

Clarenceville reaches 'B' finals

By DOUG FUNK

Clarenceville, which last year advanced to the Class B state softball finals with a predominantly junior team only to lose in the semifinals, will get a second chance to earn a title with a more experienced squad next weekend in Ionia.

The Trojans, with some sterling defensive play, defeated Southgate, 4-1, Saturday to win the championship of the Oak Park Regional.

Time and time again during both the regional final and their 6-0 victory over Tecumseh in the regional semifinal, the Trojans made the key defensive move when they had to.

In fact, Clarenceville coach Karen Oliva said her charges played as well in the field as they have all year long. "We were outstanding. That was the best defensive effort of the season," she said.

The key defensive play of the entire

afternoon probably occurred in the sixth inning of the regional final with Clarenceville ahead at the time 3-1.

Southgate's lead-off batter doubled and the next hitter popped what appeared to be a single into left center field. However, Peggy Gardella, the centerfielder, hustled to the ball and made a perfect throw to third baseman Kathy McCammon to retire the lead runner.

Also during the Southgate game,

Sharon Laird, the Trojans' first baseman snared a line drive, which she turned into an unassisted double play, and Cheryl Ranta, at second base, made an excellent catch of a line drive.

It's a good thing that the Trojans had such an outstanding day in the field because they punched only three hits during each game for a total of six for the day.

Clarenceville scored its first three runs against Southgate during the first

inning.

Ranta was safe on an error and Maureen Morrison and Lisa Redford each walked to lead the bases. Kris Klank, then drilled a single into right center field scoring Ranta and Morrison. When the ball was misbanded in the outfield, Redford crossed the plate.

Shelly McCamant knocked in the Trojans' other run with a sacrifice fly in the seventh inning.

Southgate scored its only run in the third inning by putting together a double and a single.

Clarenceville also struck early during its semifinal game against Tecumseh, scoring two runs in the first inning and three in the second.

The Trojans produced their first two runs without a hit, making use of two walks, a groundout and an error. In the second inning, Clarenceville runners crossed the plate on a wild pitch, a bases-loaded walk and an error.

Morrison knocked in Clarenceville's sixth run with a groundout in the fifth inning.

Mary Laird, as usual, pitched every inning of both games for the Trojans. She didn't strike out a batter all day, but the way she and her teammates were playing defense, she didn't have to.

Klank collected two of Clarenceville's three hits against Tecumseh, both singles. McCammon had the other, an infield single.

Pitching rules day

By KEN VOYLES

Three Detroit Catholic Central pitchers combined Saturday to defeat Lake Shore, 7-4, in a Class A State Regional baseball championship game at Hazel Park.

Ken Leonard, Jeff Evans and Greg Wendt held Lake Shore to four runs on three hits. While CC's offense tallied seven runs on six hits, Leonard pitched the first two innings, Evans worked the next two and Wendt completed the contest. Between them they tossed seven strikeouts.

CC will journey to Battle Creek Central High School for the Class A state finals Saturday.

The Shamrocks opened the scoring with one run in the bottom first inning when Jerry Scanlon walked, moved to second on a bunt sacrifice, went to third on a groundout and scored on an infield hit by Rob Williamson.

It wasn't until the third inning before CC exploded and ripped the game wide open. The Shamrocks scored five runs in that inning on four hits.

With two outs Mike Lewis walked, stole second and came home when Chris Sabo tripled into the rightfield corner. Sabo then scored when Williamson doubled. Williamson moved to third on a wild pitch and scored when John Lefebvre was safe on an error.

Tom Louwers then singled moving Lefebvre to third. Lefebvre scored when Louwers attempted to steal second and Louwers finally came home when Joe Chops singled.

In the fifth frame Lake Shore came back with two runs and CC added a final insurance tally also in the inning. Williamson reached first on an infield hit with Kevin Lacey stepping in as a pinch-runner. Lacey then moved to second on a wild pitch and third on a groundout. He scored when Chops was safe on an error.

Lake Shore picked up its final two runs in the top of the seventh.

