



American Legion Minnesota Division I Tournament

Gazette



Volume 13, No. 3

New Ulm, Minnesota

Saturday, Aug. 1, 2009

Daily stats

INDIVIDUAL BATTING

Minimum 6 AB	
Dalton, Kyle HOPK.....	.714
Sward, Ryan EAG.....	.692
Miller, Matt RCH.....	.667
Holmquist, Trent WAYZ....	.636
Althaus, Josh WAIT.....	.625
Smith, Jordan WILL.....	.615
Jaede, Tom ACAD.....	.600
Long, Lucas ACAD.....	.545
Kwak, Kristopher ACAD....	.545
Bettenburg, David HAM....	.500

INDIVIDUAL PITCHING

Minimum 4 IP			
Lloyd, Brock MAN.....	0.00	1-0	9.0
Moen, Joe RCH.....	0.00	1-0	7.0
Maher, Steven ACAD.....	0.00	1-0	6.2
Soule, Billy WAYZ.....	0.00	1-0	6.0
Biagini, Matt HAM.....	0.00	1-0	5.0
Hermes, Mark APV.....	0.00	1-0	4.2
Benson, Drew STP.....	0.00	0-0	4.0
Fischer, Garrett NULM.....	1.00	1-0	9.0
Heck, Jake FERG.....	1.00	1-0	9.0
Fangel, Blake APV.....	1.00	1-0	9.0

HITS

Sward, Ryan EAG.....	9
Quame, Derek MAN.....	8
Bettenburg, David HAM....	8
Smith, Jordan WILL.....	8

RUNS BATTED IN

Kleinendorst, Kyle GRA....	10
Lulic, Vince HAM.....	9
Trygstad, Zack WAYZ.....	8
Bettenburg, David HAM....	8

HOME RUNS

Kleinendorst, Kyle GRA....	3
Fischer, Garrett NULM....	2
Long, Lucas ACAD.....	2
Kwak, Kristopher ACAD....	2
14 tied with 1 home run(s)	

Rain stops play in Friday's final games

A beautiful day for baseball ended with a torrential downpour during the final two games Friday at Johnson Park and Mueller Park in New Ulm in the second day of the Minnesota Division I American Legion Baseball Tournament.

The final games, between Fergus Falls and Hamlin Purple and between Rochester Patriots and Apple Valley were suspended and will be picked up where they left off at 9 a.m. today.

In earlier action, Eagan, Willmar, Buffalo, New Ulm and Grand Rapids all picked up their second loss in the double-

elimination tournament and bowed out.

In addition to the four teams in the suspended games, Mankato, Wayzata and the Academy Stars all remained in contention for the title.

Games that were previously scheduled will begin as soon as the suspended games are complete.

In Division II action at LeSueur/Henderson, Pipestone defeated Royalton 10-5, Jordan topped Hayfield 1-0, Pelican Rapids beat Esko 7-0, and Eden Valley/Watkins defeated LeSueur/Henderson 6-0.

Who does that poll anyway?

By John Sherman

Eden Prairie, the team that held the No. 1 spot in the State American Legion Baseball poll, is noticeably absent from the field at New Ulm this week.

The Eagles, who are perennial contenders in Minnesota Legion ball, stumbled in the 10th District Tournament with losses to Hopkins (10-4) and Wayzata (7-1), so they didn't qualify to play this week.

Hopkins came into the State Tournament ranked second in the state and promptly lost two in a row. The same fate awaited Excelsior, the No. 4 team in the state poll.

Apple Valley moved into the No. 1 spot in last week's poll and has one of the top records in the state at 36-8.

What does the state's No. 1 ranking



American Legion Pollster Gail Kalata

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Nathe's devotion to baseball never ends

Rueben Nathe has been around baseball his entire life.

He started out as a player in his hometown of Melrose, Minn. Almost 50 years later, he is one of the top officials in Minnesota American Legion Baseball. Nathe is presently serving a fourth term as state vice-director and is helping run the State Division I Tournament this week in New Ulm.

Nathe's work at the state tournament started the day before the event began, when he greeted each of the 16 participating teams at Johnson Park. Players listened intently as Nathe talked about sportsmanship, fair play and socially-acceptable behavior.

"One thing you'll learn is that it doesn't cost anything to say, thank you," Nathe told the players. "Whether it's the tournament director or a maid at the hotel, don't hesitate to show your appreciation."

Nathe believes in America's youth and that's one of the main reasons he stays active in the Legion Baseball program.

