

Sports & Recreation

The Farmington Observer

INSIDE:
Girls soccer, D2
Adray baseball, D3

Page 1, Section D

Sunday, May 31, 1998 \$3.00

Dan O'Meara, Editor 734-953-2141

on the web: <http://observer.eccentric.com>

FARMINGTON FARMINGTON HILLS SPORTS SCENE

Honors for Rospierski

Jon Rospierski, a Farmington Hills resident and recent graduate of the University of Detroit-Jesuit High School, was named to All-Catholic baseball team.

Posting a .400 batting average for the season, Rospierski has led the Cubs in nearly every offensive stat, including runs scored, RBI and stolen bases. As a pitcher, he carries a 2.63 earned run average.

Sporting a 3.3 grade-point average, he also was named a U-D scholar-athlete and has been nominated for the Catholic League's Ralph Owen Award. The winner will be announced Monday at the Operation Friendship Scholar-Athlete Banquet in Warren.

Whelan Award winner

Joe Sgroi is the 1998 recipient of the Father James H. Whelan Award, elected by the varsity athletes at Redford Catholic Central High School.

The award is given annually to a senior who is an outstanding student-athlete and gentleman.

Sgroi, who maintained a 4.25 grade-point average, will attend the University of Michigan.

He was captain of CC's 12-1 Class AA championship football team in 1997. The 6-foot, 215-pound linebacker was named All-Catholic, all-metro, All-Observer and all-state.

Wolves first in Cincy

The under-13 Michigan Wolves, a Livonia Y Premier Soccer team, captured its division in the Buckeye Soccer Tournament (May 23-25) in Cincinnati with a 4-1 record.

Coached by Lars Richters and Kevin Callaway, the Wolves defeated the Louisville (Ky.) Mockingbirds in the championship final, 3-2.

They also downed the Versailles (Ky.) Scorpions, 5-0; Millford (Ohio) Ambush, 7-0; and Noblesville (Ind.) Rowdies, 4-0. Their only loss was to the Mockingbirds, 2-1.

Members of the Wolves are Brady Crosby, Nik Djokic, J.T. Katikos, Charlie Knoll, Livonia; Brian Popeney, Mike Simons, Canton; Dutch Morrell, Plymouth; John Haezbroeck, David Williams, Southfield; Jeff Ebehalt, Patrick Kelleher, Josh Chuella, Novi; Keith Mullins, Dearborn Heights; Josh Van Cleef, Detroit; Mike Borowiak, Fraser.

Absent from the tournament were team members Danny Lantz, Farmington Hills, and Matt Okopy, Farmington. The team managers are Laurie Simons and Liz Okopy.

Girls soccer tryouts

Mike Esparza is organizing girls under-17 and open premier soccer teams to play in the Top Division in the Little Caesars Premier League.

Players are needed at all positions. Under-17 players must have been born after July 31, 1981, and before Aug. 1, 1983. Open players must have birth dates between July 31, 1979, and Aug. 1, 1983.

For tryout information call Esparza at (734) 464-9114.

Fast-pitch camps

The Finesse Softball program, winner of two world championships in the last three years, will have a week of skills and development camps June 22-25 in Westland.

The morning session is for girls ages 10-13 (cost \$95) and the afternoon session is for girls 14-18 (cost \$150).

Camps will include instruction from six coaches on offensive and defensive techniques and game-situation strategy. Each camp is limited to 30 participants.

