

SUNDAY, JUNE 1, 1997

SPORTS

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FARMINGTON — FARMINGTON HILLS SPORTS SCENE

Cobras win title again

The North Farmington-West Bloomfield Cobras 12-year-old travel baseball team won its second consecutive tournament May 18 in Northville, defeating five opponents by a combined score of 72-9.

In round-robin play, the Cobras defeated Concealed Security 11-1, the Wayne Bandits 13-3 and the 11-year-old Northville Broncos 16-1.

In the semifinal game, the Cobras defeated the 12-year-old Broncos, 22-4. The game featured home runs by Doug Pickens and Kevin Zerbo. Ben Darga came through with a no-hit pitching performance in the championship game against Fort Wayne, Ind.

He struck out seven and walked one in the 10-0 victory. The one runner who reached base was erased in a double play.

The NFWB hitting attack was paced by Matt Clark (.714), Bryan Smith (.687), Nick Vitonis (.500) and Evan Rodriguez (.471).

Zerbo led the team with nine RBI. Andy Wingert led the team with nine runs scored. Other team members are Matt Petry, Kevin Lamb, Sam Groseman and Anthony Paletti.

The team is managed by Dan Petry, and the coaches are Randy Rodriguez, Joe Paletti, Terry Lamb and Jim Darga. See D3 for more results.

Phantoms to select team

Tryouts for the Farmington Phantoms, an under-15 girls soccer team, will take place at the William M. Costick Activities Center fields (formerly the Mercy Center) 6-8:30 p.m. on Monday, June 16.

The tryouts are open to girls born after July 31, 1984. Since this will be a new team, there will be openings for every position.

The team will begin competition in the fall and will be coached by Steve White, currently the under-12 Phantoms coach.

The under-12 team has compiled a 25-3-4 record and won three championships since it was organized in August, 1996.

White's coaching philosophy states soccer should be fun while developing individual and team skills, and all players will play at least half of each game.

For more information contact White at (248) 478-3378.

Recreation sports news

Jean Fitzpatrick of Farmington is a member of the women's senior softball team that won the gold medal in the 65-69 age group at the United States National Sports Classic May 26 in Tucson, Ariz.

More than 10,000 world-class senior athletes took part in the Senior Olympic Games, ages 50 and over from Canada, Germany, Australia and the U.S. competed for medals in 18 sports.

Some people play golf their whole lives and never shoot a hole-in-one. Not so for Gordon McKenna of Farmington Hills. He has four aces.

The latest occurred May 24 at Shenandoah Golf Course in West Bloomfield when the 39-year-old McKenna nced the 182-yard No. 15 hole with a six iron.

College sports awards

Julie Heist of Farmington Hills was one of 48 student-athletes at Central Michigan University who were honored at the Academic Excellence Banquet.

Athletes must have achieved a cumulative grade-point average of 3.5 or better. Heist was a volleyball player and one of only 11 seniors to receive the special recognition.

Josh Fryer of Farmington Hills, a junior at Oakland University, earned a place on the All-Great Lakes Intercollegiate Athletic Conference men's golf team.

Fryer, who prepped at Birmingham Brother Rice, was joined on the six-man team by Oakland teammate Todd Covert, a senior from Milford.

The Pioneers tied with Grand Valley for fourth place in the conference tournament. Ferris State won the GLIAC championship.

Sophomore Piper Metz was named to the Michigan Intercollegiate Athletic Association's second-team, all-conference softball team.

Metz, who lives in Brighton but attended Mercy High School in Farmington Hills, plays for Albion College.

Freshman pitcher Nick Latra of Farmington appeared in six games and had a 2-0 record for the Central Michigan University baseball team.

Latra posted wins over Grand Valley and Eastern Michigan. He started one game, worked 11 innings, faced 48 batters, fanned four, walked five and had a 9.55 earned run average.

The Chippewas were 14-14 in the Mid-American Conference and 25-20 overall.

Shamrocks honor McDonald

Detroit Catholic Central senior Mace McDonald has added another honor to his resume.

McDonald is the recipient of the Father James H. Whelan Award, Award, given to the CC senior who is an outstanding student, athlete and gentleman.

McDonald, who graduated with a 3.39 grade point average, was a two-time first-team All-Observer selection. He earned a basketball scholarship to attend Loyola University in Chicago, Ill.



He knows pitching: Dan Petry is certainly qualified to instruct young pitchers as a former Major Leaguer with the Detroit Tigers. He watches as Ben Darga delivers during a recent North Farmington-West Bloomfield Cobras practice

Petry remains in the game

Former Detroit Tiger pitcher Dan Petry is retired from the big leagues, but he's still involved in the game. Petry, a Farmington Hills resident, manages his son's team in the NFWB organization.

BY RICHARD L. SHOOK
STAFF WRITER

Dan Petry never could wait for the season to start.

First when he was a pitcher in the major leagues. And now that he's the coach of his son's travel team.

The 38-year-old Farmington Hills resident coaches son Matt, who turned 12 last month, on the North Farmington-West Bloomfield Cobras

12-year-old travel team.

