

CYO

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two losses. Fortunately, we learned something from those two games."

In the title game, the Saints lost the coin flip and batted first against St. Paul. They used it to their advantage, scoring three runs in the first inning.

Chris Bergeron and Zack Crawford scored on a Matt Reje single, and Reje came in on a single by Scott Malinowski.

With Steve Kish on the mound, the Saints kept the Lakers off the scoreboard until the third inning when Billy Matouk doubled in two runs.

In the fifth, St. Paul's Tim Detors led off with a double and scored when Buzz Pallazola singled and got caught in a rundown to tie the game, 3-3.

The Saints responded immediately, though, sending 10 batters to the plate in the sixth. Jeff Petry led off with a single, catcher Jonathan Castine walked, and Reje singled in Petry with the go-ahead run.

Sorrows loaded the bases when Malinowski singled and Tom Whiting was hit by a pitch. Andy Harris walked scoring Reje, and

Tim Nagrocki's sacrifice fly scored Malinowski. Kish singled and Bergeron singled in Whiting with the final run.

The Lakers threatened in the sixth, leaving two on base, and the seventh, leading the bases with one out. But Kish finished off the Nos. 4 and 5 hitters on strikeouts. Kish fired a six-hitter, striking out 11 and walking six.

Sorrows reached the final by beating Allen Park St. Francis Cabrini, 3-2 in eight innings, and Detroit St. Thomas Aquinas, 8-3, in the Downriver District. They defeated Dearborn Heights St. Linus in the West Side final, 6-3.

The Saints entered the 16-team, post-season playoffs by winning the West Suburban Division title with a 9-1 record. They also won the OLS spring tournament.

The Saints finished the season with an overall team batting average of .336, led by Castine (.528), Petry (.481), Reje (.396), Malinowski (.389), Kish (.361) and Whiting (.325).

"While these boys put up the biggest offensive numbers, you don't win championships

without good defense and pitching," Reje said.

"Jon Conover, Nick Martz and Nick Carroll were solid in the field along with Harris, Nagrocki, Crawford, Bergeron and the rest of the boys."

"We didn't have the kind of overpowering team coach Mike Charles had in the 1999 and 2000 title years at OLS, but these boys learned a lot from Mike when he coached them last season. Plus, they had a little extra incentive to shave coach Castine's beard if we won the title."

Two years ago, most of the same boys shaved coach Reje when they went 16-0 for a sixth-grade division title.

Reje had a beard for 22 years and the players wanted to shave coach Castine's beard of 26 years at that time. He promised them a shot at it if they won the CYO title this year.

"There are a lot of people who don't know me now," said coach Castine after his shave at a post-game party. "After 28 years it was worth it. And thanks to the boys for no cuts, no errors."



PHOTO COURTESY OF BRIAN D. ELLIS

The new-look coach: Our Lady of Sorrows players point to coach John Castine's clean-shaven appearance. Castine honored his word, letting the boys shave his beard after the Saints won the CYO citywide title.

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