

SPORTS

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MONDAY, JUNE 28, 1993

FARMINGTON
FARMINGTON HILLS
SPORTS
SCENE

Badgers capture crown

The Farmington Badgers '79 captured the Western Suburban Soccer League Division II girls under-14 championship with a 6-0-2 record.

Melki Ziegler and Erica Rice split the goalkeeping duties and shared a 59% win-loss record. The Badgers had fine defensive play from sweeper Jennifer Geiger, stopper Kelly Wachsborg and outside fullbacks Meghan Degrave and Meghan Houser.

Farmington also had a potent offense, scoring 36 goals. "We had tremendous support from our half-backs," coach Bill Green said. "Erica Dyke, Angeline Lundborn and Andrea George provided us with superior midfield control while Stephanie Unger and Anna Casadei contributed to our outside play."

The forward line of Liz Blanchfield, Annie Howard and Ava Lala gave the Badgers substantial striker power, Green said.

Len Rice served as assistant coach. Special-emphasis coaching was provided by Tom Faro (offense) and Sarah Green (goalkeeping).

All-Catholic baseball

Four members of Redford Catholic Central's baseball team were named to the all-Catholic League team: seniors Brian Paluk and Jeff Gutt, and juniors Juan Sanchez and Mike Brusseau.

Paluk was CC's top pitcher. A right-hander, he finished with a 10-3 record and a 1.30 earned run average. He led the Shamrocks in innings pitched (80%) and strikeouts (109); he allowed 15 earned runs on 56 hits and 29 walks.

Gutt was a Shamrock surprise. Cut from the team as a junior, he emerged as CC's top hitter, batting .322. A left-flier, he had seven doubles, a triple and 17 runs batted in.

Sanchez split time between catcher and right field, batting .321 with 23 RBI. Brusseau played second base and led off, batting .313 and scoring a team-best 33 runs.

New basketball coach

Madonna University men's basketball coach Bill Sharpe has found an assistant: Jim Aho, a Redford Catholic Central graduate and alumnus of St. Francis College of Port Wayne, Ind., where he was team captain last year. Aho resides in Farmington Hills.

Collegiate honor roll

Jeff Paluk, a junior right-handed pitcher for Saginaw Valley State from Plymouth (Salem HS), was honored as co-recipient of the Coaches Award this past season.

Paluk, who was 5-5 with a 4.37 earned run average and 63 strikeouts in 59 1/3 innings, shared the award with shortstop Mike Bloomingfield. The Cardinals were 24-20.

A pair of former Western Lakes Activities Association standouts were selected to the all-Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference's second team in baseball.

Senior Joe Ransley, an outfielder for Hillsdale College from Livonia (Franklin), and sophomore Gary Devine, an outfielder for Wayne State from Farmington (Harrison) — both also adept football players — were honored. Devine, who has a 3.17 grade-point average in criminal justice, was a first-team, all-academic selection.

College hoop signing

Solid fundamentals made Dana Wade a needed asset for the Siena Heights College women's basketball team, which recently signed the former Farmington Hills Mercy cogger.

Wade, an honorable mention all-Catholic League player, averaged seven points and eight rebounds a game for the Marlins. Her rebounding ability and hard-work ethic made her an attractive prospect.

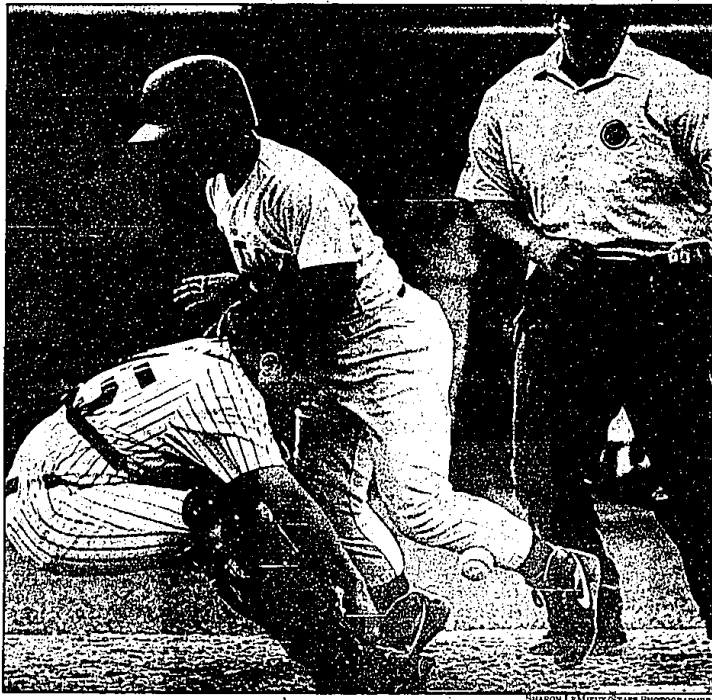
Academic/athletic stars

Kim Reichard, a sophomore third baseman for Michigan State from Plymouth (Farmington Hills Mercy HS), was named to the all-Big Ten academic softball team. Reichard has a 3.0 cumulative grade-point average with a major in English.