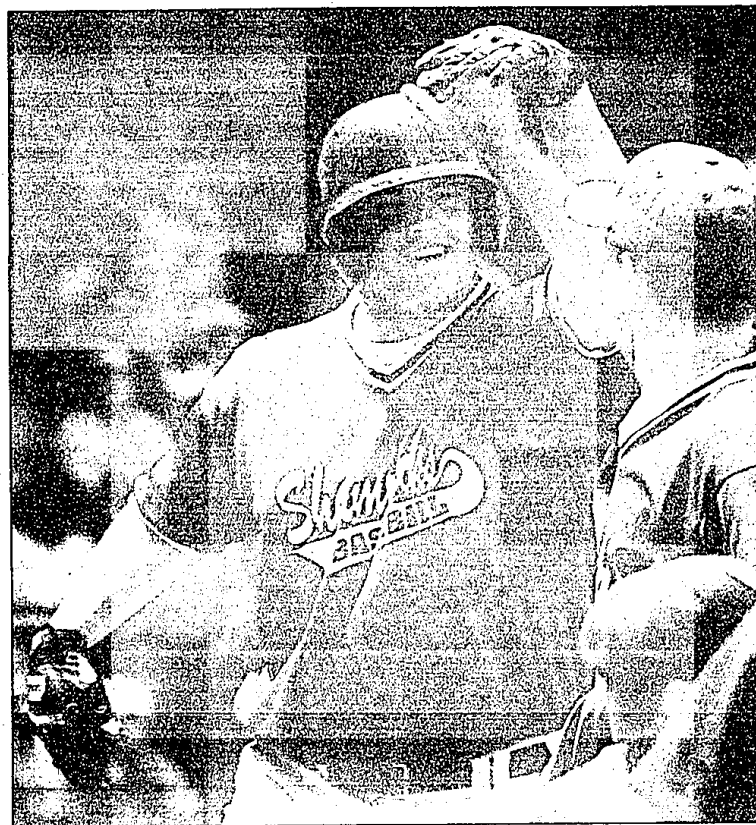
For more information call Garden City girls softball coach Barry Patterson at (734) 487-3964 or Don Dreher at (248) 552-8624.

Teams seek players

The North Farmington-West Bloomfield 18- and 16-and-under girls fast-pitch tournament softball teams are looking for talented high school varsity players to complete their rosters for the upcoming summer season.

If interested, 18-and-under players should call Andy Groves at (248) 888-9155, and 16-and-under players should call Rob Schrock at (248) 471-3688.

CC powers way to league crown



High-five follows home run: Anthony Toney of Farmington is greeted by a CC teammate after hitting a two-run homer in Tiger Stadium during the Catholic League championship game Wednesday.

■ Home runs by Anthony Toney and Casey Rogowski lifted Catholic Central to a 7-3 win over Notre Dame in the Catholic League championship baseball game.



Mighty Casey at bat, in Tiger Stadium, equals home run. In the upper deck. This is no fiction story.

Casey Rogowski's leadoff homer in the third inning landed several rows into the upper deck in right field, highlighting Detroit Catholic Central's 7-3 win over Harper Woods Notre Dame in the Catholic League championship game Wednesday at the corner of Michigan and Trumbull.

Rogowski's mammoth shot left witnesses running out of adjectives. "I hurt my neck it went so fast," said CC first base coach Ed Hamacher.

"Did Casey wake up any pigeons roosting up there?" said Notre Dame coach Angelo Gust, weary of having to face the junior slugger again next year.

"It's not the first time I've seen him crush the ball against us. He hit a change-up earlier this year that changed the ball from round to flat." CC coach John Salter was the last one to shake Rogowski's hand rounding third before his teammates mobbed him at home plate.

"That's the longest one I've seen in high school, here or anywhere else," Salter said.

The championship was CC's first since 1992. The Shamrocks were 19-4 overall heading into district tournament play Saturday; the Fighting Irish, who haven't won since 1991, are 19-7.

Rogowski walked in his first trip to the plate in the second inning, but his home-run trot was more like a walk as he enjoyed the experience every step.

"I dreamt of it," Rogowski said. "I was telling kids at school I'd do it, but I never thought it would happen. It was a fastball numbers high."

Rogowski's father, Dennis, recovered the ball for his son. The elder Rogowski played at Tiger Stadium, or was it Briggs then, three times but not with the same success.

