Baltimore Signs Thurston Slugger

By TOM DONOGHUE
Sports Editor

Thurston High's Bill Fraser had heard that his name was in the recent baseball draft and even heard that he was drafted by somebody.

The 18 year-old Redford Township athlete was finally contacted and made all rumors good with a contract signing with the Baltimore Orioles for a bonus of $5,000.

Fraser learned that he was drafted by Baltimore in the 38th round and was faced with one big decision.

Hockey has always been everything to the two-year Junior Red Wing star who has played organized hockey since the age of seven and had never given baseball a second thought up to this season.

"I never gave baseball a serious thought until this past year at Thurston High," said Fraser. "Hockey has always been my life but things started changing and everything jelled towards baseball."

FRASER PLAYED varsity ball at Thurston the past two years under Coach Emil Majeski and was playing for Redford Adray under the direction of Pat Sheridan.

The Thurston graduate won all-area acclaim with the selection to the All-Observer baseball squad in addition to unanimous selection to the Northwest Suburban first team.

Fraser was the No. 1 prep batsman in Observerland with 38 hits in 76 at bats for a .500 mark and scored a total of 23 runs in the leadoff position.

"Bill is the type of kid that every coach dreams of having," said Thurston baseball Coach Majeski. "He has determination and loves to compete."

THE CHOICE to play professional baseball was not an easy one.

Fraser had an athletic scholarship at Eastern Michigan University in baseball and had high hopes of a hockey career.

"I have always been a great admirer of Gordie Howe," added Fraser. "I went to Olympia and we had a talk about the entire situation. Gordie always came to our practices with advice and an interest in every one of the guys.

"He told me that I shouldn't pass up the school opportunity and he even set a hockey-tryout with the Major A Toronto Marlboros."

"GORDIE DIDN'T want to influence my decision, he just wanted to let me know the pros and cons," added Fraser. "He said his personal opinion would of course be biased to hockey and school.

"Everyone I talked with, and believe me... a lot of people gave me their opinions, agreed that if I could get a bonus from Baltimore that equaled the value of the scholarship, I should take it," Fraser said.

"It looks like my blades are buried now," said the now property of the Baltimore Orioles. "I guess hockey will always be in my blood but I will never play again.

"It's all eat, sleep and play baseball from now on out," said Fraser with a smile.

BILL'S PARENTS left the choice up to him.

"My dad coached me a little but when it came down to the final word, I was all alone," said Bill.

"It was a very difficult decision for Bill to make," said Mrs. Fraser. "He loves hockey and baseball and didn't want to pass up the four year scholarship.

"Just as long as he is happy... we are happy," concluded Mrs. Fraser.

BALTIMORE SCOUTS Mike Rogan and Jim Martz were instrumental in the signing of the Thurston graduate. In fact a private workout was called last weekend at Thurston with both scouts in attendance.

"Coach Majeski threw batting practice and I had about 15 swings," said Bill. "I then went to the outfield where he hit me balls in game situations. They then timed me in the 60 yard dash.

"When they called me out to the field I didn't know they had all these drills in mind and my pancake breakfast and I were having a little squabble," added Fraser.

"I won the stomach fight but wasn't sure how I did on the diamond," said Fraser. "A few days later the scouts offered me what I had in mind and I signed."

BILL has already left for the Oriole's Bluefield rookie club in the West Virginia Appalachian League which opened its season last Wednesday.

The all-area ball player will be missed in Adray competition. Redford Coach Sheridan had Fraser in the leadoff spot and had no other choice than to wish his outfielder the best of luck.

The Baltimore scouts have Bill listed as an outfielder but have already told him he will be working out at third base.

BILL FRASER

observerland sports

Redford Sneaks By Livonia, 4-2, On Grand Slam

Redford continued its domination in the Adray baseball league with a 4-2 triumph over Livonia Griffin and a shutout over Garden City, 6-0.

Pat Sheridan's crew now stands with five wins and one tie to its credit, one point ahead of Westland Burger King. The two clash at Thurston High School on Sunday (July 2).

Redford was one pitch away from suffering its first defeat against Livonia.

Livonia was leading 2-0 in the top of the sixth with Redford at bat and the 10:30 p.m. curfew was activated with the sixth being the final stanza.

But the one pitch that could have ended it all with Livonia the winner ended with Livonia the loser.

GORDIE ESZES uncorked a grand slam home run to deep right center field and Livonia failed to rally in the bottom of the inning to fall to its third defeat.

Tom Ford worked the first five innings for Redford, allowing just one hit, striking out 11 and walking eight. Liconia Graham pinch hit for Ford in the sixth and got credit for the save with Ford getting the win.

