

1979 All-Area softball team loaded with talent

By MARTY BUDNER

The 1979 Observer & Eccentric All-Area Girls' Softball team consists of 13 players.

Because of a tie in voting at the in-

field and outfield positions, two extra players were added. The team was to have originally included three pitchers, a catcher, four infielders and three outfielders.

The O&E all-star team was recently

picked by the votes of area coaches.

The first team is composed of two players each from Troy Athens, Farmington, Bloomfield Hills Andover, Rochester Adams, Southfield-Lathrup and

West Bloomfield, Birmingham Marian has one representative.

Dave Marr, selected by his peers as coach of the year, is from Athens High School.

Following is a list of all stars by positions.

PITCHERS

Karen Czarnecki of Athens and Theresa Bechard of Adams were two of the Metro-Suburban Activities Association (MSAA) top pitchers this year.

A senior, Czarnecki had four shutouts and finished with an overall 9-6 record. The All-MSAA player was 5-1 in league action, with her only loss coming to Rochester Adams.

"She was overpowering on a lot of occasions, and she was more confident in herself this year," said Marr. "If the bases were loaded, she could come back and strike out the batters, whereas, last year, she might have walked them."

Czarnecki batted three straight years at the number four position. This year she hit .487 with 16 extra base hits.

Bechard had an overall 10-3 mark, with two of her losses coming to eventual state class A champion Royal Oak Pondero. The senior right hander was a first-team all league performer, and the Highlanders' most valuable player.

"She had a respectable record considering this was her first year of pitching," said Adams coach Dave Berube. "She has a tremendous arm, and she played left field for us when she didn't pitch."

Bechard, who elected to sit out her junior year, batted .413, and led the team in RBI's (45) and home runs (seven). Bechard was an all-league player as a sophomore.

CATCHER

Birmingham Marian's three-sport star Patti McDonald is the catcher.

Throughout her career at Marian, McDonald earned 14 varsity letters, including five in her sophomore year when she was with the swim team and ran track.

She was recently selected by the National High School Athletic Coaches Association as an All-American softball player. Last summer she played on a recreation six-pitch team which won a national championship.

INFIELDERS

The all-star infield is composed of Sally Maloney of Rochester Adams, Jean Zuhorski of Farmington, Pat Corfield of Southfield-Lathrup, Barb Arnold of West Bloomfield and Barb Cook of Bloomfield Hills Andover.

Maloney, only a sophomore, batted .457, was second on the team in RBI's (32) and second in home runs (six). Perhaps her most impressive statistic was she struck out just once in 98 trips to the plate.

Another sophomore, Zuhorski played third base and pitched. She had a 7-4 won-loss record with a 3.50 earned-run average. Zuhorski batted .389.

Arnold was one of West Bloomfield's top hitters this season. The senior first baseman hit .475, including two home runs and 11 doubles. She had 37 RBI's.

One of Arnold's best games this year was in the Greater Oakland Activities League (GOAL) title-clinching game against Milford when she had three hits and three RBI's. She had four hits against Saginaw Eisenhower.

Cook has been All-GOAL for two years and has a three-year varsity batting average of .400 even. A fine shortstop with good range, Cook batted .384 and had 18 RBI's this year.

Cook led Andover in hits (25), slugging percentage (.750), runs scored (30) and stolen bases (18). She was selected as the Barons' most valuable player this spring.

OUTFIELDERS

Nancy Slattery of Troy Athens, Wendy Dierkes of Farmington, Stephanie Smith of West Bloomfield and Lisa Zoltnier of Bloomfield Hills Andover are the four outfielders.

A speedy junior, Slattery batted .400 and was one of Athens' top defenders. As a leadoff batter, she was on base 81 times (40 walks, 23 hits, nine on base by errors and four hit by pitches) in 113 at bats.

A three-year starter, Dierkes batted for a .468 average at the number three spot for coach Vestus Spindler. She walked 20 times and had an on-base average of .678.

Dierkes, who also played basketball, was solid on defense. She committed only two errors.

Smith batted .437, and had 22 RBI's for the Lakers. In a playoff victory over Birmingham Seaholm, Smith, a junior, had three hits and two RBI's.

Zoltnier has been All-GOAL for the past two years. She threw out five players at the plate this season — two of which were game savers for the Barons.

She batted .400, had 15 RBI's and led the team with five home runs. In three varsity seasons she averaged .410.

COACH OF YEAR

The Redhawks culminated one of their best seasons ever in district action.

Coch Marr's team, which had only two starting seniors, was beaten in the district semifinals against Warren Mott. The 9-3 defeat was Athens' worst of the year.

