

Tie Games Become A Habit With GC East

Baseball isn't a game supposed to end up in ties. But don't tell that to the Garden City East team in the Connie Mack League.

Twice in a row last week, East had to settle for a deadlock. First it was a 6-6 standoff with Franklin, then 4-4 with Tom's Service.

There was one bright spot, however, as far as East Manager Don Hannan was concerned. In each game, his team rolled from behind with a big sixth inning to pull even before darkness fell and forced the suspension of action.

AGAINST FRANKLIN, East scored five times with hits by Tom Dobby, Brian Smith and Ken Shaw the big blows. Shaw's single drove in the final two runs. Dobby and Smith each had a pair of safeties in the game.

In tying Tom's, East pushed in three runs in the sixth inning.

Dobby singled and Ron Wazinski walked. After they stole a base, Eric Pollack singled them in. Then Pollack stole second and scored on Dave Bailey's single.

Bailey pitched one-hit, scoreless ball during the final four innings.

Hubert gained second place in the American Division with a 11-3 romp over Churchill.

The Stevenson High athletes, who make up Hubert, found themselves two runs back in the first inning when Armstrong walked. Watson tripled and Johnson singled for Churchill.

Hubert came up with five runs in the second when Stu Rose knocked in two markers and Jim Cron, Gary Croskey and Bob Picano one each.

Hubert added two runs in the third when Cron singled in two more runs. Cron followed suit in the fifth when Hubert added three runs. A hit batsman and two walks pushed in the other run in the fifth.

Four walks gave Hubert another run in the sixth.

Mike Gee scattered six hits, fanned 12 and walked one for the winner.

MARK BIDIGARE and John Owens teamed up with some excellent pitching as the Plymouth Elks scalped American Sentry, 9-1.

Frank Geluso clubbed three of the hits for the losers.

The Elks scored three times in the third when Howie Schryer, who had two hits in the game, doubled two markers home and Dan Hees sent in the other.

Plymouth wrapped it up with five runs on two hits, two walks and some errors in the seventh.

Ray Ponke bested Dale Robson in another pitchers' duel as Chesley Industries of Farmington nipped Gates Real Estate of Plymouth-Livonia, 3-2.

Hits by Vic Flemming and Paul Kupferschmidt, plus an error, produced the deciding run in the third. Thereafter, the teams played scoreless baseball. Danny Grimes drove in both runs for Gates.

Each pitcher allowed only four hits.

An equally-impressive mound duel was that in which B.J. Ratigan (Franklin) nosed out the Livonia Optimists, 2-1.

ROB HOLLANDSWORTH emerged the winner in the extra-inning battle when Don Opland singled home Randy Lee, who had opened the eighth inning with a triple.

A strikeout which got away from the catcher and an error led to the Optimists run in the first inning. Paul Sopisch singled in the tying run in the fifth after Opland walked and was forced by Gary Allen, who then stole second.

Redford Township's Warholak Township rolled along unbeaten by routing Northville Reef, 9-3.

Winning pitcher Kirk Taylor fanned eight, walked two and allowed three hits as Dave Martin supported him with three hits and four runs batted in.

Warholak pulled ahead with five runs in the first inning. Walks to Denny Blazok and Randy Taylor and an infield hit by Kirk Taylor loaded the bases. Martin singled in two runs. Tom Wysocki singled in another and Bill Herbert two more to give Warholak a cozy lead.

THURSTON OF REDFORD stayed on top in the American League when John Munson outdueled Steve Pummill and Garden City West, 3-2.

Thurston had taken a 2-0 lead when Dennis Poppenger doubled in two runs in the third after Gordon Ezres and Bill Graustein singled.

Then West scored once in a hit by Jim Whaley and Paul Pierson and tied in the seventh when Craig Sylvester singled after Al Poland singled and was advanced to second on Pat McHugh's sacrifice.

But in the bottom of the seventh, Munson walked and streaked home with the winning run on Scott Stacy's triple.



DADDY HELPS two-year-old Justin Patterson take his turn at the plate during the annual Tigers' Father and Son game. Justin doesn't seem to have the same interest in the game as Papa Doryl. (Observer photos by Vince Wriek)

Bjerke Streak Ends; Allows Run, Loses

All great achievements sooner or later must come to an end -- and for pitcher Dale Bjerke of Redford Township's Greater Livonia Adray League his shutout streak now is history.

He had worked through 31 straight innings without allowing a run.

