

SPORTS

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THURSDAY, APRIL 25, 1996

Temple stifles Big Ten hitters



Mark Temple is having an outstanding senior season as a University of Michigan pitcher. The North Farmington grad is 5-0 in the Big Ten with four complete games and has the Wolverines in title contention.

BY NEAL ZIPSER
STAFF WRITER

After earning all-area honors in baseball as a North Farmington High School in 1992, Mark Temple's phone remained silent.

The right-handed pitcher couldn't find many colleges that would offer him a scholarship to play the game he loved the most - baseball.

So Temple followed his heart. After dreaming about wearing a maize-and-blue uniform his entire life, Temple was told he would make the University of Michigan baseball team, but not on scholarship.

Not four years later, Temple has proven he was a good gamble. But still, his phone remains silent.

Temple has developed into the U-M's ace pitcher and has helped to

show an interest in the 6-foot-1, 191-pound hurler.

"No teams have been in contact with me, probably because I'm not the prototypical pitcher; I'm a right hander who doesn't throw in the 90s," Temple said.

Some of his turnaround can be attributed to new U-M coach and former major league pitcher Geoff Zahn, who has been more hands-on with his staff than former coach Bill Froehman.

"Coach Zahn has definitely been a help," Temple said. "He's very demanding on the pitchers, and if you don't keep the ball down and throw strikes, you won't be pitching. (Froehman) didn't work that much with the pitchers. He left it up to (pitching coach) Ace Adams, who has also been a help."

Temple's success has been rather surprising, because he doesn't resemble the overpowering U-M pitchers of the past, such as Jim Abbott, Steve Howe, Steve Ontiveros and Larry Seaman.

"I'm definitely not a power pitcher," he said. "I'm more of a control pitcher who needs three pitches to get over to be effective. But I must keep the ball down and hit the corners."

Temple uses a combination of fastballs, sliders and change-ups with an occasional curve to keep hitters off balance.

His control is evidenced by his impressive 4-to-1, strikeout-to-walk ratio. In 36 innings of Big Ten play, Temple has fanned 16 and walked only four. Overall, he has 29 strikeouts and only nine walks in 62 1/3 innings this year.

Perhaps a turning point in Temple's career came toward the end of fall practice his sophomore year when he was hit in the face with a line drive.

"That incident helped me become a better defensive player, because I was upset at myself for not stopping the ball," Temple said.

His career highlight (so far) happened later that season when he

See TEMPLE, 4C



Wolverine ace: Senior Mark Temple is the leading pitcher on the Michigan staff with a 7-3 record and 1.25 Big Ten ERA.

Clarenceville's Hatch overcomes adversity in return to baseball

Harper Woods baseball coach Scott Wank, even in defeat, made it a point to come over and shake the hand of Livonia Clarenceville starting pitcher Scott Hatch.

Wank's defending Metro Conference champions had just blown a four-run lead in the bottom of the seventh inning Friday in a 9-8 loss.

"You showed a lot of courage out there young man," Wank told the Clarenceville senior, who went the first 4 1/3 innings and did not figure in the decision.

Just being on the mound was a victory in itself for the 17-year-old Hatch, who wondered at times if he'd ever be able to step out on a diamond, let alone pitch.

When he was 14 years-old and playing travel baseball, Hatch could throw close to 80 MPH, but as promising as his career appeared, his world would suddenly turn upside-down.

"I can remember the date and the time - 2:06 p.m., September 21, 1993," Hatch said without hesitation.

Hiding his bike southbound on the east sidewalk of Middlebelt Road, police reports said Hatch veered into the westbound lane that Grand River against the light and was struck by a black Mustang, slamming into the windshield and then onto the pavement.

"The car was going about 45 miles an hour," said Hatch, who suffered a severe closed head injury. "There were a lot of dark days."

He spent nearly a week in a coma followed by 12 1/2 years in extensive rehabilitation.

"Deep down we were all wondering if he was going to make it," said half-sister Kari Watson, a former standout volleyball player at Clarenceville and now law student at the University of Detroit.

Play baseball? That seemed out of the question after spending six weeks at the University of Michigan Hospital following the accident, along with countless physical therapy sessions at seven different sites.

"Day by day you can see him making progress," Clarenceville coach Rich Roy said. "The first day of practice you could see he was nervous, but now he wants to be the ace and he probably could."

Hatch, who made a previous relief appearance in the season opener April 3 against Farmington Hills Harrison, gave himself a passing grade as he allowed four hits, three walks and three earned runs before being lifted in the fifth inning. Hatch, who retired the first six batters he faced and struck out four, showed remarkable poise.

"I really wanted that first win," he said, "but they (the coaches) were smart to take me out when they did."

"I was excited to be out there. It was my first start ever in high school baseball. I was relaxed once I made a good pitch or throw a strike."

Being out of baseball for nearly three years, Hatch had to learn the game all over again. It wasn't as easy as riding a bike.

"My accuracy was off, I was wild," he said. "The coordination, velocity at times were difficult. Some things would come back by themselves in a period of time."

Clarenceville head coach Mark MacDonald wondered if Hatch would ever recover from such a serious injury, let alone pitch.

"He was fortunate the fire department was located right there (near the accident scene) and they responded within a minute-and-a-half and Botsford Hospital was just down the street," MacDonald said. "His pitching performance really impressed us. He was really into it."

"He's been an inspiration to the team. And just what he's accomplished so far is incredible."