The University of Michigan honored 174 of its student-athletes with Athletic-Academic Achievement Awards, including a few from Observeland.

Among those lauded: Matt Smith, a member of the track team from Westland (Redford Bishop Burgess HS); Erica Zander, a golfer from Farmington Hills (North Farmington HS); Rodney Westlake, another member of the track team from Livonia (Stevenson HS); Mark Temple, a baseball player from Farmington Hills (North Farmington); Kerry Sayers, a softball player from Farmington Hills (Mercy HS); Katie Knipper, a swimmer from Farmington Hills (Mercy HS); and Kathleen Berrigan, a softball player from Farmington Hills (Mercy HS).

Jeff Bellale, a sophomore at Wayne State from Canton (Salem HS), was an honorable mention selection to the GLIAC's all-academic baseball team. A pitcher, Bellale posted a 3.8 grade-point average with a major in accounting.



Home-plate collision: NFWB Mickey Mantle catcher Aaron Lawson tumbles backward when a Canton player runs into him at home plate Thursday.

South Sox in league lead

The South Farmington Sox ran their first-place record to 9-1 in the Little Caesars Baseball Federation Sandy Koufax Division with a 5-3 victory over host Birmingham Thursday.

Five pitchers took a turn on the mound, with Wes Cornwell shutting down the opposition the last 1 1/2 innings.

He entered with two out and the bases loaded in the bottom of the sixth and ended the Birmingham threat with a strikeout. Cornwell retired the side in order in the seventh.

C.J. Ghannam hit a two-run double, and Jerry Yatoama also had two RBI with a double and groundout. Michael Books had two hits for the Sox. Greg Call and Ghannam are the leading hitters overall.

Other members of the South Farmington team are Tommy Mondoux, John Daguanno, Chuck Archambeau, Charlie Jaeger, Paul Mitchell, Chris Flase, Scott Trice and Kyle Zajdel.

"They're a good bunch of kids, but the problem is they play to the level of the competition," Sox assistant coach Jerry Yatoama said.

"They really get fired up if they go on the field and see a good team. If they see a team they think they can beat, they lay down a little bit."

The Sox are managed by Richard Daguanno, and the other coaches are Steve Zajdel and Chris Ghannam.

NFWB MICKIE MANTLE
The North Farmington-West Bloom-

BASEBALL

field Cobras rallied from a 6-0 deficit Thursday to defeat Plymouth Canton 9-7 in a Little Caesars Baseball Federation game.

Jake Lawson was the winning pitcher despite giving up seven runs on six hits and seven walks through four innings. He struck out six.

Darin Glasser pitched shut the door on Canton. He struck out four and walked none.

Brian Holshelmer and Ben Moeller had two hits apiece for the Cobras, 5-1 in the league. Mark Cantor had two RBI.

AMERICAN LEGION

Farmington Post 346 won its fifth consecutive game without a loss Wednesday 7-6 over host Auburn Hills American Legion.

Post 346 led 7-0 after 1 1/2 innings and then held on to take the victory despite making six errors. Farmington out-hit Auburn Hills 10-5.

Mike Samolin pitched four innings to get the win, though he allowed five runs on four hits and three walks.

After a brief appearance by Joe Pesci in relief, Ron Salomonson worked the final 2 1/2 innings to earn a save. He gave up only one hit and held Auburn Hills scoreless.

Farmington scored twice in the first inning on a bases-loaded walk to Jeff Benit and a catcher's interference ul-

ing with Randy Neumann at bat and the bases loaded.

Andy Hill hit a leadoff homer in the five-run second. Paul Roma hit a two-run single, and two runs scored on errors.

Brock Goff of Farmington Hills was 3-for-4 and scored two runs.

PEE WEE REESE

The North Farmington-West Bloomfield Cobras continue to bowl over the LCBF Pee Wee Reese competition, winning three games last week to run their record to 12-1.

The Cobras needed extra innings for a come-from-behind, 10-9 win over Waterford.

They trailed 9-5 in the last inning but tied the score with Ryan Modica's two-out, two-run double.

Mike Gleeson retired the side in the top of the eighth and became the winning pitcher.

In the bottom of that inning, Mike Sopo walked, stole two bases and scored the winning run on Adam Fazio's single.

Dave Lusky had three hits and Rob Sparks provided strong middle-relief pitching.

Gleeson and Lusky combined on a three-hitter in a 14-1 rout of Westland. Sopo had eight stolen bases and Josh Gad-Hart three hits.

Lusky had five hits to pace NFWB to a 16-4 win over Southgate. Gleeson had three hits, including a pair of doubles, and Fazio a home run. Melvin scored four runs.

Baseball all-stars fare well

BY BRAD EMMONS
STAFF WRITER

Mark Rutherford didn't mind a kiss from his older sister Lynne following his performance Thursday at Tiger Stadium.