Howard Schryer collected the lone Livonia hit with a single in the second.

Tony Kaseta hurled for Griffin and scored a six-hitter with six strikeouts and five walks.

LIVONIA SCORED two off Ford in the third without the benefit of a hit. Bill Turkington walked and moved to second on a wild pitch. Roy Henriksson also walked and both runners moved up on another wild pitch.

Ford balked on a disputed call and Turkington was awarded home plate with the first run. Henriksson scampered in with the second run on Ford's third wild pitch on the inning and the lead appeared strong enough for an upset.

The umpires ruled the sixth the final inning and everything was going Livonia's way till. . .

BILL HERBERT was safe on an error but Kaseta got the second out and things still looked secure. Pinch-hitter Graham drew a walk and R.J. LeRoux walked to fill the bases.

Then with two outs and two strikes, Eszes blasted an outside curve to deep right center and by the time Livonia Coach Ron Hellier had realized what happened, his team was on the short end of a 4-2 score, after being one pitch away from a two run victory.

Graham got his first start for Redford against Garden City and responded with a three-hit shutout, striking out 10 and walking just two. Greg Puishes worked for Garden City and allowed 10 hits, struck out three and walked two.

DAN O'BRIEN was the offensive star for Redford with two singles, a double, a home run and five runs batted in.

The husky Redford batsman is hitting at a .667 pace with 12 hits in 18 at bats in Adray competition.

LaRoux started Redford off in the first with a walk followed by a double by Jeff Washington. O'Brien cleared the bases with a single and Redford was two up.

LaRoux opened the third with a solo round tripper but Redford was still in the mood for scoring. Eszes singled but was thrown out attempting to stretch it into a double. Washington was then hit by a pitch and O'Brien lashed out a two-bagger and Redford was up, 4-0.

Eszes singled in the fifth and was followed by back to back hits by Washington and O'Brien and it was 5-0. O'Brien blasted his second homer in the seventh some 420 feet away from home plate and Redford had scored another Adray victory.

Adray Baseball

STANDINGS

	W	L	PT
Redford Adray	5	0	11
Burger King	5	1	10
Adray Dearborn	5	1	10
Griffin Sport	4	3	8
Plymouth Bidwell	3	2	7
Mario Sinacola	2	4	5
Northville Reef	2	4	4
Koebel Diamond	1	5	2
Garden City	1	5	2
Varsity Shop	0	3	1

SCORES

Burger King 5, Sinacola 3
Redford 4, Griffin Sport 2
Dearborn 4, Koebel 1
Plymouth 1, Garden City 0
Dearborn 2, Burger King 1
Griffin Sport 5, Varsity Shop 1
Northville 2, Sinacola 1
Plymouth 2, Koebel 1
Redford 6, Garden City 0
Garden City 5, Koebel 1

WEDNESDAY'S GAMES

AT BIRMINGHAM GROVES HIGH
Varsity Shop vs Koebel, 6 p.m.
AT GARDEN CITY PARK
Garden City vs Burger King, 8:30 p.m.

FRIDAY'S GAMES

AT HENRY FORD FIELD
Plymouth Bidwell vs Burger King, 6 p.m.
Livonia Griffin vs Garden City, 8:30 p.m.
AT NORTHVILLE ATHLETIC FIELD
Northville Reef vs Dearborn, 6 p.m.
AT THURSTON HIGH
Koebel vs Redford Adray, 6 p.m.
AT BIRMINGHAM GROVES HIGH
Sinacola vs Varsity Shop, 8 p.m.

SATURDAY'S GAMES

AT BELLCREEK PARK
Redford vs Varsity Shop, 4 p.m.

SUNDAY'S GAMES

AT HENRY FORD FIELD
Varsity Shop vs Garden City, 6 p.m. Livonia Griffin vs Koebel, 8:30 p.m.
AT THURSTON HIGH
Burger King vs Redford, 1:30 p.m.
AT NORTHVILLE HIGH
Plymouth Bidwell vs Northville, 1:30 p.m.
AT DEARBORN CC
Sinacola vs Dearborn, 1:30 p.m.
Dearborn vs Plymouth, 5 p.m.

Tri-Captains

Wayne State University's 1972 football team will be led by tri-captains, for only the second time in its history with end Larry Fitzpatrick, center Rick Marsack and tackle Pasco Yearby elected to head the Tartars.

WSU Cagers

During the 1972-73 basketball season, Wayne State will appear in three pre-Christmas tournaments, being invited to the Ferris Tip-Off Tournament (Dec. 1-2), the LaCrosse State Invitational (Dec. 8-9) and the Capital City Classic (Dec. 21-22).

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