

Blazers tumble 9-7

By BRAD EMONS
STAFF WRITER

It was a Nike and Reebok kind of day all wrapped into one for the Livonia Ladywood softball team in a Class A regional semifinal Saturday at Plymouth Salem.

The Blazers just couldn't do it, discovering that life is short even when you play hard as Ann Arbor Pioneer spoiled their tournament run 9-7.

Ladywood (22-12-1) barely resembled the team that posted the area's biggest upset only a week earlier in the district finals against No. 2-ranked Plymouth Canton, 1-0.

The shoe just wouldn't fit for Blazers, who committed seven errors and numerous mental mistakes.

First-year coach Lisa Parsons was forced to juggle her lineup when she learned that Tara Waslak (shortstop) and Jennifer Charnley (third base) would both be absent because of commitments to take the ACT test.

"It hurt because we had a lot of people out of position," Parsons said. "I think it kind of hurt team morale. We were nervous to start out with."

"Tara is one of our leaders on the field. She keeps the kids up, but for kids she comes first and I can't blame them. We tried to get the starting time changed. It's just unfortunate the test was today."

Mary Jo Kelly, Ladywood's ace pitcher, might have sued for non-support if she was required to play for four runs in the opening inning.

Sarah Middlemas ripped a two-run single, but four subse-

quent errors led to two more runs.

Pioneer jumped out to a 7-0 lead in the second, one run coming across on a Mary Heburn single, another on a wild pitch and a third on a groundout.

Ladywood got on the board in the third when sophomore catcher Melissa Campese doubled in Kelly Stokes.

Pioneer made it 9-1 in the fifth on an RBI single by Tara LaSavage and an RBI sacrifice fly off the bat of Molly Grimes.

Ann Arbor pitcher Jenni Pieper, meanwhile, was cruising along like the Pied Piper until the sixth, when Ladywood mounted a six-run rally.

"They made us play the ball; whereas, we sat up there (at the plate)," Parsons said. "We didn't make it happen ourselves. Finally in the sixth (inning) we got aggressive."

Kelly, who held Pioneer (26-11) scoreless in the top of the seventh, led off the bottom of seventh with a walk.

But the senior standout was thrown out by catcher Kim Eychuck, trying to steal second on a botched hit-and-run play. Pieper then closed out the victory with a strikeout and groundout to second.

Pioneer coach Kim Waddell, whose team rolled past Belleville 16-0 in the regional final, was elated to get by Ladywood.

"Because of their size and the way they swing the bat, I knew that Jack Brewer (catcher) and Waddell, whose team out-hit the Blazers 10-6. "We just were fortunate to produce enough runs early."

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We had a super double play and we threw out a couple runners trying to steal."

Mercy finished with a 9-24 overall record and won a district championship with wins over Farmington Harrison and North Farmington.

"When we minimize our mistakes we can play with anybody. Our record really isn't indicative of our team," Burgess said.

"I thought we played great ball the last couple of weeks. I couldn't be prouder of our girls. They're winners."

KEYTERING 11, MARIAN 3: Nothing went right for Marian after taking a 1-0 lead on its first run at bat in the opener against Kettering.

The Mustangs scored in the top of the first inning on a pair of hits by Susy Michalek and Kim Rafalski. Then the Captains took command.

Kettering's Amy Albery got on base via an error to lead off the bottom of the first, and that was a sign of things to come. The Captains worked losing pitcher Judy

Stuart for six walks and two hits en route to an eight-run inning.

Marian mustered only five more hits the rest of the way.

The Mustangs put together three straight hits in the fourth inning, by Rafalski, Amanda Allen and Stuart, for one run. In the sixth inning, Allen and Stuart had consecutive hits to produce Marian's final run of the season.

"We made an error on that first play of the game and that really set the tone," said Marian coach Dave Facklenbury. "We knew they were a tough team and we just wanted to play the best we could. I thought after that first inning we played five good innings."

