

Baseball

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As the leadoff batter, Chesney hit .388 with nine doubles, four home runs and 27 RBI. He also walked 23 times and scored 32 runs.

"He can handle it," Finn said in regard to Chesney being the catcher, adding junior Anthony Volpe might play there, too. "We won't be as experienced as we'd like, but they're good athletes and can handle it."

Farmington is solid on the left side of the infield with sophomore Jeff Fischer back as the starting shortstop. Either Bob Houchins or Andy Brown, both of whom are seniors, will play third base depending on the pitching rotation.

"For a couple years, the right side has been strong and the left side was a question," Finn said. "Now it's the other way around."

"It's not really a question, because there's no question who is going to play there. But can we be as successful defensively as we have been? That's always an issue going into the season."

"We have some talented kids, but we don't have the experience we had last year."

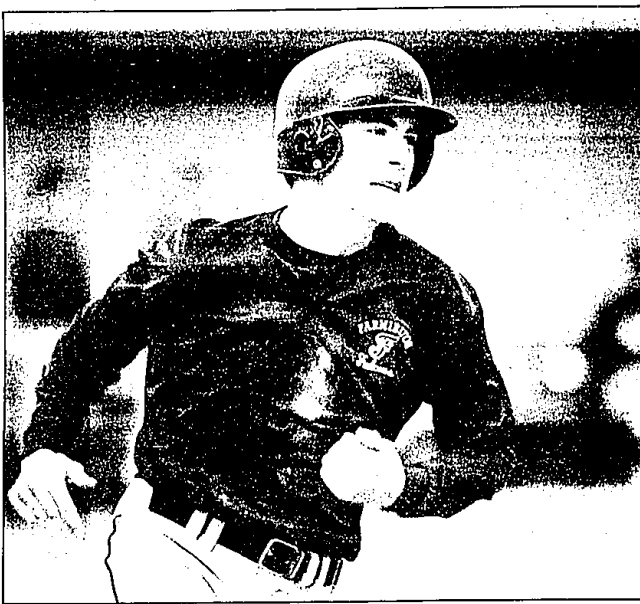
Brown, freshman Tim Mitchell, Volpe and even Luttman can play first base in place of Burrear, a second-team, all-area player. Junior Mike Kish takes over at second base for Barenie.

"We have guys who are used to playing a lot of positions," Finn said. "They'll have to play more positions. We have some versatility; that's a positive."

Farmington has a quality center fielder in senior Preston Picard, who has rebounded from a broken ankle, an injury that occurred during football season and prevented him from playing hockey.

"He has recovered from that nicely," Finn said. "He's a competitor and he's very fast. We'll move him into the leadoff spot and move Chesney to cleanup."

If he's not pitching or playing second base, Houchins will be in right field. If he's needed elsewhere, the position will be filled by sophomore David Justice, who started there in the regional



FILE PHOTO BY BILL BRENNER

Returning starter: Sophomore Jeff Fischer has a full year of experience to his credit as the regular shortstop for the Farmington varsity team.

tournament.

Doing the bulk of the pitching besides Luttman will be Houchins and Brown. Picard, Volpe and junior Joe James will be on the mound at times, too.

"I think we'll be pretty deep," Finn said. "We have a lot of guys who have experience. Obviously, our top guys are Bob, Tony and Andy. If they stay healthy, we should at least compete on the mound. We'll have a chance to succeed there."

The varsity roster also

includes juniors Brian Dickey and Ryan Baranik. Dickey can play almost any field position; Baranik is a catcher and outfielder.

Farmington had its first two games cancelled due to poor weather and was scheduled to open the season Wednesday against Redford Union.

The Falcons, who lost to the eventual Division I state champion, Grosse Pointe South, in a quarterfinal game last year, hope this season is just as suc-

cessful if not more so.

"The potential is always there," Finn said, adding the competition in the WIAA will be stiffer.

"We have to come to play every day."

"The law of averages says those teams will be better, and we have to work hard to have the same kind of results we had in a year when the (Lakes) division was maybe not as good."