"Our hitting was excellent. We took advantage of every defensive mistake they made," said CC coach Frank Corej. "We did hit the ball well but you can't take credit away from the three pitchers. We talked about it before the game and decided to use two or three pitchers if the heat got to bad. The heat was an important factor and we had to be set for that."

"I know the heat had to get to everybody but especially the pitchers," he continued. "You just cannot keep throwing hard in this kind of heat and humidity."

West loses heartbreaker

By BRAD EMONS

Frustration is the only way to describe Garden City West's regional final baseball loss to Adrian Saturday at Wyandotte's Memorial Park.

Adrian came into the regional with the worst record (11-9). But everything seemed to turn out right for the southern Michigan squad.

Adrian eliminated a good Plymouth Salem team in the opener, 2-1. Salem went into the game with an impressive 19-5 mark. West took care of Allen Park in its opener, 7-3, setting up the final with Adrian.

West pounded the ball all over the field against Adrian starting pitcher Larry Love but could only manage one run.

In fact, not one West batter struck out against Adrian pitching.

"We hit the fast ball against Allen Park but against Adrian we were overpitching," said a disappointed West coach Bob Dropp.

Love was much slower than Allen Park starting pitcher Scott Vaughn, a 27th round draft pick recently of the Detroit Tigers. "The Adrian pitching threw our timing off," Dropp said.

West took a brief 1-0 lead in the bottom of the third inning when pitcher Jerry Tatro hit a lowering 300-0 homer over the left field fence into a stiff wind. West got three hits in the inning but were able to score only one run.

In the top of the fourth inning, Adrian countered with two runs.

Centerfielder Steve Knorr led off with a walk. John Bailey followed with an infield single and then catcher Steve Brown drove home Knorr with Adrian's first run.

First baseman Chris Stevens singled home Bailey with the go ahead run with a line shot into left field. West mounted a threat in the final

inning when catcher Dave Seger rifled a double past Stevens in left field. Tatro then hit a sacrifice fly to right off Adrian reliever Ray Green, sending Stevens to third base with one out.

With the Adrian infield in, West's Mike White sent a shot up the middle and Adrian second baseman Rick Barber grabbed and made the put out at first. Pinch runner Kevin McHugh was unable to advance.

Green got the final out on a pop fly to second.

"We had a little luck going our way," admitted a happy Adrian coach Doug Nelson. "We came through with some clutch hitting and our pitching kept our defense alert."

"We are a better team than our record shows," he said. "We've lost five, one run games this season."

"You just can't win with one run," said Dropp. "We've had a good season. It was frustrating the way we lost this game."

In West's 7-3 victory over Allen Park, the Tigers struck for four runs in the third inning, rattling Vaughn. Shelton started the rally with a walk as Vaughn missed on some close pitches. The Tigers' Mike Anderson then laid down a perfect bunt which Vaughn threw a wild pitch into right field.

Gary Rago and Tom Miner followed with successive singles, scoring two runs. West tallied its other two runs when Jaquar third baseman Jim Ellegee threw past his catcher at home plate off a ground ball. Miner and Rago scored on the play.

In the fourth, West collected three more runs to take a commanding 7-0 advantage, knocking Vaughn out of the box in the process.

Allen Park came back with three runs in the bottom of the fourth but Miner, the starter, held the Jaquars

off with three final scoreless innings, lifting his record to 9-2.

The West lefty contributed to his own cause with three hits. On the mound he struck out 12.

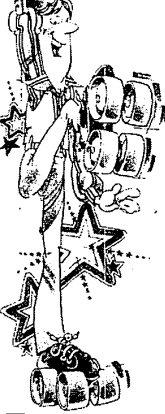
"The umpires called the strikes tight and Vaughn had to come over the plate," Dropp said. "We were waiting for his fast ball, but he was throwing in sequence, alternating with his curve."

West finished the season with a 19-5 mark.



Tom Miner, the ace of Garden City West's pitching staff, hurried the Trojans to victory over Allen Park in the first game of the Wyandotte Regional Saturday.

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