

Sports

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entertainment inside



(F10)

Area squad earns pro raves

By Brad Emons
staff writer

IT WAS A Camelot-type of season for Emil Majeski and his Redford Thurston baseball team.

When the state tournament began, Majeski's Eagles were nowhere to be found in the Observerland rankings. They had a 10-9-1 record although they had gained a share of the Northwest Suburban League (NSL) crown with Garden City.

Redford Catholic Central, Livonia Churchill, Garden City, Plymouth Canton and Livonia Stevenson were all ahead of Thurston.

But underdog Thurston saved the best for last, winning seven consecutive tournament games and beating four state-ranked teams in the process en route to the Class B championship, the first state crown in the school's 28-year history.

Majeski, a veteran of 19 seasons, is to be saluted for the job he did this season — thus, he is the 1984 Observerland Coach of the Year.

NOT TO be overlooked were the efforts of Garden City coach Bob Dropp, whose team posted a 19-7 record with an inexperienced lineup, or Churchill coach Herb Osterland, whose team claimed a share of the tough Western Lakes Conference crown with Northville and beat Class A state champion Walled Lake Western twice.

This year's team is talented and versatile. The team is led by Redford St. Agatha pitcher Andy Robertson, who unfortunately couldn't make our color photo section because he had to report to Batavia of the New York-Penn League.

Area coaches gathered recently to select the top players. Here are the results.

FIRST TEAM
PITCHERS

Andy Robertson, Redford St. Agatha: What a season for Robertson, who was drafted in the sixth round by the Cleveland Indians and signed a pro contract immediately.



This year's All-Area baseball team is loaded with fence-busting talent. From left to right are Tim Michalik (CC), John Nissen (CC), Bob Rousseau (Thurston), Paul Krol (Garden City), Mark Bennett

Michigan coach Bud Middaugh said the hard-throwing right-hander, clocked at 88 mph, had "the best arm in the state."

This season, Robertson went a deceiving 11-4, but he had a pair of no-

bitters and three one-bitters.

He struck out 199 batters in 104 innings and posted an ERA of 0.47.

He also batted .350 and hit three homers as the Aggies posted a 20-10 record.

(Canton), Tim DeMarco (Thurston), Mike Gindrich (Selom), Bob Foust (Churchill), and Brian Porter (Stevenson).

Careerwise, Robertson was 31-9 with five no-bitters. He was an All-Catholic pick three times.

John Nissen, Catholic Central: The hard-throwing senior right-hander posted

a 10-2 record with a 1.52 ERA this season.

Nissen struck out 102 batters in 73½ innings pitched this season. He gave up only 35 walks.

The three-year varsity performer

was 18-4 and was "an excellent strikeout pitcher with a good curve ball" to compliment his fastball," according to CC coach John Salter.

CATCHER

Bob Rousseau, Redford Thurston: Last year Rousseau made second team, and this year he became the area's top catcher, batting .333 (prior to the state semifinals) with 31 hits and 20 RBI.

The 5-foot-10, 150-pound receiver captained the Eagles and possessed a strong arm.

He was an All-NSL and All-Region (Class B) choice this year.

"Bob's a great team player with an excellent arm," said the Thurston coach.

INFELDERS

Mark Bennett, Plymouth Canton: The senior was a versatile performer for the always-potent Chiefs.

He grabbed the first base slot with a .371 average with 23 hits and 20 RBI. He led the team in runs scored (25) and home runs (5).

When he wasn't playing first, Bennett pitched and compiled a 7-5 record with four saves.

Coach Fred Crissey said Bennett was "Canton's clutch player for '84."

"Mark's a fine competitor and fielder," said the Canton coach.

Paul Krol, Garden City: The senior shortstop, headed for the University of Detroit, is on the first team for the second consecutive year.

As a senior, Krol batted .407 with 35 hits and 24 RBI.

Careerwise, Krol hit over .400 and collected eight homers in three years of varsity ball. He also played on three district and two league championship teams.

"Paul is a good contact hitter — good wrists — who stings the ball," said GC coach Bob Dropp. "He was very instrumental in the success of Garden City baseball for the past three years."

Bob Foust, Livonia Churchill: Hitting was Foust's forte.

The senior shortstop batted .370 this

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All-Stars put on 'Classic' show

By Jim Hughes
staff writer

It's called a classic — the Observer & Eccentric Girls High School Soccer Classic to be exact. But now, with good reason.

The 336 soccer fans who gathered at Livonia Stevenson Friday were treated to a thrilling game, which featured some of the top high school players in the state. The final 5-2 score went in favor of the Observer team, but it was closer than some may have expected.

In last year's inaugural event, the Observer team posted a 7-1 victory, and the Eccentric squad wanted nothing more than to redeem itself. That they did.

