

Blue Jay baseball squad has pitching depth

By DENNIS O'CONNOR

Despite cold weather conditions, Southfield's three high schools anxiously await the start of another prep baseball season with high hopes for successful spring campaigns.

Southfield-Lathrup and Southfield Christian feature young, junior-oriented squads this season, while Southfield High fields nine returning lettermen who have their

work cut out for them in the tough Southeastern Michigan Association (SMA) race.

SOUTHFIELD-LATHRUP has, in coach Bob Marten's opinion, one of the best young teams he's ever coached. The Chargers have 11 juniors and just six returning letter winners.

"Our juniors are our nucleus," Marten said. "This is the best group of juniors I've ever had." The Chargers will miss

the services of All-Metro Suburban Activities Association (MSAA) first baseman Jim Wissing because of graduation. He was Lathrup's leading hitter last year.

Ron Curcio, a junior, will try to fill Wissing's shoes, however, as the two-year starter is expected to lead the offense.

Scott Stork and Mike Roman are two returning seniors who head the pitching staff. They also double as outfielders.

Other returning seniors include Mark Kost (infield), Jerry Wieniec (infield) and Jack Dakesian (pitcher-outfielder).

The key to the Chargers' season lies on the shoulders of junior pitchers Mark Sokolov and Doug Wieniec, Jerry's younger brother, who both have the potential to be great hurlers, according to Marten.

"I think this is the best team I've had in three years. We have the most

potential we've ever had," the Charger coach said. "If the junior pitchers come along, we'll be in it," he said in reference to the league race.

Other key juniors include Ken Angrove and the keystone combination of Gary Voight (second base) and Bill Desmond (shortstop). Frank Spier and Eric Jarvis are two other juniors expected to make a contribution to the club.

SOUTHFIELD loses its pitching ace Dain Smith to graduation, but the Blue Jays still have nine returning lettermen on the club. The only problem the Blue Jays face is the stiff competition offered annually by perennial league baseball powers Hazel Park and Royal Oak Kimball.

Southfield coach Cal Fletcher feels he has depth on his pitching

staff, both 1 left-handed and right-handed hurlers, which should help the Jays handle a rugged schedule of doubleheaders. But he questions his staff's overall quality.

Fletcher said that compared to other teams his pitching was "not as good but not as much. We have three or four to give us more depth."

The Jays' coach sees visions of a league title as a distant object.

"Again, it's going to be tough," the Southfield coach said. "Hazel Park and Royal Oak are always tough and they have everyone back."

"Any other year we'd really be in the thick of it. It's going to be doggedog. I hope we're in the thick of it."

Senior catcher Mike McMan, one of the most sought after players in the area, leads the Blue Jays' attack this year. He hit .300 last season and is

one of the team's co-captains.

Tony Slavin, the other co-captain, is a senior left-hander who heads the pitching staff and also plays the outfield.

Two other returning senior starters are shortstop Alan Manduzas and outfielder Greg White. Both should see a lot of action this year.

Fletcher is blessed with three transfer students — two of whom are juniors on this year's squad.

The Bond brothers, senior K Kevin and junior Keith, come from Detroit Mumford. Kevin is a pitcher-outfielder who may be "a pleasant surprise" to the club, according to Fletcher. Keith is a first-baseman-pitcher.

Bryan Greer is a junior outfielder who comes from Memphis, Michigan. Steve Feldman, a senior left-hander, is another

pitching hopeful who is a first-year player.

SOUTHFIELD CHRISTIAN's head man Bob Newman is the only baseball coach the school has had in the short five-year baseball history of the Class D institution.

This season, Newman says he will probably start only one senior and up to seven juniors in his line-up.

Christian loses 500 hitter (18-for-36) Jim Warsinski to graduation. He was a first baseman-pitcher.

Junior Rob Vosler heads this year's team. A good all-around athlete, Vosler will be the ace of the pitching staff and will play shortstop when he's not on the mound.

Despite seeing limited varsity action last year, Newman is high on Vosler, who has strengthened himself, physically, by lifting weights. He

also is an excellent basketball player.

"He (Vosler) looks to be very, very strong," Newman said. "He has a good move to first (base), good control and knowledge of the game."

Senior first baseman Bryan Wilson returns, hoping to avoid a mid-season hitting slump which plagued him last year. Still, he finished his junior year hitting .321.

Junior Joe Ninowski, an outfielder, saw limited action last year as a sophomore but still batted .413 against varsity competition. Steve Hall, another junior, can play both the infield and outfield.

John Sedor, who split his time between second and third base position last year as a sophomore, returns as the regular third baseman this year. He is a good hitter (.344 last year) but must improve his fielding.



Even though half of the teams in the Woodland Classic were in Florida competing in the ABC tournament, the tradition of at least one 700 series was carried on.

The chap who saved the day was Bob Patterson, who turned in his most consistent bowling of the year. He opened with a 234, added a 237 and finished with 236 for a 707. His nearest rival was Aaron Lipsky who fashioned a 679 series.

MARGE KROPACEK, the Canton Township homemaker who captains the Livonia Bowling Sales team in the all-star leagues, had one of the most unusual bowling experiences of her life Wednesday night at Crown Lanes.

Troubled with all manner of splits in her first two games in which she posted counts of 129 and 115, she did a complete turnaround in the final where she fired a 215.

JOHN HURLEY, the Westland Bowl sharpshooter, shot a 258 game last Monday morning, but it came just a few minutes too late. In just another 700 series of which he has 17 this season, he had to be content with a 658. Then, in his fourth game, he hit the 238, waved good bye and set out for the ABC in Florida.

In the ladies classic, Betty Hoener showed the way with games of 215 and 212 in a 617 series. Cyndi Edwards was right behind with a 234 in 610 and Bev Haggadone landed third with 603 that included a 257 game.

BRAD LACKEY was another who turned in a consistent performance.

Bowling in the Vinco League at Garden Lanes, he started with 224, came back with 219 and closed with 216 for 659 to gain the pacemaker role.

In order behind him came Loren Rigolite with 633, Bob Malinsant with 612, Frank Cernik with 601 and Al Kowalski with 595.

THE JUNIOR HOUSE league at Woodland Lanes came up with an unusual performer when Lee Carlesimo bowled a 638. It was unusual because he carries a 171 average and posted games of 191, 222 and 225 which is 125 pins over.

Among the other high scores, Marv Gadde linked games of 225, 215 and 238 for a 678 in the Great Scott loop. In the Ford LIT circuit, Norm Hamada registered a 252 and Steve Blaszcak posted a 244.

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AT MAYFLOWER LANES Al Tilley set the pace for the week when he rolled a 631 in the Movers league. Jack Brodie was next high for the week with 612. On the ladies side, Jan Livingston had a 584 and Mary Lou Wesman turned in a 574.

IN OTHER perfor-

manes Fred O'Connor paced the senior citizens at Plymouth Bowl with a 232 and Ev Hubble fired a 253 in a 587 series at Super Bowl.

AFTER GETTING away to a great start with games of 259 and 246, Dave Uniatowski faltered in the final and missed breaking the 700

barrier in the Bel-Aire Classic by a mere eight pins. With the pressure of the possible 700 he slumped to 187 and had to settle for 692.

With that count he had a big lead on his rivals as Jerry Fischer landed second with a 244 in 655 and Gary Hodge was tied with Jerry Snidley at 651 for third place.

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