Marian finished the season with an 11-23 overall record. The Mustangs captured their fourth straight district championship last week.

"Winning the district certainly made our season," said Facklenbury, whose team entered regional play with a four-game winning streak. "We have a lot of young players and they tend to make mistakes. But I think the last couple weeks of the season we played well."

Adams prevails in regional tourney

By BILL PARKER
STAFF WRITER

As retirement presents go, none could be much sweeter than the gift the Rochester Adams baseball team served up Saturday for retiring head coach John Guerrieri.

After 17 years at the helm of the Adams baseball program, the Highlanders presented Guerrieri with the school's first regional championship at Walled Lake Western.

Adams combined solid pitching, timely offense and flawless defense to post a 9-2 victory over defending Class A champion Brighton in the final of the championship game and a 1-0 victory over Redford Union in the semifinals.

Rice advanced to the finals by edging Walled Lake Central 2-0 in the other semifinal game.

"I just love it," Guerrieri said. "I've retired to this is it. The kids made it real special."

Guerrieri's retirement party will have to be put on hold. Adams (28-8) meets Clio Tuesday

BASEBALL

in the state quarterfinals at Saginaw Nouvel.

Senior Andy Mychek threw five strong innings in the championship game to set up the Adams victory. Mychek fanned seven, walked four and allowed just one hit as the Highlanders stormed out to a 9-0 lead.

Senior Mike Pompa surrendered two runs in the sixth before Junior Damon Villereal — who tossed a complete-game one-hitter in the semi — secured the win by recording the final two outs in the seventh. Adams' victory avenged a doubleheader loss to Rice during the second week of the season.

"I was hoping to get the start against Rice," Mychek said. "It feels real good. Our team just played excellent defense. We didn't make any errors in the finals. It feels good when you're pitching and the defense is playing like that, because you don't have to worry about anything."

Glenn next year. A computer would eventually determine whether the twins play at Canton or Salem.

"If I were their parents and our programs were shutting down, I would move," Hoens said. "Those kids are too good to sit."

Salem will vouch for that. Bryan Besco, a dart-throwing left-hander, overpowered the Rocks batters, allowing three hits and striking out seven. Both runs were unearned. He is now 8-1 on the year with an eye-popping strikeout-to-walk ratio of 94-18.

Then there was brother Derek. All he did was change the entire course of the game with one swing of his bat in the first inning.

Some background, please: Salem has been one of the hottest teams in the state the past few weeks. After starting out 6-9, the Rocks had won 16 of their last 19,

including a thrilling 7-5 victory over No. 8 Ann Arbor Pioneer in the regional semifinal.

They had touched Bryan Besco for a run without the aid of hit in the top of first and had Mike Marsella on the mound, fresh off his no-hit performance against Livonia Franklin in the district final.

The Rocks, to say the least, were flying high.

Enter Derek Besco: Marsella walked the first two batters, but he slapped two quick strikes on Besco. He then buzzed Besco with a high inside fastball on the 0-2 pitch. Salem coach John Gravin and Marsella both figured Besco was ripe for an outside breaking ball.

What he got was a split-fingered fastball that just spun out over the plate, which Besco promptly sent flying over the 355-foot marker in left-center field.

not allow a run in the final four innings, giving up three hits but no runs, striking out eight.

Too late, though. Slankster got CC's second hit leading off the seventh, and he eventually reached third. But that's where he stayed, as Gutt fanned to end the game.

CC concluded its season at 27-10, while Carleton, fifth in the Huron League, improved to 19-9 with the win.

Besco brothers lead Rockets to title

By CHRIS MCCOSKY
STAFF WRITER

Nobody is really talking about it, but you get the sense the Westland John Glenn baseball team is playing with the determination and conviction of a group that knows its days are numbered.

It's as if they got together and decided that, "Hey, if this is going to be the last year of athletics at John Glenn, then we are going out as champions."