Scott has received tremendous support not only from the coaching staff, but his extended family.

"They were always there for me," Hatch said. Hatch will not graduate from Clarenceville on time, having missed a semester of school.

But he'd like his baseball career to continue once he receives his diploma.

"My first goal is to build up and go all seven (innings)," the right-hander said. "I'd like to become a pitcher in college. I've got a lot of time if everything goes well."

BASEBALL

put the Wolverines in Big Ten contention.

With doubleheaders remaining against rivals Ohio State and Michigan State, the Wolverines find themselves a game behind Penn State and Illinois for a share of the conference lead. U-M is 19-19 overall and 13-7 in the Big Ten.

The Wolverines can credit much of their success to Temple, who beat Penn State 8-1 Saturday for his seventh straight victory.

Temple improved to 5-0 in the Big Ten and 7-3 overall. Not bad for a guy who entered the season 4-8 in his career with a 6.77 earned run average. He also has four complete games and an incredible 1.25 ERA in the Big Ten.

"A lot of the improvement has to do with just having more experience," Temple said. "I've been more consistent this season and have been keeping the ball down and throwing strikes. I believe now, every time I take the mound, I'm going to win."

"The defense has also been very solid this season and has been making the plays behind me."

But professional teams have yet to

Falcons 4th at invite; Hawks just miss

Coach Bruce Brown called it right when he predicted his Farmington High girls track team would do well in the big meets.

The Falcons had their best performance in several years at an invitational, finishing in a tie for fourth place Saturday at West Bloomfield.

Farmington was led by senior Kim Washnock, who accounted for 18 points by winning the discus and finishing second in the shot put.

Washnock set a school record of 127-7 in the discus and threw the shot 33-1, which is less than her season best of 34-8.

"Kim had an awesome day," Brown said. "She's worked really hard; I've never seen anyone work

GIRLS TRACK

in the weight room as hard as Kim does, and it's paying off for her."

The Falcons demonstrated their strength in the distance events again as cross country veterans Kate Adams, Ellen Adams, Annemarie Grimaldi and Theresa Derwinski won the 3,200-meter relay in 10:06.3.

"I thought we'd certainly be one of the better ones," Brown said. "Win? You never know, but I thought we'd have a shot at it."

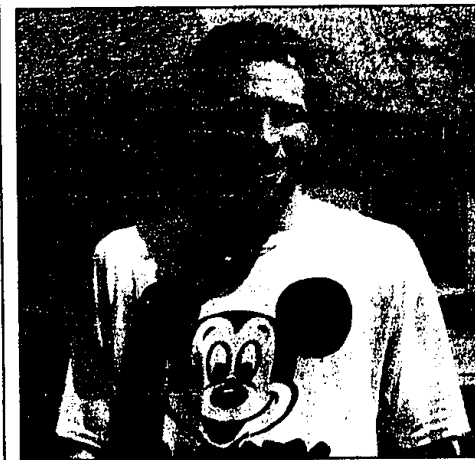
Grimaldi also finished third in the 3,200 run (12:15.6) and Ellen Adams fourth in the 1,600 (6:39.3).

The Falcons completed their scoring with a sixth-place showing in the sprint medley (4:37.4). Kate Adams ran 400 meters, Emily Porter and Kelly Barenie 200 each and Derwinski the final 600 leg.

"These are the kind of meets I think we'll do pretty well in," Brown said. "In dual meets, we have some holes we can't fill. But, in a meet like this, we can be a better-than-decent team."

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Stopen remains half-marathon champ



Two-time winner: Keith Stopen of Farmington Hills displays the lucky T-shirt he has worn in the last two half-marathons.

BY BILL PARKER
STAFF WRITER

There were familiar faces in the winners circle Sunday at the 20th running of the West Bloomfield Half-Marathon.

Keith Stopen of Farmington Hills repeated as the overall champion, bettering last year's winning time by 51 seconds to take the crown in 1:10:04.

In the women's division, Romeo's Nancy Collister returned to the head of the pack after missing the race last year.

The 1994 women's division champion struggled a bit this year and finished in 1:27:06, nearly two-and-a-half minutes behind her winning time in '94.

Some 538 runners entered the half-marathon with 493 finishing the race, which was run under nearly ideal conditions. Temperatures hovered around 63 degrees; the sky was partly cloudy and there was a mild breeze.

"It was a great day for running," said Collister. "It would have been perfect if it had stayed cloudy."

Stopen, donning the same lucky Mickey Mouse T-shirt he wore in winning the race last year, gained some new respect for the paved, hilly course, which winds through

ROAD RACING

the picturesque neighborhoods of West Bloomfield.

"I take back what I said last year about the hills not being so bad," said the 29-year-old Stopen. "There are some big hills on this course. I didn't remember them being so big."

"Overall, I feel pretty good. I hope I can parlay this into a good run at the Old Kent (a 25-kilometer race scheduled for May 11 in Grand Rapids)."

Stopen ran distance events in college at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh in the mid-1980s and ran a marathon just after graduating in 1989.

He left road racing after that and returned to the scene last year just in time to win the '95 West Bloomfield Half-Marathon.

"I got out of it for about five years and went to Florida," Stopen said. "Last year, I was just putting in a lot of distance. This year I'm working more on speed."

Stopen's goal this year was to break the 1:10 mark. Although he trimmed 51 seconds off his winning time from last year and posted the

See RACE, 8C