"Most of the kids who come here already have a good sense of responsibility," he said. "They can learn valuable lessons here. I tell them if they live by our sportsmanship code they will

make people proud of them. They are not only representing themselves, but also their parents, their communities, their coaches and their Legion posts."

Nathe has taught many lessons during his career as a town team and American Legion coach in Litchfield. He has coached amateur teams for 32 years and the Litchfield American Legion team for 28 years. He is one of the most respected baseball men in Central Minnesota.

"I have a saying that I share with my players," said Nathe. "I tell them that winning is getting up one more time than you get knocked down. Baseball is an easy game to play, but a hard game to play well."

When people in the area noticed how well Nathe worked with youth, he was asked to serve as District 7 Legion Director, and in 1977, he joined the State Legion Baseball Committee.

"I was the youngest member of the committee when I started, and I am still one of the younger guys," said Nathe. "All of the committee members are very dedicated, and they bring a lot of different opinions to the meetings."

In addition to serving Legion Baseball at the state and local levels, Nathe has served as a director at 15 Regional and National Legion Tournaments.

He worked in Shelby, N.C. last summer, and the regional attracted more than 30,000 paying customers.



Game is in his blood

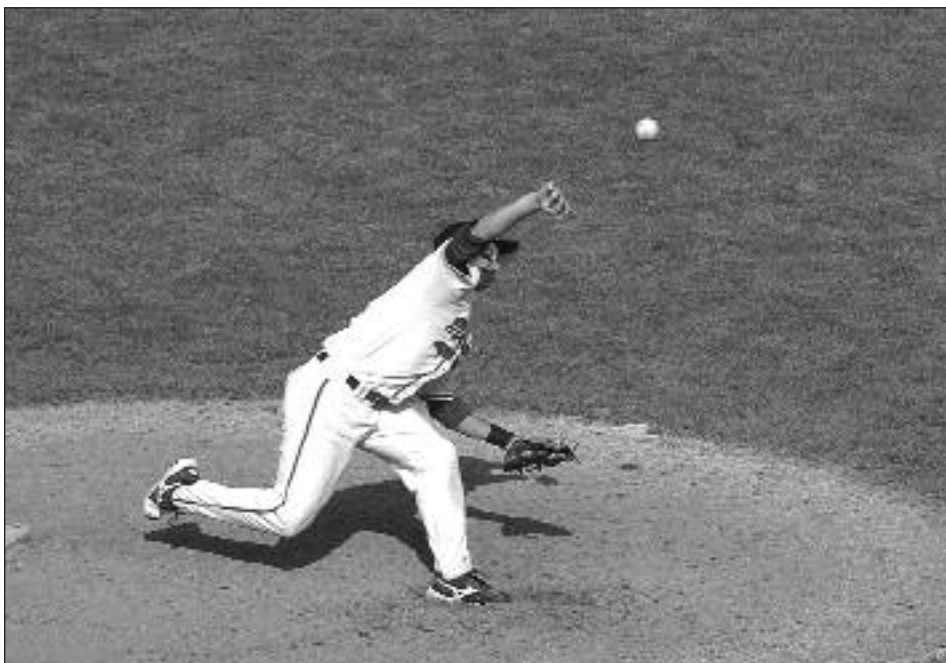
Rube Nathe instructs teams at tourney's beginning.

This summer, he will serve as a director of a regional in Medford, Ore.

Nathe is retired from Litchfield Public Utilities, the local power company. He was assistant superintendent when he stepped down after 36 years.

The State Vice-Director is in just about every Hall of Fame associated with amateur baseball. He is a member of the Minnesota Baseball Hall of Fame, the Minnesota American Legion Baseball Hall of Fame and the Litchfield Amateur Baseball Hall of Fame.

You won't find Nathe on the golf course or at the fishing hole during the summer ... not as long as there's baseball to be played, and that's the way he wants it. Hopefully, he will be at the ball field working with young people for many more years.



Five Hitter

Luke Weber unleashes a pitch on Friday as his team, Mankato Nationals, defeated Grand Rapids 4-1. Weber allowed five hits in a complete game performance.

Stars of the Day

Tom Jaede of the Academy Stars hit for the cycle. He went four for five with a home run, triple, double and a single for 10 total bases and six RBI.

Zack Trygstad of Wayzata in the same game had three hits including a triple with five RBI.

Kyle Kleinendorst of Grand Rapids had two triples and scored three runs for his team in a win over Willmar.