The pitcher/infielder from Livonia Churchill had quite a day at the 12th annual Michigan High School Baseball Coaches Association East-West All-Star Game.

Rutherford was voted East team most valuable player despite a 7-5 loss in 10 innings to the West squad. (Grand Lodge's Pat O'Keefe was the West MVP.)

The only four-year starter ever to play at Churchill High School, Rutherford made his first trip to the old ballpark a memorable one.

Among his contributions, he:

■ Drew walks in his first two trips to the plate, including one after falling behind 0-and-2 in the count against Michigan's Mr. Baseball, right-handed fireballer Jason Middlebrook, who is headed for Stanford after recently turning down a \$300,000 offer from the New York Mets.

■ Made a diving stab of a placing line drive off the bat of Tom Horny (Saginaw Nouvel), turning it into a double play in the third inning.

■ Came through with a clutch two-run single in the seventh inning to knot the game at 5-5.

■ Protecting a 6-5 lead, did not allow a hit in his three-inning stint and was within one out of becoming the winning pitcher in the bottom of the ninth before disaster struck the East squad.

With two outs and the bases empty, the East made three consecutive errors, all routine plays. The West scored a run and won it in the 10th on an RBI single by Imael Castellon (Lansing Everett) after Steve Uganaki (Jenison) reached second on another East outfield error.

Redford Catholic Central's Brian Paluk, who relieved Rutherford in the 10th, was charged with the loss.

"It felt nice out on the mound," Rutherford said. "I was able to hit the spots and things worked out well, then we kind of fell apart."

"But they made some good plays behind me, too."

Five East errors told the story of the ballgame, but the memory of playing in a major league stadium won't be forgotten for quite sometime.

"The adrenalin was pumping at the start, but you had to realize it was a game," Rutherford said. "You get used to it after awhile. It was a great place to play and a good way to end a high school career."

Plymouth Salem first baseman Charlie Winstel also could brag about his performance.

The lanky left-hander collected a pair of singles, while reaching base safely three times in four trips to the plate. He singled and scored a run in the East's five-run seventh, which helped erase a 5-1 deficit.

"In my mind, Charlie was second in line for MVP," said Salem coach John Gravelin, an East assistant. "He had two base hits, two good pickups and made three great defensive plays."

See ALL-STARS, 2C

LaPointe steps down as Canton coach

BY DAN O'MEARA
STAFF WRITER

After one season as Plymouth Canton varsity baseball coach, Mark LaPointe has resigned to devote his attention to personal matters.

LaPointe had taken a team that was 9-12 a year ago and turned it around in just one season. The Chiefs won the Western Lakes Activities Association title and finished 22-12.

The success in baseball provided a soothing diversion for LaPointe during a difficult time in his family life while he and his wife went through a divorce, he said.

"Although I'm putting it down because of my personal life, baseball also helped me with my personal difficulties," the 42-year-old LaPointe said.

"It's some thing I knew would come sooner or later, but it was coming sooner than I expected because of things in my personal life. The only regret I have is leaving the kids and not being at the field."

With the high school season over and the Connie Mack summer season getting started, LaPointe said he had to reconsider his role in coaching be-

cause of his children — 11-year-old Joseph and 9-year-old Elizabeth.

"Due to the fact my children's family structure is changing, it's necessary to spend more time with them," LaPointe said, adding they would have been apart again last weekend if he had taken the Connie Mack team to Pennsylvania for a tournament.

"The kids would have had to stay with relatives, but they've done enough of that. I could have sent the team to Butler without me and resumed running the team later, but I'm the kind of person who's either going to run it or not run it."

LaPointe indicated the stress of that situation and other things had led him to make his decision.

He submitted his resignation to Plymouth-Canton Athletic Director Paul Cummings on June 18. LaPointe had coached the Connie Mack team for the last five years, but will leave that role to former Canton player Jason Grain.

"It was not something I had planned on," he said. "A number of things had happened."

"I came home and the yard was knee deep in grass. The eaves trough was overflowing with those helicopter things. I looked at my children and I hadn't seen them much at all."

"They're going through a tough time and they need me. Everything had built up and I said 'LaPointe, you don't need to do this anymore. You don't need to prove anything to anyone. You don't need this.'"

LaPointe, who teaches at Central Middle School, had assisted former coach Fred Crissey for 17 years and had been the Canton junior varsity coach for 10 years. He became the varsity coach after Crissey retired following the 1992 season.

"Somebody might say 'You got your big break and now you're getting out?' But I've been with the program for 18 years, so it's not like I'm getting out all of a sudden."

"Circumstances are forcing me to do what I'm doing. It's just the situation and I have no control over it right now."

LaPointe said he will continue to coach at the middle school level if the district has sports in the coming year. He hopes to return to varsity coaching in the future.

"I have to wait until the situation in my home life settles down. (His children) need a settling force in their lives right now, and I'm going to try and provide that."