Then when Bjerke finally was touched for a tally last Sunday, it cost him a ball game as Northville edged out a 1-0 thriller.

As brilliant as Bjerke was, Jeff Taylor of Northville was just as great on that particular afternoon.

TAYLOR ALLOWED one hit -- a single by Bill Howe in the second inning. He fanned six and walked one.

Meantime, Bjerke was touched for only two hits and three walks, but it was a walk to Stan Nierder in the seventh and final inning -- a sacrifice and a single by Bernie Bach that did the damage.

Taylor faced only 23 men, two above regular for a seven inning game.

The defeat gave Redford a split for its day's effort. In another Sunday battle, the defending champion Townshipers won over Plymouth, 5-2.

Greg Main pitched six innings and Kirk Taylor finished up for the winners who scored three times in the second inning when Dennis Poppenger homered after Howe walked and Main singled. In the third inning, Main doubled after a Howe single.

Then Dennis Benedict homered in the fifth to complete the Redford scoring.

Plymouth averted a shutout with two runs in the sixth when Howie Schryer walked, Bob Kellman was safe on a fielder's choice, Dale Rumburger and Pat Cunningham singled and Larry Wasalski was safe on an error.

The Plymouth team earlier in the day had downed Farmington's Holcomb team, 3-1, as Rumburger, an all-star catcher moved to the pitcher's slab and allowed seven hits, fanned five and walked two.

Scott Gentz, the losing pitcher, allowed only two hits.

Plymouth scored once in the first inning when Kellman walked and came around on a passed ball and two wild pitches.

In the second inning, Wasalski doubled in John Stout and Cunningham, who had walked.

Holcomb's run came on a hit by Brooks and an error.

WESTLAND and Garden City Darin split a double-header. Westland took the opener, 3-1, but was spanked in the nightcap, 15-1.

Kerry Webb was the winning pitcher for Westland as his mates scored three times in the fifth inning when Dave Fisher, Ron Genrich and Archie Lieb singled to load the bases.

Then Dave Conlin singled in two runs and Gary Battles delivered a sacrifice fly to finish the scoring for the winners of loser Rick Orlandi.

Six runs in the first inning and seven in the second inning turned the nightcap into a runaway and made Craig Puishes an easy winner.

Puishes helped himself with two hits while Rick Lang had three and Charley Evans drove in five runs.

Evans started the big first inning with a single, Al Poland, Ed Puishes, Lang and Greg Puishes each had a hit in the wild inning that gave Garden City its cozy lead.



SAFE! That's the sign given by Joe Hiller, year-old-son of Pitcher John Hiller, who has a tight grip on his pacifier.

Ponke Becomes Iron Man For Farmington Legion

They don't come much stronger-armed than Ray Ponke of Farmington.

Ray pitched for two sandlot baseball teams -- in the Connie Mack League and in the American Legion.

Saturday he won for his Mack team. Sunday he came back with just about a day's rest and turned in a one-hitter to beat Clarkston, 2-1, and give Farmington a split after Clarkston had won the opener, 3-0.

PONKE STRUCK out eight and walked two in his fine performance.

His mates scored once in the first inning on a walk to John Holappa, a single by Dan Dell-

ing and a double by Dave Shay.

Then in the third, Ponke walked and came around to score on a single by Delling and a sacrifice fly by Shay.

Clarkston scored three times in the fifth to beat Dennis Hagen without getting the ball out of the infield.

A walk, fielder's choice, bunt single, a walk and another fielder's choice did the damage against Hagen.

Farmington made only three hits in the games -- singles by Holappa, Shay and Paul Kupferschmidt.

THE SPLIT CAME after Farmington dropped a double-

header on Saturday to Waterford Mott, 4-2 and 4-3.

Mott needed 10 innings to win the opener after Shay singled, Mike Hart walked, Kupferschmidt singled and then John Flemming singled -- the latter driving in the two Farmington runs.

Flemming went the route for Farmington.

Mott scored twice in the first inning and twice in the third to beat Bruce Econoou in the second game.

Hits by Rick Garneau, Ponke and Holappa produced the first run for Farmington in the third. Two came over on a walk to Ponke, a single by Holappa, a double by Stan Kouris and a hit by Delling.



TAKING BIG SWING is Jim Price, 8, son of Catcher Jim Price as he gets ready for action in the annual contest between Tiger fathers and their sons. Jim missed this one, but he belted a couple others for hits.

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