"But I think we have as good a chance as anybody."

Chiefs sweep Zebras to stay unbeaten

Plymouth Canton improved its baseball record to 4-0 thanks in great part to the bat of Nick Musselman as the Chiefs swept Wayne Memorial, 1-0 and 9-2, in a non-league double-header Saturday at Canton.

Carl McDevitt improved his record to 2-0 with a four-hit shutout in the first game, allowing two walks while striking out three. The Chiefs managed just three hits in the game, but one of them was a solo home run by Musselman leading off in the bottom of the fifth inning. That was the only run Canton would need.

In the second game, Chiefs' starter Matt Staley surrendered two unearned runs in the first inning before giving way to Mark Hanson. Hanson pitched just one inning, striking out two, but it was enough to get him the pitching win.

That's because of the offensive support provided. Musselman slugged a two-run homer in the first to knot the game at 2-2 and Hanson supplied the winning runs himself by slamming a two-run homer in the second in his only appearance at the plate.

Musselman finished with two hits (the also had a two-run double) and four RBI. Zach Fishaw contributed two hits, two runs scored and two RBI as well.

Jon Western pitched the final three innings (the game was called after five innings due to darkness) and did not allow a run, hit or walk, striking out two.

Salem 7-14, Purcell (Marion, OH) 12-0: Missions in the field raised any chance Plymouth Salem had for a victory in the opener of its double-header against Purcell HS Saturday at Rose Lawn Park in Cincinnati. But the Rocks rebounded to mercy the sixth-ranked team in Ohio's AA Division in the second contest.

Salem finished the weekend with a 2-1 record. Purcell was 3-2.

In the opener, Salem led 6-4

BASEBALL

after three innings, but Purcell scored four runs on just one hit in the fourth to take the lead for good. Kevin O'Beirne took the loss, allowing eight runs (one earned) on four hits and two walks and two hit batsmen. The Rocks had four errors in the game.

"We'd been playing pretty good defense up to that point, then made three errors in the third and fourth innings," said Salem coach Dale Rumberger.

Steve Cox led Salem's offense with two hits, including a double, and two runs scored. Jon Gordon added a two-run triple in the third, finishing with three RBI in the game.

In the second game, the Rocks rode the strong pitching of Andy Boyer to an easy victory. Salem led 2-0 after two innings, then struck for six runs in the third.

Boyer pitched all five innings, surrendering one hit and three walks while striking out five. He threw just 67 pitches.

Neil Kowalik contributed two doubles and two runs scored in the game, Tony Puzzuoli had two hits (including a double), scored three runs and knocked in another, Gordon had a double and three RBI, Cox finished with two hits, two runs scored and two RBI, and both Nate Krumwiede and O'Beirne had a hit and an RBI.

"We got off to a good start," said Rumberger. "We got in a good 10-12 hours of practice outside, and we found out a lot of things about our team, which will help us in the weeks to come."

"Cox, Kowalik and Gordon all did a great job. I don't want to be too optimistic, but I think we're a bit better than I thought."

Last Thursday, Salem opened its season in Cincinnati with a 6-4 win over Woodward (Cincinnati). Kowalik started and got the pitching win, allowing four runs on three hits and five walks in 4 2/3 innings. Puzzuoli tossed one inning of scoreless ball to earn the save.

Gordon had two hits (including a double) and an RBI and Dylan Tobin contributed two hits, an RBI and a rally-squelching diving catch in left field with the bases loaded and two out in the fifth.

The Rocks play at Redford Thurston Friday, then host Redford Union in a non-league double-header Saturday.

CLASSES

POWER SKATING CLASSES

Suburban Training Center in Farmington Hills will have a beginning power skating class on Fridays from 4:30 to 5:20 p.m. and an intermediate power skating

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Skaters ages 7 and up are

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Pre-registration is required. For more information call Suburban Training Center at (248) 888-1400 or visit www.suburbanhockey.com.

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