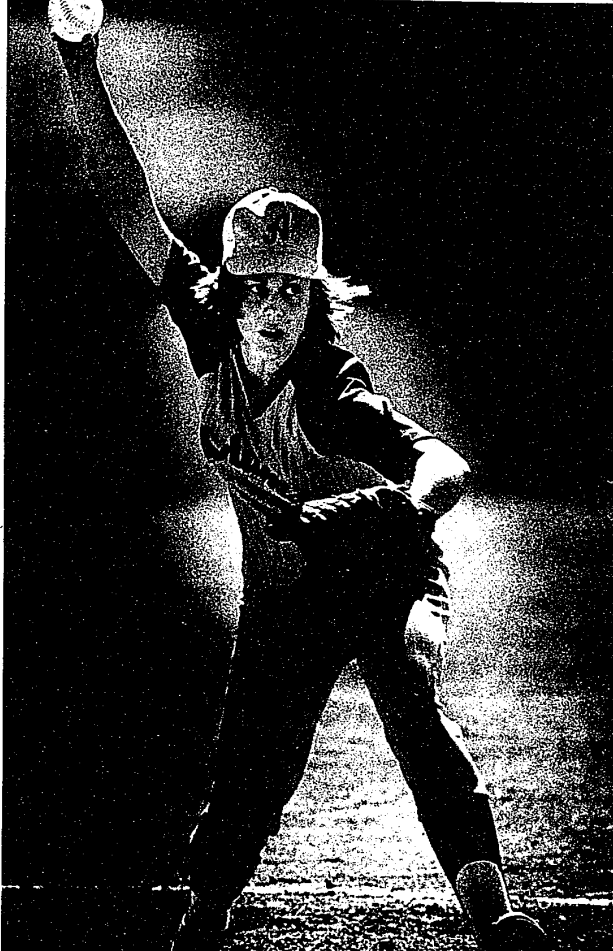
Athens finished with a respectable 21-7 record. The Redhawks were second to state champion Dondoro in the MSAA.

Athens won the Pontiac Invitational championship early in the year.

"When you win 21 games, you have to be satisfied with your performance," said Marr.

"At the beginning of the season we believed we could do what we did. We won all the games we were supposed to win, and three of our seven losses were by one run.

"We're happy with the season we had, and we're already excited about next season," he said.



Theresa Bechard of Adams High School had a 10-3 mound record, and led her team in runs batted in with 45. (Staff photo by Mindy Saunders)

All-area girls' softball

ALL-AREA GIRLS' SOFTBALL

FIRST TEAM

Name	School	Position
Karen Czarnecki	Troy Athens	Pitcher
Theresa Bechard	Rochester Adams	Pitcher
Patti McDonald	Birmingham Marian	Catcher
Sally Maloney	Rochester Adams	Infield
Jean Zuhorski	Farmington	Infield
Missy Thomas	Southfield-Lathrup	Infield
Pat Corfield	Southfield-Lathrup	Infield
Barb Arnold	West Bloomfield	Infield
Barb Cook	Bloomfield Hills Andover	Infield
Nancy Slattery	Troy Athens	Outfield
Wendy Dierkes	Farmington	Outfield
Stephanie Smith	West Bloomfield	Outfield
Lisa Zoltnier	Bloomfield Hills Andover	Outfield
Dave Marr	Troy Athens	Coach of the Year

SECOND TEAM

Karen Crawlis	Birmingham Groves	Pitcher
Karen Murphy	Birmingham Seaholm	Catcher
Margie Klir	Bloomfield Hills Labser	Infield
Karen Abosta	Troy Athens	Infield
Rita Love	Troy Athens	Infield
Carol Patrick	Birmingham Seaholm	Infield
Jeanne Freed	West Bloomfield	Outfield
Lona Makim	Birmingham Groves	Outfield



DAVE MARR
Coach of Year



KAREN CZARNECKI
Troy Athens



NANCY SLATTERY
Troy Athens



SALLY MALONEY
Rochester Adams



JEAN ZUHORSKI
Farmington



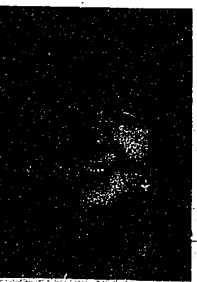
WENDY DIERKES
Farmington



MISSY THOMAS
Southfield-Lathrup



PAT CORFIELD
Southfield-Lathrup



BARB ARNOLD
West Bloomfield



LISA ZOLTNIER
Bloomfield Hills Andover



BARB COOK
Bloomfield Hills Andover



PATTI McDONALD
Birmingham Marian