Luke Weber of Mankato pitched a five-hitter in a 4-1 victory over Grand Rapids. He had seven strikeouts.

Billy Shaw, pitching for Grand Rapids, had six strikeouts in the game.

Dan Larsen of Mankato went 4-6 with three RBI in a win over Eagan. For Eagan, Ryan Sward went 4-5 with three RBI.

In the New Ulm - Hamline game, **Garrett Fischer** had four hits for New Ulm and **David Bettenburg** had four hits for Hamline.

Apple Valley gives it the old college try

By John Sherman

Apple Valley High's varsity baseball team struggled to find its way above the .500 mark this spring.

But when Legion ball started in early June, it became a whole new ball game. In addition to having the nucleus of the high school team, 76ers Legion coach Bruce Young welcomed back three college freshmen – Jordan Buck, Brandon Peterson and Andy Schwantes.

Anyone who has watched the State Tournament this week knows what those three players mean to the 76ers. Peterson's hit ended a 5-4 victory over New Ulm, one of the key winners' bracket games Thursday, July 30. Schwantes and Buck also have key hits to their credit.

Adding the three college ball players has been a real bonus, according to 76ers head coach Bruce Young.

"They instantly brought a lot of experience and leadership to the team," he said. "They've been through it before and know what it takes to be champions."

"They've been here before, and that's a big key," said Jeff Buck, an assistant coach

and Jordan Buck's older brother. "This is the third year of Legion ball for Jordan and Brandon and the second year for Aaron."

The players are glad they decided to come back to the Legion team.

"It has been a great time," said Jordan Buck, who starts at first base and plays college ball at the University of North Dakota. "This is one of my funnest experiences in baseball. Our team is a great group of guys with great chemistry."

Peterson, a starting outfielder and .393 hitter at the College of St. Scholastica in Duluth, said, "It sounds generic, but chemistry really is the key to our success. Everyone believes in each other."

Schwantes played at the University of Minnesota-Duluth and started some games at the end of his freshman year.

"The biggest adjustment in going from high school ball to college was balancing school and baseball," he said. "You have to make sure you get to class every day, and when you go on the road you take your homework with you."

Apple Valley finished the regular season 34-8 overall, playing one of the toughest



Brandon Peterson and Jordan Buck

est schedules in the state.

"One of the toughest teams we've played is New Ulm," said Buck. "We have played them three times and won two close ones. The other time, we didn't show up."

The 5-4 win over New Ulm in the State Legion Tournament was a well-played game that featured successful bunts, stellar fielding, timely hitting and a great ending for Apple Valley.

Legion Poll has been around for 18 years

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really mean?

"It's nice to be recognized," said Apple Valley head coach Bruce Young. "The No. 1 ranking is a tribute to all the work put in by our coaches and players."

"The No. 1 ranking isn't enough," said Apple Valley first baseman Jordan Buck. "It's an honor, but the real honor comes with winning a state title. The mindset on our club is that we'll find a way to win."

Young said there is high interest in the rankings. He is one of 15 pollsters who submit a top-10 ranking each week.

"The poll doesn't really mean anything until the last out of the State Tournament is recorded," he said. "But the poll is great publicity for Legion Baseball. I don't see all the teams from around the state, so I end up voting for the teams I've seen. I didn't see the Minneapolis Academy Stars this season, but they are 27-3, and that kind of record speaks for itself."

Fifth District Director George Karnas wondered out loud why the Academy Stars were ranked 19th in the last state poll.

"The poll makes about 25 teams happy," said Karnas. "It certainly creates interest in Legion Baseball, but I'm not sure that everyone participating puts his heart into it."

Gail Kalata of the Tri-City Red Legion Post coordinates the state poll. She sends out weekly scores from all districts to each

of the participants in the poll and also reminds each of them to submit their picks.

Not everyone agrees with the results of the poll, but there's one thing most people agree on – Gail Kalata.

"We couldn't find a better person to do the poll than Gail," said Karnas.

Apple Valley's Young agreed. "Gail is one of those people behind the scenes who puts her heart into Legion Baseball. She's responsible for the success of the poll, and she never gets enough credit for all her hard work."

State American Legion Baseball Director Darwin Berg gave the poll his support.

"It was a nice addition when it started a few years ago," he said. "It's positive as far as I'm concerned because of the interest it creates. I appreciate all the effort Gail puts into it."

Kalata, who is working in the media relations department at the State Tournament, said the poll has been going for at least 18 years. She has been in charge of it for more than half that time.

