

# Hines Park begins playoffs on shaky ground

By STEVE KOWALSKI  
Staff Writer

A month ago, Hines Park Lincoln League couldn't wait for the Livonia Collegiate Baseball League playoffs to begin.

But now that the four-team playoffs are one day away, members of the regular season league champion probably aren't too sure about their chances.

Consider:

- After going undefeated in its first 18 regular-season games, Hines Park finished 5-6-1 in its last 12 games.
- Hines Park (22-6-2 overall, 46

points) will be without its most versatile athlete/pitcher Scott Kapla and starting center fielder Jason Riggs, both of whom are out with injuries.

The playoffs games are nine innings long opposed to seven, making pitching depth a premium.

The playoffs begin Friday with a double-header starting at 5:30 p.m. at Ford Field.

Hines Park meets fourth-place Westland Federation (14-14-1 before Wednesday) in the first game, followed by second-place

Little Caesars (21-9) against third-place Del-Wal (16-11-1). The double-elimination format features two games Saturday (2:30 p.m. and 6 p.m.) and two more Sunday (2:30 p.m., followed by the 5 p.m. championship).

The champion goes to the National American Baseball Federation regional in Altona, Pa.

"It's going to be tough to get out of it," Hines Park coach Ken Wandzel said. "There's nothing more that Westland would like to do but beat us."

Kapla, 6-0 with a 1.47 earned

run average, has arm trouble and can't throw or bat for at least two weeks, according to Wandzel. Riggs broke his leg at work and is out the rest of the season.

Hines Park still has pitching ace Jeff Paluk, 7-1 with a 1.29 ERA, to go with Steve Ross (6-1, 3.04 ERA), Andrew Margolick and Brian Paluk (Hines Park property who has pitched mostly in Connie Mack).

"Little Paluk might have to work with his game face on," Wandzel said.

Westland lost four of the five meetings with Hines Park during the season but coach Joe Vondracek points out three of the four losses were by a total of three runs.

Friday's second game pits a perennial challenger for the post-season title, Little Caesars, against Del-Wal, one that is hoping to win its first crown.

Caesars closed the regular season with a sweep over Del-Wal on Sunday. Caesars has two of the hottest hitters in the league, Lawrence

Scheffer (.397) and Dave Roman (.410), to go with the LCB's top hitter Matt Patterson (.448). Caesars would benefit even more if leadoff man Andy Krueger is able to show.

"We've got as good a chance as anybody," Caesars coach John Moraitis said. "The boys are hitting pretty good now and we've also got (Jerry) Shippe back."

Del-Wal has a strong four-man pitching rotation, led by North Farmington graduate Mark Temple.

## Defending champ sits on sidelines

Walter's Appliance will be watching the Livonia Collegiate Baseball League playoffs from the sidelines.

Walter's split a double-header on Sunday against Wendy's at Ford Field to finish the season with a 12-18 record (24 points) and out of the four-team post-season playoffs.

Last season, Walter's won the LCB's playoffs and placed second in the All-American Amateur Baseball Association national tournament in Johnstown, Pa. Westland Federation claimed the final playoff spot with a 14-14-1 record, five points ahead of fifth place Walter's.

"We still had a chance mathematically but knew Westland Federation would beat us," Tom Davey said. "It's going to be different sitting on the hill (watching the playoffs at Ford Field) this year. We were young but still competitive, losing seven games by one run."

Walter's beat Wendy's 3-4 in Sunday's first game, which was called in the third inning because Wendy's player John Collins was ejected for throwing his bat, leaving the team with only eight players.

Wendy's won the second game 9-1 as Walter's Chuck Coleman suffered the pitching loss, allowing four runs in four innings.

Lance Sparks, the winning pitcher, struck out seven.

Brandon Herrin was Wendy's offensive hero on the day, going 6-for-6. He had a double, triple and two RBI in the nightcap.

Hines Park falls

The last-place Tecumseh Green Giants scored five runs off Hines Park Lincoln Mercury reliever Steve Ross (Redford Catholic Central) in the sixth inning Tuesday to win the season finale for both teams, 6-5, at Canton High School.

Ross, who replaced starter Tom Davey after five innings, allowed five hits and lasted only 1/3 of an

inning before ace Jeff Paluk came on to quiet the Tecumseh bats.

Gary Pierce led Hines Park with two hits, two runs scored and an RBI. Davey was 1-for-3 with a run scored; Heath Fowler and Tracey Ewald each had a hit and an RBI and Ed Gundry had a sacrifice fly for an RBI.

Caesars sweeps

Little Caesars ended its regular season Sunday with a sweep over Del-Wal, 10-2, 5-2, at Ford Field.

