

# Holmes leads Chiefs to 2nd softball title

BY BILL PARKER  
STAFF WRITER

There was no mystery in Plymouth Canton's 3-0 victory Wednesday in the Western Lakes Activities Association softball championship game at Walled Lake Central. Kelly Holmes had all the answers.

The senior fire-baller hurled a near-perfect game, allowing just one hit, walking none and fanning 14 batters as the Chiefs defended the WLA title with a shutout victory. Canton beat Central 10-3 in last year's title game.

"It's always hard to repeat something," said Canton coach Jim Arnold, whose team improved to 27-4 on the year. "We came in today with the attitude that we just wanted to have fun and whatever happens, happens. We had a kind of relaxed attitude and just wanted to play Canton softball."

Which they did.

The Chiefs took a 1-0 lead in the top of the first, and Holmes & Company took care of business after that. Defensively, the Chiefs gave very little away, committing just one error in seven innings.

Holmes, who threw 62 strikes in 83 pitches, received strong support from shortstop Dani Marlene (three putouts including a heads-up play on a hard line drive in the fifth inning off the bat of Central's Jenny Czach), third baseman Tina Schaefer, second baseman Kate Strahan and right fielder Sarah Rowe.

"Walled Lake Central is a real good team, a good hitting team," said Arnold. "They didn't go 9-1 in the league and win the Lakes Division by not hitting the ball. They can swing the bat."

"I was a little concerned coming in, but when Kelly is on there's not too many people that

can hit her. If we can get some runs on the scoreboard, I feel pretty confident with Kelly in there."

Rowe opened the game with a walk and moved to second on a stolen base. With one out, Rowe moved to third on a ground out, then gave the Chiefs an early 1-0 lead by stealing home.

Holmes gave herself some insurance in the second inning when she lined a would-be single up the middle into a stiff wind. The ball dropped sharply after reaching the outfield and scooped second baseman Glenn Bessco as Holmes circled the bases to give the Chiefs a 2-0 lead.

The Chiefs scored the final run in the fifth inning. Tracy Linger reached first on an error, moved to second on a single by Glenn Bessco and took them on a walk to designated hitter Laura Ciantar. With the bases loaded and no one out, it appeared the Chiefs were on the verge of blowing the game open. But Central pitcher Jenny O'Donnell, who tossed a solid game for the Vikings, struck the next two batters to pop out. Tina Schaefer belted an RBI single to center allowing Linger to cross the plate.

O'Donnell, who allpped to 9-2 on the year, scattered four hits, walked one and struck out two.

Betsy Harvey broke up Holmes' no-hitter with a single over second base in the fourth.

"I told the kids they didn't have anything to be ashamed of," said Viking coach Gordon Glenn, whose team allpped to 20-8. "The kids played very well. They worked hard and had fun. I'd rather lose to Canton in a close game than beat up on someone 20-0. You don't achieve anything that way. This reassures us that we can play with anyone."

# Underdog Canton wins league crown

BY BRAD EMONS  
STAFF WRITER

Pitcher Craig Benedict proved to be a bulldog Wednesday, as well as the rest of his Plymouth Canton teammates as they captured the Western Lakes Activities Association baseball title.

The host Chiefs scored a 5-3 triumph over Westland John Glenn and avenged a double-header sweep administered by the Rockets earlier in the year (including a 2-0 victory against Benedict) despite being out-hit 9-3.

Canton's five-run uprising in the bottom of the third inning proved to be the difference in the ball game.

Benedict (7-5), a senior right-hander, once again was cool and composed, winning his fifth-straight decision. He had nine strikeouts and walked five.

"Craig was in trouble, but he really hung in there even though he was a little tired and frustrated at the end," said Canton first-year coach Mark LaPointe, whose team is now 20-11.

Canton pulled off the victory against the 19-4 Rockets with solid defense and sound pitching.

"We know we were up against

home on a wild pitch, putting the Chiefs up 5-1. Bessco then slammed the door on Canton, retiring the final 10 batters he faced in order without allowing a hit.

Meanwhile, Glenn tried to mount a comeback, scoring twice in the sixth on an RBI line single by Scheffer followed by an RBI sacrifice fly by Nesbitt.

With Scheffer on first, Glenn shortstop Derek Bessco then made a bid to tie it, ripping a shot to the left field fence, but Fordham caught it on the warning track.

"(Fordham) made a tough play; I thought it was out," LaPointe said. "And we brought in Sam Brammick to play right field, and he made a key catch in the same inning (on Nesbitt's RBI sacrifice fly).

Glenn's Brian Tack doubled off Benedict with two out in the top of the seventh, but the right-hander, who appeared to get strong in the later going, finished the game off with a strikeout.

"He's legitimate," Hoenes said. "Benedict is a good pitcher. You've got to give him some credit."

Bessco struck out Brad Pasklevitch to end the inning, but not before Fordham raced

a final four team in Glenn; a team that can win its district and regional," LaPointe said. "These kids have believed in themselves all year long. They remained focused and steadfast in their goal from the beginning of a run home, a run, making the score 1-1."

Left fielder Ryan Fordham then sent a shot to right field past the glove of Greg Nesbitt, who couldn't track the ball down. The three-run triple put Canton ahead 4-1.

"Before he went to the plate, we talked about going with the pitch and going the other way," LaPointe said. "Ryan just keeps getting the job done. He's just a battler."