"Jim Peck started the poll in the early 1990s," said Kalata. "I had known Jim for a few years because I was involved with the Tri-City Red team, and we played some games against Jim's Excelsior team. One day he called me and asked if I'd be interested in taking over. I said, 'Why not?'"

Doing the poll was tedious work at first because most of the polling was done by telephone.

"Once we got everyone converted to e-mail, it became a much easier job," said Kalata. "Greg Schmidt has been working with me on the poll since I started. I get the spread sheet to him and he gets it ready to send to the newspapers. More than 25 papers around the state publish the poll."

Kalata said occasionally one of the pollsters rates 11 teams instead of 10 or includes a team that shouldn't be there.

"After watching the Duluth tournament one year, one of the pollsters rated Superior," she said. "I had to call him to tell him they belonged in the Wisconsin rankings."

Peck said most of the pollsters were ranking St. Michael early in the season, unaware that the top three players from the St. Michael-Albertville High team had elected to play town ball instead of Legion ball.

"The best thing about the poll is that it creates additional interest in the program," said Peck.

Not everyone accesses the state rankings through newspapers. Kalata reported that the ratings page on her website (www.tricitybaseball.org) had 3,670 hits in July. The website also contains information on local programs, the State Legion Tournament and the Gopher Classic.

Line scores, summaries from Friday

Game 17

Eagan 0(11)0 010 010 13 14 6

Mankato 6 0 2 021 102 14 18 3

Walker, Mathiason (1), LaChapelle (9) and Dorgan. Quame, Turbes (2), Larsen (8) and Kleist. WP Larsen, LP Mathiason.

“Bases loaded” was the theme of this elimination game Friday morning at New Ulm’s Johnson Park. The game began with Mankato scoring six runs in the first. Eagan scored 11 in its half of the second, and the game ended on Derek Quame’s single that bounced over first and down the chalk line in the bottom of the ninth. The game featured 32 hits and nine errors.

Game 18

Grand Rapids 134 030 3 14 11 1

Willmar 000 100 3 4 7 1

Shaw, Cournoyer (4) and Bischoff. Skaalerud, Hamann (3), Oestreich (5) and Sawatzky.

Kyle Kleinendorst of Grand Rapids swung a hot bat with two triples and a single. Zack Dick added two RBI for the winners, who scored in five different innings.

John Sawatzky had two hits and two RBIs for Willmar.

Game 19

Buffalo 020 021 012 8 9 3

Fergus Falls 000 231 52x 13 17 3

Duske, Kiphuth (5), Eckstein (6), Holthaus (8) and Beilke. Stanislawski, Hansen (7), Erickson (9) and Mithaugen. WP Stanislawski, LP Kiphuth.

Specer Kidder, Alex Hensch, Jake Heck and Derek Hansen each had three hits as Fergus Falls outlasted Buffalo in an elimination game at Johnson Park. Josh Gaughan sparked Buffalo with a three-for-three performance. Brooks Beilke added two hits for Buffalo.

Game 20

New Ulm Gold 012 300 000 6 11 3

Hamline Purple 321 003 23x 14 15 1

French, Hoscheit (6), Deinhart (8) and Domeier. M. Johnson, Biagini (5) and Lulic. WP Biagini, LP Hoscheit.

Hamline Purple got a home run from Vince Lulic to stay alive in an elimination game at Mueller Park Friday afternoon. Garrett Fischer countered with two home runs and a four-for-four performance for New Ulm Gold. Wade French also hit a home run for the host team which finished the season with a 27-8 record.

Game 21

Mankato 001 020 010 4 7 0

Grand Rapids 000 000 100 1 5 0

Weber and Kleist. Shaw, Srbec (8) and Bischoff. WP Weber, LP Shaw.

Luke Weber pitched a five-hitter with seven strikeouts in an errorless ball game at Mueller Park in New Ulm. Derek Quame was two-for-three at the plate for Mankato and teammate Ryan Willaert had an RBI triple.

Game 23

Wayzata 005 802 602 23 18 2

Mpls. Stars 640 002 010 13 17 3

Kent, Brau (2), Harrison (9) and Trygstad. Jaede, Hogan (4), Girouard (5), Fechette (5), Schneider (8) and P. Sullivan and Pagel (9). WP Brau, LP Jaede.

Wayzata rallied from a 10-run deficit to defeat the Minneapolis Academy Stars in the winners’ bracket at Johnson Park Friday afternoon. Catcher Zack Trygstad led Wayzata’s offense, going three-for-six with five RBI.