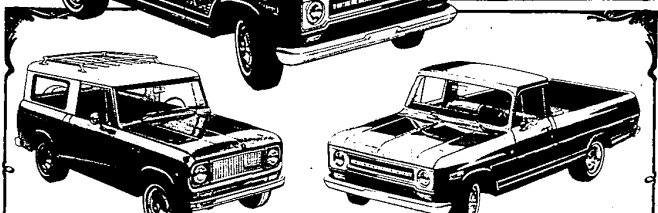
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