The No. 4-ranked Rockets, who could lose their pay-to-play athletic programs if a millage plan fails today, played near perfect baseball Saturday and won a second straight Class A regional championship, beating No. 10 Brighton 1-0 in the semifinal and host Plymouth Salem 7-2 in the championship.

Glenn (26-4) made two errors on the day and allowed just three hits to each opponent. Glenn ad-

vanced to the quarterfinal Tuesday at Chelsea and will play the winner from the Temperance-Bedford regional.

"I really think this is the best team I've ever had," said Norm Hoens, who has been coaching baseball at Glenn for 27 years.

"I've had some real good teams but this group has more good players on it than I've had. And most of them are sophomores and juniors (including six starters). It would just be a crying shame if we lose our program and can't keep this group together."

Ironically, two of the juniors who did most of the damage against Salem in the championship game, twins Derek and Bryan Besco, could end up playing for the Rocks next year. The Besco family has hinted that it would move into the Plymouth-Canton Community Schools district if there are no sports at

Shamrocks from page 1C

Hicks was coming to bat — the same guy who went 6-for-7 in the district tournament a week earlier.

He had grounded out to second twice earlier; this time he hit the ball on the nose. But it went straight to center fielder Jason Shallow. He threw to Johns near the mound, and Johns relayed to catcher Tom Humbert, who tagged out Brusseau to complete the inning-ending double play.

In retrospect, it might be said that Hicks hit the ball too hard. Brusseau broke toward home on the drive; by the time he backtracked and tagged up, the Raiders had a shot at him. CC scored first, getting two

runs courtesy of Dave Susalla's RBI triple and Eric Justice's RBI sacrifice fly.

In Carleton's third, Taylor opened with a single and Humbert walked. He then tried to sacrifice, but Paluk's throw to third was low, an error that loaded the bases with none out.

Scott Swearingen followed with a grounder to Justice, who got the force at second, one run scoring. Paluk then fanned Eric Caldwell,

leaving runners at the corners with two down.

He couldn't extricate himself from the jam, however. He walked Johns to reload the bases, then uncorked a wild pitch. Humbert scored, and when Hicks' throw to Paluk at the plate got past him, Swearingen came home with the go-ahead run.

Paluk was relieved by Susalla to start the fourth, and the junior left-hander was superb. He did

not allow a run in the final four innings, giving up three hits but no runs, striking out eight.

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CLARIFICATION

In Thursday's issue of the Observer it should have said Redford Union pitcher Mike Bjork got Farmington Hills Harrison's Dave Hensel to fly out to center field with two men aboard in the seventh inning to preserve a 3-1 win for the Panthers.

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Division	Team	Contact	Dates	Time	Place
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	Strikers	Howard Toben 637-2827	7/1	6:00	School
	Power	John Spreitzer 689-5896	6/28 6/29	6:00 6:00	Boulan School
Boys 14½	Terminators	Dave Eve 689-2988	6/30 7/1	6:00 6:00	Boulan School
	Arsenal	Alex Alkidas 649-0180	6/25 6/26	6:00 10:00	Boulan Park
	Drive	Roger Watkins 680-1439			
Girls 13½	Dynamite	Cal Champine 879-0534	6/18 6/20	6:00 1:30	Boulan Park
	Force	Dan Herrera 679-6456	6/28 6/29	6:00 6:00	Barnard School
Girls 14½	Sting	Dick Young 528-2732	6/30	6:00	Barnard School
	Thunder	Paul Gorishek 689-7223	6/22 7/1	6:00 6:00	Boulan Barnard School School
Girls 15½	Challengers	Dick Marx 528-2732	6/30	6:00	Boulan School
	Chargers	Ted Lindstrom 879-8344	6/16 6/20	6:00 4:00	Boulan Park
Girls 16½	Vipers	John Jackson 641-7936	6/17 6/18	6:00 6:00	Boulan Park