

Canton '9' seeks state title

By DENNIS O'CONNOR

While most high school baseball teams have already turned in their uniforms, Plymouth Canton

is still very busy on the practice field as it prepares for state championship competition in Wyandotte Saturday. The Chiefs, one of only

four class A teams left in the single-elimination tournament, will face Flint Southwestern in a semi-final battle at 10 a.m. Hazel Park and East

Kentwood square-off in the other semifinal at 12:30 p.m. The winners of these two games meet for the state title at 3:30 p.m.

Canton reached the final four with its regional victory last weekend, also at Wyandotte. In that competition, the Chiefs edged Taylor Truman, 5-2, in nine innings and then shutout Westland-John Glenn in the final, 3-0, for the regional crown.

And as far as Canton coach Fred Crissey is concerned, the Chiefs' first opponent, Flint Southwestern, is the team to beat.

Southwestern, 30-3 overall, recently was ranked best in the state in the last coaches' poll. The Chiefs, 25-4 overall and champions of the Western Big League, had held that rating prior to the final poll. They are now second.

So the challenge is there, for both clubs, to show which is the best team in the state. "Southwestern is big, strong, and physical," said Crissey. "Hey, they're the number one

team in the state. "But this is the kind of challenge you like to have, and we've got the kind of kids who will go after it."

"We've got a group of hell-fighters, here," Crissey said about the Chiefs. "And we're going after the title. There's no playing conservative at this time. If we beat the best, fine. If we get beat by the best, fine. We'll just have to be careful of that."

Crissey will have to be careful about Hazel Park, the numbers-three ranked team in the state and a perennial state contender. And East Kentwood is supposedly the best team in the western part of the state.

The Canton coach feels the competition will be even this weekend and fans should expect close games.

"When you get this far in a tournament, I don't think any club will get ripped out of town,"

Crissey said. "The pitching is just too good."

AS USUAL, the Chiefs had trouble hitting the ball but relied on strong pitching and sound execution to survive the regionals.

Canton registered only two hits off Westland John Glenn hurler Jim Black in its 3-0 victory over the Rockets. The Chiefs' Scott Dawson was equal to the test, however, scattering three hits for the shut out.

"Dawson was in control all the way," Crissey said. "And that (Glenn) is a good hitting ball club."

"I thought we hit the ball well. We only got two strike outs, but there were great defensive plays on both sides."

The real spine-tiger was in the semi-final. The Chiefs had lady-luck on their side in a 5-2 overtime victory against Taylor Truman.

Both teams scored initial runs in the first inning but the score remained tied after eight innings—although both sides had numerous scoring opportunities. In fact, Truman almost scored the winning run in the bottom of the seventh but a perfect throw from leftfielder Dave Weise cut down the potential tally at the plate.

Clarenceville girls head for B tourney

By DOUG FUNKE

A young Clarenceville team, champion of the Metro West Conference and district and regional titlist in the Class B tournament this spring, will attempt to grab all the marbles this weekend at the state finals in Grand Rapids.

One of only four squads remaining in the tourney, Clarenceville will play in the 12:30 p.m. game Saturday at Belknap Park. The first game is scheduled for 10 a.m. and the championship contest at 3:30 p.m.

"Our goals have been elevated somewhat. I'd say we're going out there to win," said Clarenceville coach Karen Oliva, who had stated before the season began that she hoped to have a good shot at winning a regional.

"It's really a treat for us to be going. It's so exciting. I have so much confidence in them. They're together off the field as well as on and that's part of it too," said Oliva, who added that the girls often play basketball and swim together when not competing or practicing.

Another unusual aspect of the team is that there is only one senior—Anita Luka—on the roster. Everyone else will return next season regardless of what happens this weekend.

Clarenceville, which won the Oak Park District June 3, returned to the same site last weekend for the regional and defeated Troy, 6-5, in the championship game to earn a berth among the final four.

It looked like curtains for the Trojans late in that game, as Oliva's charges trailed 5-1 with but two innings to play. However, Clarenceville tied the proceedings with

a four-run rally in the top of the sixth inning.

Luka ignited the fireworks with what appeared to be a harmless infield single. Shelly McCamant then doubled. Kris Klamik followed with another infield single to score Luka.

McCamant then stole third base, but was subsequently tagged out at the plate while trying to score on a passed ball. Klamik advanced to second base when McCamant was put out at home.

A single by Carol Skaggs and a walk to Kathy McCammon loaded the bases. Klamik scored on a walk to Mary Laird and Skaggs and McCammon crossed the plate on a double to left field by Cherry Ranta.

Clarenceville scored the winning run in the seventh inning when McCamant tripled into center field and came home on a sacrifice fly by Klamik.

Troy had scored all five runs in the fourth inning with two hits, a walk and three errors. Laird, who hurled all seven innings, gained the pitching victory. McCamant and Luka each had two hits.

The Trojans defeated Grosse Ile, defending Class B state champion, 11-4, in their first test at the regional. Clarenceville managed only four hits during the game, but made good use of 10 walks and six errors.

The Trojans, who had scored three runs during the second inning and two in the third, put the game away with a six-run outburst in the sixth inning without the aid of a hit.

Lisa Redford accounted for two of Clarenceville's four hits with singles. Laird again pitched the entire game and recorded the victory.

NFWB Pony League standings

Following are the win-loss records of the teams in the North Farmington-West Bloomfield's Pony American and Pony National leagues.

TEAM STANDINGS — Athletics—5-0 won-loss record; Tigers—2-0; Royals—1-0; Yankees—0-0; Red Sox—1-4-0; Indians—0-2-0; Orioles—1-2-0; Rangers—1-0; Twins—0-2-0.

TEAM STANDINGS — Expos—5-0; Orioles—3-1; Padres—3-1; Giants—3-1; Braves—2-4; Dodgers—0-1; Pirates—0-1; Reds—0-1.

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