Mark Van Ameyde won the first game with a complete game five-hitter. Lawrence Scheffer had three hits and four RBI and Jerry Shippe contributed three hits and three RBI. Dave Roman had two hits and Chris Hollman drove in two runs.

Scheffer also keyed the 5-2 victory with two hits and three RBI in a game that was rain-shortened after five innings. Mark D'Antonio was the winning pitcher, throwing a five-hitter. Roman and Randy Gierczak delivered a pair of hits each.

Caesars on Friday defeated Westland Federation, 5-1, at Ford Field.

Adam Marano pitched a complete-game four-hitter and Roman and Matt Patterson added two hits and two RBI apiece.

Del-Wal wins in 8

Del-Wal scored two runs in the top of the eighth inning Friday to break a 1-1 tie and beat Walter's Appliance 3-1 at Ford Field.

Del-Wal forced extra innings after scoring once in the top of the seventh inning with two outs to tie the score at 1-1.

Todd Boike threw a two-hitter with eight strikeouts and two walks to earn the win.

After Walter's got the first two outs in the seventh, Noah Bremen singled. Three straight walks on full counts forced Bremen home with the tying run.

Del-Wal scored twice in the eighth, also with two outs. John VanDenBrink, Cliff Murray, Bremen and Tom Grigg had consecutive singles to score two runs.

## BASEBALL

LIVONIA COLLEGIATE BASEBALL LEAGUE STANDINGS (as of Tuesday)				
Team	W	L	T	Pts
C-Hines Park	22	6	2	46
Little Caesars	21	9	0	42
Del-Wal	16	11	1	33
Westland Fed.	14	14	1	29
Walter's Appliance	12	18	0	24
Wendy's	7	20	15	15
Tecumseh Giants	6	23	0	12

  

Catched regular season title				
BATTING LEADERS (50 at bats)				
Player	AB	H	AVE	
Matt Patterson (LC)	58	26	.448	
John Collins (Hines)	70	31	.442	
Jim Solak (W)	92	39	.424	
Ed Gundry (HP)	84	39	.415	
Dave Roman (LC)	88	36	.410	
Andy Duncan (Del)	84	34	.405	
Lawrence Scheffer (LC)	78	31	.397	
Danny Taylor (Fed)	87	34	.390	
Mike Zielinski (W)	70	28	.371	
Randy Gierczak (LC)	55	20	.363	
Heath Fowler (HP)	53	19	.358	
Jerry Shippe (LC)	60	21	.350	
Tom Kruttschmer (Del)	73	24	.327	
Tom Davey (HP)	67	28	.322	
Jeff Schaffer (W)	78	25	.320	

  

HOME RUN LEADERS				
Player	HR	Team		
1. Ed Gundry (Hines Park)	6			
2. Andy Duncan (Hines Park)	5			
3. (tie) Jim Solak (Walter's) and Tom Kruttschmer (Del-Wal)	4			
4. Steve Ross (Caesars)	3			

  

STRIKEOUT LEADERS				
Player	SO	Team		
1. Jeff Paluk (Hines Park)	81			
2. Mark Temple (Del-Wal)	56			
3. Mark D'Antonio (Caesars)	50			
4. Steve Ross (Hines Park)	47			
5. Mark Van Ameyde (Caesars)	39			

  

RUNS SCORED				
Player	Runs	Team		
1. Dave Roman (Caesars)	36			
2. Gary Pierce (Hines Park)	33			
3. Ed Gundry (Hines Park)	34			
4. Aaron Hoch (Caesars)	31			
5. Andy Capra (Caesars)	29			

  

RBI LEADERS				
Player	RBI	Team		
1. Ed Gundry (Hines Park)	40			
2. Lawrence Scheffer (Caesars)	30			
3. Andy Duncan (Del-Wal)	25			
4. Jim Solak (Walter's)	20			
5. Tom Kruttschmer (Del-Wal)	21			

  

PITCHING LEADERS (minimum 30 innings)				
Player	W-L	IP	ERA	SO
John VanDenBrink (Del)	7-1	83	1.29	128
Jeff Paluk (Hines)	7-1	48 1/3	1.47	147
Scott Kapla (Hines)	6-0	38	1.47	133
Steve Ross (Caesars)	4-0	30	1.50	120
Jim Solak (W)	4-1	30 1/3	2.07	107
Chris Hollman (Del)	3-3	37	2.40	124
Steve Ross (HP)	6-1	46 1/3	3.04	145
Mark Temple (Del)	6-3	42	2.43	121
Mark Van Ameyde (LC)	7-2	54	3.00	130
Tom Kruttschmer (Del)	6-2	37	2.61	118
Mike Zerkow (W)	3-3	40 1/3	3.45	145
Tom Davey (HP)	1-1	15	3.00	32
Mark D'Antonio (LC)	6-3	62	3.18	148

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