Hoenes then brought on junior lefty Bryan Bessco out of the bullpen to replace Scheffer.

"We just don't give Aaron enough support," Hoenes said. "The three losses were not his fault. Unless he strikes out eight or nine, our guys struggle when he's on the mound for some reason."

Bessco struck out Brad Pasklevitch to end the inning, but not before Fordham raced

# Rocks rally past Hawks on diamond

Despite taking a 2-0 lead into the fifth Thursday, Farmington Hills Harrison couldn't hold a late Plymouth Salom surge as the visiting Rocks claimed a 6-2 victory.

The Rocks (15-11) scored four in the top of the fifth and added an insurance run in the sixth to pull away. Salem's Nirav Kher went the distance and struck out five Hawks while walking one.

Salem's 13-hit attack was led by Bryan Zarosely and Charlie

Winstel, both of whom went 3-for-4. Dave Knight (two RBI) and Jamie Owens (one RBI) added two hits each.

Kyle Smith took the loss for Harrison (9-8) as he allowed 12 hits, struck out six and walked three. Matt Woolf, Jeff Cialo and Joe Pesci were 2-for-3 for the Hawks.

CHURCHILL 7, NORTH 1: Even though his debut bid was the seventh inning Wednesday, Mark Rutherford still proved to be the difference in Livonia Churchill's romp over visiting North Farmington.

Rutherford scattered six hits while striking out 11 and walking none to help the Chargers improve to 11-9 overall. The Raiders fell to 5-14.

Sean Scheuber, Mike Marchetti and Todd Siedleszczek ripped two hits each and drove in one for Churchill, which broke the game open with a five-run fourth.

Corey Meurer had two hits for North. Jason Danilewicz recorded the loss as he failed to survive past the fifth.

IN FRANKLIN 12, FARMINGTON 8: After

taking an 8-1 lead Wednesday, Livonia Franklin held off visiting Farmington.

The Patriots (7-17) collected 16 hits — three by Phil Big, who hammered two doubles and knocked in two runs. Franklin also received two hits and two RBI each from Matt Fournier and Pat McCormack.

Sophomore Rich Longford pitched the first 3 1/2 innings to record the victory. Sophomore Jason Schuler hurled the final 3 1/2 for the save.

Ron Salomonson went 3-for-4 with two RBI to pace Farmington. Curt Katis added two hits and one RBI. Dave Schall took the loss.

# Harrison tops Farmington

Farmington Harrison pounded out 16 hits and stole 11 bases Wednesday to defeat host Farmington 16-8 in softball.

Kelly LaCasse led Harrison (4-15) with three hits, two stolen bases and four runs scored. Jenny Mysalinski had three hits, two stolen bases; three RBI and three runs.

Hester Hopkins contributed three hits, three RBI, two stolen bases and two runs. Catcher Kristen Kozlarski, who had two RBI and two stolen bases, picked off four runners and threw out one stealing.

Erin Lacasse scattered six hits and 10 walks over seven innings and struck out five, to earn the victory for Harrison.

Suzanne Carlson pitched all seven innings for Farmington. Sara Thomas and Jenny Sever had two RBI each for the Falcons.

On Thursday, the Hawks lost to visiting Novi 9-7 in a non-

league game. Despite outitting the Wildcats 12-10, Harrison was unable to recover from a 6-0 deficit after three innings.

Kelly Barton's two-run triple in the seventh lifted Novi. Barton finished two hits and two RBI. Erin Berke recorded the victory.

Amy Geary threw the first three innings for Harrison before being relieved by Lacasse. Amanda Ault had two hits and three stolen bases. Mysalinski, Hopkins and Geary added two hits and one RBI each.

WESTERN 7, NORTH 6: Melanie Chesny gave up four hits and struck out eight for North Farmington, which committed eight errors in the loss to Walled Lake Western.

The errors occurred in two innings. The Raiders led 6-2 entering the sixth before allowing two in the sixth and three in the seventh.

Kate Mackis went 3-for-3 with a home run and two RBI for North (10-14). Jennifer Cassidy added two RBI and Becky Thurston one RBI.

# Collegiate from page 1C

seven innings Wednesday, leading Wendy's to a 12-5 triumph over the defending LCBL playoff champions.

Jim Solak went 3-for-4 with an RBI in a losing cause. Mike Zielinski added two hits and knocked in a run.

John Collins had two hits, including a three-run homer for Wendy's. Dan Schmitzer contributed three hits and scored three times, while John Arvai went 2-for-4 with a double.

Ryan Grabetz, who allowed five earned runs in four innings, took the loss.

Del-Wal nips Caesars

Winning pitcher Derek Wire-

baugh (five innings) and reliever Todd Boike (two innings) combined on a three-bitter Wednesday at Ford Field, 2-1.

Boike worked out of a bases loaded jam in the seventh, fanning the final three batters to gain the save.

Matt Recht (University of Michigan) and Chad Cilley (Sienna Heights) each contributed RBI singles for the victors, who collected five hits.

Mark D'Antonio (University of Detroit-Mercy) threw a complete game for Caesars, but suffered the loss.

# SPORTS ROUNDUP

ACADEMIC ALL-STARS

The Mid-American Conference has honored 79 student-athletes from Western Michigan University by choosing them for the Academic Honor Roll.

Among the honorees: Joe Bonnett, a senior hockey player from Canton, with a 3.16 grade point in secondary education; Todd LaJoy, a sopho-

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