Down, 3-0, with about 13 minutes to play in the game, the Eccentric scored back-to-back goals from Troy's Carol Grenn and Birmingham Seaholm's Katy Andrews, to turn a would-be rout into a barn-burner.

"I think the girls may have let up a bit," said Stevenson coach Norcine Divens, who directed the Observer squad. "There was an injury which stopped play for about 3-4 minutes, and we relaxed a bit. That stoppage of play can stop the momentum of a team."

QUICKLY, THE momentum shifted in the Eccentric's favor. The Observer lead, built on goals from Stevenson's Mary Kay Hussey, Plymouth Canton's Lisa Russell and Livonia Churchill's

Jennifer Flowers, diminished in a short span.

Grenn — who played most of the game as sweeper but was shifted to center-forward late in the game — had a scoring chance, but was tripped by goalie Betty Eads of Farmington Hills Our Lady of Mercy. Grenn, on a penalty kick, blasted the ball to the upper left corner to cut the gap to 3-1.

Andrews made it a one-goal game when she headed in a pass from Birmingham Marian's Shannon Bassette, and there was a scent of an upset brewing.

However, killer instinct from Mercy's Annette Ruggiero took care of the outcome. Ruggiero, voted the game's Most Valuable Player, assisted on Flowers' second goal of the game, and added an insurance marker with less than a minute to play.

"She certainly deserved the MVP award," Divens said. "She's an excellent ball-handler and a very hard player. She has good soccer sense. She stands out wherever she plays."

RUGGIERO'S PLAY stole a little of the thunder from the Eccentric's valiant comeback, but it couldn't totally overshadow the effort.

"These players weren't going to give up in that situation," said Marian coach Terry Dilworth, who ran the show for the Eccentric. "They're just too experienced for that. I thought if we could tie it up, whoever would score the next goal would have it."

"They (Observer) just had too much energy at the end. That last push took everything out of us."

Although Ruggiero was brilliant from start to finish, picking an MVP is difficult. As expected when the state's best gather on one field, it was coast-to-coast stars.

The Observer had Hussey, last year's MVP. She excited the crowd every time the ball touched her MVP (most valuable foot). Stevenson's Cheryl Galindo was a stalwart on defense. Stevenson goalie Dorotea Beagle shut out the Eccentric during her stay in goal, and Flowers led the offense with her two-goal performance.

Had the victory gone to the Eccentric, Grenn no doubt would be taking the MVP award. Her role as sweeper kept the Observer from racking up more goals, and when she moved to

**Mercy standout
Annette Ruggiero
scored one goal and
added two assists to
earn MVP honors in the
Observer & Eccentric
Soccer Classic.**

forward, the attack was fierce.

"Two years her play before, but to have her on your team, well, it was fantastic," Dilworth said. "She was incredible. She was all over the field. If she played one position, I didn't notice it. She was all over the place."

"I've never seen an effort like that. She played outstanding is what she did."

Another Eccentric standout was goalie Sue Lormin of Troy Athens, who came out of the net several times to close off Observer threats.

HUSSEY OPENED the game's scoring early in the first half when she scored on an unassisted goal. Her shot was right on center and through the outstretched hands of Lormin.

To that point, the play was controlled by the Observer team.

The momentum shifted in favor of the Eccentric when Troy's Lisa Santucci took a shot, which was handled by Beagle. Shortly thereafter, Troy's Joema Marquardt rifled a shot which looked like it would find the range, but Beagle tipped and snared the ball from flight.

The most dangerous threat came when Marquardt headed lower and was tripped. Andrews took the penalty kick, and her blistering shot hit the inside of the right post, and bounced to the left side of the field before Athens' Lori Nicely overbore the goal.

The 1-0 score stood at the half.

Russell made it a 2-0 game when she fired a shot from 25 yards, which Lormin couldn't control, and the ball trickled across the goal line. Flowers' first goal, which gave the Observer a 3-0 lead, was the result of some nifty teamwork. Churchill's Dorotea Beagle passed to Ruggiero, who in turn fed Flowers with a short cross-field pass.

The pre-game buildup drew an anal-



photos by RANDY BOKST/staff photographer

Eccentric team goalie Sue Lormin of Troy Athens draws a crowd from (left to right) Jennifer Hussey of Churchill, Angel Cepaloti of Marian and Jennifer Flowers of Churchill. The Observer team won the battle, 5-2.

ogy with Rocky I, where Rocky Balboa (Sylvester Stallone) just looked for a chance against title-holder Apollo Creed (Robert Duvall). It was every bit as close as the movie majestically depicted.

"We knew it was going to be a tough-

er game (than last year's)," Divens said. "We knew a lot of their players because we play against them in the off-season. We knew it would be a tight game."

In kicking terms, it was a tremendous decision, but the scoring was close on every card.



Game MVP Annette Ruggiero of Mercy uses some nifty footwork to get past Marian's Debbie Wojlarski in Friday's all-star soccer matchup.