Please see SHAMROCKS, D3

North's Taylor to pitch for Michigan

As a college pitcher, Kirk Taylor believes he could learn a lot from a coach like the University of Michigan's Geoff Zahn.

That's why the North Farmington standout has given the Wolverines a verbal commitment to play in Ann Arbor next year.

Zahn, who also pitched for the U-M and several Major League teams, has been where Taylor hopes to go, but they have more in common than that.

"Coach Zahn is left-handed, too,"



Kirk Taylor
N. Farmington pitcher

Taylor said. "When he was in the majors, he was throwing 84-85 (miles per hour) and had to pitch rather than blow it by guys."

"The way he pitched is similar to what I'm trying to do in high school. I think our personalities go well together, and what he teaches could make a big difference for me."

Taylor is the second North Farmington player to commit to the U-M. Teammate Jeff Trzos, another 6-foot-5 southpaw, announced his intentions late last year.

Taylor has yet to sign with the Wolverines, however, and is waiting to see what happens in the June draft and how it might indirectly affect his situation.

He doesn't expect to be drafted, but some U-M players and recruits might.

"There's not too much money (available for scholarships) right now, so we'll see how that plays out," Taylor

BASEBALL

said. "Obviously, if one of those guys gets drafted, that will free up some more money."

If he is drafted, Taylor said he will certainly listen to an offer. But he isn't anticipating it, because he's a control pitcher and not the flame-thrower pro teams want.

"Generally, the way the draft works you have to throw around 90 or be in the high 80s," Taylor said, adding his range is the low to mid 80s.

"I pitch more with control — fastball, curveball, change-up; I'm not trying to overpower anybody. I probably won't get drafted, because I don't have the 90-93 fastball."

A good showing in the fall could mean more scholarship money, too. That also will determine if Taylor just pitches or plays a field position and

bats, too.

"They gave me a set amount and then it's based on how you play," Taylor said, adding the U-M deal has some incentives in it. "They'll give me the opportunity to do both."

"There's a six- to eight-week period where everyone just plays, pitches and hits. We have intrasquad scrimmages, and that determines playing positions for the upcoming season."

Taylor is a major reason the Raiders won the Western Lakes Activities Association championship this year and were 19-5 heading into the Division I district tournament Saturday at Plymouth Canton.

His pitching record was 7-0 with 78 strikeouts and 4 walks. His earned run averaged was 1.43 through 44 innings. Taylor, who rotates with Trzos at first base, has done it with the bat, too.

Please see TAYLOR, D3

Olympic gold medalist enjoys Wheaties fame

Lisa Brown-Miller, a member of the gold medal-winning U.S. Olympic women's hockey team, think she's looking into a mirror each time she goes shopping for cereal at the grocery store.

"I was walking through the cereal aisle, and I looked at the box and said 'Wow! I can't believe it,'" Brown-Miller said.

The surprise element in her shopping experience was that her picture, along with those of her U.S. teammates and coach, was staring back at her from the front of a Wheaties cereal box.

Thanks to the great success and popularity of the first women's U.S. Olympic hockey team last February at the Winter Olympics in Japan, the team's photo earned a spot on the front of the coveted "Breakfast of Champions" cereal box.

"The Wheaties box was something I never imagined," said Brown-Miller,

HOCKEY

32, a West Bloomfield High School graduate and Wixom resident.

"I bought my own box and General Mills sent us a plastic case with the box. It's something that will last forever."

She is still awed by the entire experience.

"To look over and see the team on the Wheaties box, it still blows me away," she said. "All of the stuff after the Olympics has been kind of surreal for me."

Brown-Miller learned after the Olympics she wasn't sitting alone. She and her husband, John, are expecting their first child in September. Although she wasn't aware of it at the

Please see BROWN-MILLER, D2



Olympic medalist: Lisa Brown-Miller, a member of the women's U.S. hockey team, still can't believe it's her on the Wheaties box.