

World Series champs: The members of the Concealed Security team are (kneeling, left to right) Alan Hagedon, Westland; Joey Patlevic, Rochester Hills; Andrew Stafford, Sterling Heights; Lance Latkiewicz, Allen Park; Jeff Richard, West Bloomfield; Matt Rodeghier, Farmington Hills; (middle row) Scott Szpyrka, Orchard Lake; Steve Karchefsky, Detroit; Eric Drieselmann, Garden City; Mark Pirronello, Livonia; Eric Vojtkofsky, Wayne; Chris Rusin, Canton; (back row) coach Larry Vojtkofsky, Wayne; coach Al Shay, Garden City; coach Lou Pirronello, Livonia; and Ryan Shay, Garden City.

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and Shay, who earned the save with two-thirds of an inning of clutch pitching, collected two hits.

Andrew Stafford and Alan Hagedon (Westland) also contributed two hits as did Eric Vojtkofsky (Wayne), bravely playing designated hitter despite wearing a cast on one of his hands.

Drieselmann was the starting pitcher and pitched well into the seventh, according to Pirronello.

Defense played a role in helping the Dodgers get to the championship round.

Concealed opened the tournament with a 13-12 win over Baltimore, a team previously undefeated in 60 games.

Rusin was the winning pitcher, scattering 12 hits with six strikeouts and three walks in five innings. Shay earned the save, allowing one hit and a walk in one inning.

Rusin also helped at the plate with two hits, three runs scored and an RBI. Szpyrka was 3-for-3 with three RBI.

Mark Pirronello (Livonia) made a diving catch in the sixth inning with a runner on second base to help save the win. Baltimore was the team that eliminated Concealed from last year's CABA World Series.

That gave the Dodgers momentum heading into the second game against Lenox, II. The Dodgers mercied this team in the regional and would eventually beat it in the championship game, but this game had a different ending.

Concealed lost for the first time, 8-4, to New Lenox as Joey Patlevic suffered the loss on the mound.

Rusin had two hits, including a triple, and an RBI. Szpyrka was 3-for-3 with three RBI.

"We were so sky high after (beating) Baltimore, then played a night game against New Lenox, the team we beat in the regional, and they beat us," Pirronello said. "We didn't feel good at all about that."

That set up a must-win situation for Concealed against Mansfield, Ohio, in the final game of pool play. Concealed responded with a 6-5 win to advance to the semifinals.

Shay tossed a six-hitter with nine strikeouts and only two walks to earn the pitching victory.

Shay also helped his cause with three hits, including two doubles, two RBI and two runs scored.

Stafford, Rusin and Szpyrka had two hits each. Stafford also came up with the defensive play of the game, going into the hole at shortstop to fetch a grounder with runners at second and third and two outs.

"If he doesn't make that play, we don't advance," Pirronello said. "Same with Mark's catch against Baltimore."

Pirronello said the Dodgers will carry a bigger reputation into this year's CABA World Series than last.

"I don't know if this makes us a favorite," Pirronello said. "People definitely know who we are. Stuff goes on the Internet, we did well last year. We were the last team to fall out of the winner's bracket last year."

Pirronello and Al Shay are joined on the coaching staff by Pat Rusin and Larry Vojtkofsky. The team's roster also includes Steve Karchefsky, Lance Latkiewicz and Matt Rodeghier (Farmington Hills).

Jeremy Shay (Garden City) and Tyler Rusin (Canton) are bat boys.

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"What gave them confidence was they came back and made the first game closer than it should have been," McDonald said.

"That made them believe they could keep the ball rolling, and that's exactly what they did. And they sorta hold their breath when we had that big inning."

With Dabco Tool ahead 15-2, Vladimir's rallied to score nine runs in the bottom of the fifth to make the game interesting.

But Vladimir's never scored again, leaving runners at the corners in the sixth and going down in order in the seventh.

"It wasn't safe by any means," said Temple of the four-run, 15-11 lead. "But, if you give a team one big inning, you can usually hold them. I still felt confident, and I'm sure all the other guys did, too."

Fruitman, who has been refining his craft since he started pitching in the intramural softball program at Michigan State University in 1982, stopped Vladimir's when he needed to. Dabco Tool had a 20-17 edge in hits.

"I wanted to throw strikes and let the guys behind me catch the ball," he said. "I was trying to throw a knuckleball and let the wind take it and bring it in over the plate."

In the final game, Dabco Tool's Buddy Pope had four straight hits and ended up 4-for-5 with

four RBI; Alex Sarafin was 3-for-4 with two RBI. Rob Dace had two hits and knocked in three runs.

Dean Temple, Duane Horecki, Bryan Bosco, Jeff Temple and Fruitman added two hits each. Pope and Dean Temple also scored three runs apiece. Horecki and Bosco had single RBI on base hits.

"We were hitting the ball a lot better this year," Jeff Temple said. "Plus, Fruity was pitching real well. He had a shutout in one game and a couple others he only gave up four or five runs. That's why we voted him the MVP of the tournament."

Vladimir's Kurt Perry was 3-for-3 and Brian Smolinski 3-for-4; Greg Tome drove in three runs with a sacrifice fly and a double; Dave Timmis and Dave Tome had two hits each. Dave Schultz, Perry, Mike Gibson, Mike Rudin and Dave Tome had RBI singles.

"We knew we could chip away (at the 14-0 deficit)," McDonald said. "Our mentality was 'Cut it in half and go from there.'"

"The key was when we didn't get the big two-out hit in the bottom of the sixth (with runners at the corners). (Greg Tome, who hit a flyout to center field) didn't pull the ball enough. It would've been a home run if he pulled it a little more. When we didn't get that, it sorta deflated our momentum."

In Vladimir's 10-9 win over

Dabco Tool, Timmis hit a pair of RBI doubles; Dave Tome had two RBI with a double and a sacrifice fly; Rudin drove in two runs with a solo homer and a sacrifice fly. Ronnie Bol, Dave Schultz, Greg Tome and Mike Petrovich had one RBI each.

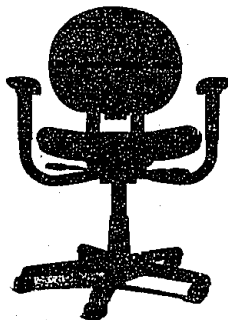
Dabco Tool's Horecki hits two solo homers; Pope two RBI singles, and Jeff Temple, Fruitman, Dean Temple and Rob Fredrick had one RBI single apiece. Others who played for Dabco Tool are Paul Alati and Tony Marsili.

Dave Schultz was Vladimir's top hitter in the tournament, going 17-for-22 and hitting .773. McDonald hit .733 (11-for-15) and Bol .700. Dave Tome hit five homers and Rudin three.

McDonald, who has played in the last 21 consecutive tournaments and been on four championship teams and eight runners-up, said it was one of the best Founders Festival tournaments because of the good condition of the Founders Park fields.

"Plus, it was nice hitting in an enclosed park," he said. "You try to get guys with the power to hit the ball out instead of guys who hit ball singles and try to move runners around."

"And, in the enclosed park, you don't have to have real fast outfielders, because if the ball gets by them the fence is going to stop it."



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