His other son, Jeff, 9, plays in the NFWB house league.

When they aren't playing on a travel hockey team, that is.

It's enough to keep a mom and a dad jumping, which thousands of moms and dads in the Observerland area know very well.

But despite all the other goings on, Petry had his travel team work-

ing out since "the week after the World Series. Indoors."

"It's strictly a volunteer thing, showing up," he said, "and I understand kids have other lives to lead. Like books, basketball, soccer and hockey, for instance."

Petry, who pitched nine seasons for the Detroit Tigers and two for California's Angels before being retired, seriously missed the first couple of spring trainings he wasn't invited to attend.

But he wasted no time moaning. He joined the real world right away.

In July, Petry begins his fifth year working for Seaman Patrick Paper Co., selling paper to commercial printers.

"I got hooked up with a good company," he said. "I got right into it after I got out of baseball. I didn't have any time to go. 'Aw, gee,' and feel sorry for myself. It's getting better and better every year."

Petry won't make the baseball Hall of Fame, though there's nothing shabby about his 113-92 career won-lost record, and his 3.85 ERA looks better with every bat-busting year.

In 1983 he led the American League with 38 starts in a 19-11 season. At that time, many of us who covered the Tigers on a regular basis were betting that he, not Jack Morris, would be the staff leader

Please see PETRY, D3

Major Leagues next step for Pesci?

BY DAN O'MEARA
STAFF WRITER

As a high school athlete, Mike Pesci was known more for his exploits on the football field than the baseball diamond, but that's like ancient history now.

Pesci, who starred in both sports at Farmington Harrison, chose to play baseball in college and made a name for himself as an outstanding hitter at the University of Detroit-Mercy.

He did so well this year the Midwestern Collegiate Conference made him its Player of the Year, raising Pesci's prospects for being selected in the Major League draft this week.

After his first season at UDM last year, Pesci was chosen by the Arizona Diamondbacks, but he decided to stay in college and use his fifth year of eligibility.

"Last year kinda caught me off guard," Pesci said. "You're drafted on Thursday, and they want you to leave on Saturday."

"I was a little overwhelmed by it

all and how they try to low-ball you. This year I've done a little more planning if it does happen."

The 6-foot-2, 220-pound right fielder also had some unfinished business as a college player — both as an individual player and a team member.

"I knew I was a lot better than I showed my first year at UDM," he said, "and I know we were good enough as a team to win the league. I knew we had the right chemistry."

"I thought I could do a lot more for the team. Personally, I had goals to do a lot better in every area of the game — cut down on strikeouts, increase average and walks, just a lot of little things."

As a result, Pesci did a lot of the big things well, too, while helping the Titans win the MCC tournament championship.

He led the team with a .409 batting average and 14 doubles. His 18

home runs and 46 RBI were second only to former Plymouth Salem star Ed Gundry's school-record 18 and 50.

Both had 136 total bases, which was 40 more than the next player. Pesci also had a .974 field percentage, making only two errors on 76 chances.

Being named Player of the Year "is a reflection on the team," Pesci said. "Without Eddie Gundry hitting behind me, I wouldn't have seen a lot of the pitches I saw."

He missed getting Co-Player of the Year by one vote; he deserved it as much as I did. Those kinda things (post-season honors) come as they come. The better the team does the more recognition there is for everyone.

"We accomplished everything but one goal — getting to the NCAA tournament. The seniors wanted to finish off our careers with a bang, and I think we did."

In two seasons with the Titans,

Please see PESCI, D3



Mike Pesci: Could a shot at the Major Leagues be next for Detroit-Mercy hitting star?

Merger should bolster collegiate league

BY STEVE KOWALSKI
STAFF WRITER

A team named Livonia Adray playing under the lights at Ford Field in Livonia.

Perhaps it's a good omen.

The last time a collegiate team assumed that same name at Ford Field — more than a decade ago — the Livonia Collegiate Baseball League flourished.

Livonia Adray, formerly known as Little Caesars, is a member of the new Adray Metro Baseball Association, a merger of the LCB and the Adray Metro Baseball League.

AMATEUR BASEBALL

The eight-team league includes three teams from the LCB and five from the Adray Metro Baseball League.

Games will be played at three sites, including Ford Field. The other sites are MichMac Park in Windsor and Wyndotte's Memorial Park.

This is the first full week of action.

Four of the five teams from the Adray Metro Baseball League have no age restrictions. Some of the players are in their late 20s and 30s and have

professional baseball experience.

The fifth team from the Adray Metro Baseball League is the Lake Area Rams, a collegiate team coached by Rick Berryman, who is also Redford Union's skipper.

The Rams will join Livonia Adray, Livonia DCI and Hines Park in the Collegiate Division. Collegiate teams' players cannot turn 20 during the season.

The other division, called the Adray Metro Baseball Division, will consist of four unlimited age teams: Troy Jet Box, Windsor Stars, Windsor

Please see COLLEGIATE, D3