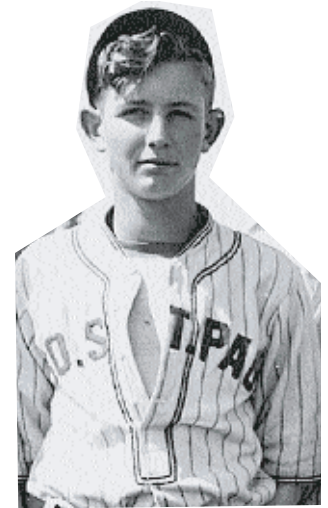




American Legion Minnesota Division I Tournament

Gazette



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Six remain in hunt for state title

After two days of non-stop action in the Division I American Legion State Baseball Tournament at Chanhassen, six teams still are competing for the title.

The final two teams in the winner's bracket are suburban powers Eden Prairie and Wayzata. Eden Prairie put up big numbers again defeating New Ulm Gold 12-3, and Wayzata outlasted a scrappy Austin team 5-2.

The two undefeateds will play each other at 1 p.m. Sunday at Chanhassen.

Whoever wins that game will automatically advance to the championship game on Monday and will also earn one of Minnesota's two berths in the national regional tournament at Bismarck next week.

In the loser's bracket, four teams will fight it out Sunday to make it to a semi-final game on Monday.

New Ulm will play Hutchinson at 10

a.m. at Chanhassen on Sunday.

Austin will take on host Chanhassen in a 11 a.m. game at Chaska.

The winners of those two games will then play at 2:30 p.m. Sunday at Chaska.

The state tournament will conclude on Monday with a semi-final game at 10 a.m. with the final at 1 p.m.

The winner of the semi-final game will also automatically advance to the national

regional.

The World Series is in Shelby, N.C. in two weeks.

In the Division II Tournament at Morris, Foley defeated BOLD 8-6, Minneapolis Giantvalley topped Jordan 13-11 and Moose Lake topped Morris 2-1.

In the semi-finals at Morris, Moose Lake will play LaCrescent and Foley will play Giantvalley.

Athey's hot bat gets even hotter

By John Sherman

Eden Prairie slugger Jeff Athey has been swinging a big bat in the State American Legion Baseball Tournament, and most likely, he's not done yet.

Over a three-game stretch, Athey has racked up nine consecutive hits with a few walks sprinkled in.

"I've never had a streak like this

before," said Athey after going three-for-three with an intentional walk and a hit by pitch in a 12-3 win over New Ulm Gold Saturday at Chanhassen High School.

Athey doesn't usually swing for the fences, but at 6 feet, 4 inches, he has plenty of leverage in full extension. The EP standout batted .394 during the regular season and Sub-State playoffs, and by going 11-for-13 at State, that number has suddenly jumped to a robust .443.

While he is pumped up about his hitting at State thus far, Athey is even more excited about the team's 3-0 record.

"We hope to keep going, keep winning," said Athey.

Athey is going into his senior year at Eden Prairie High School this fall, but before he heads back to the classroom, he would love to take a trip to a regional and possibly the American Legion World Series, as well.

Athey's hitting, along with that of teammate Wesley Young, is the impetus for Eden Prairie's championship charge. But Athey agrees with his coach, Scott Hackett, that this is a team effort.

Hackett said EP's pitching will play a big role in determining how far the team



Play at the hot corner

Eden Prairie's Josh Miller (3) beats the throw to third during a 12-3 victory over New Ulm Gold Saturday at Chanhassen. The third baseman for New Ulm is Josh Wenthe.

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Sub-States promote equity, rivalry

By John Sherman

When the American Legion State Baseball Committee changed the format of the playoffs three years ago, there was skepticism in some quarters.

Instead of organizing District Tournaments, as they always had, Minnesota Legion officials divided the playoffs into 15 Sub-State tournaments. With that change in place, there was no guarantee that every District would have a team in the State Tournament.

One of the initial critics was Mike Gort from Marshall, the Seventh District Baseball Director.

“At first, I was the biggest critic [of the Sub-State format],” Gort said yesterday. “Now I don’t know if there’s anybody more pleased with it than I am. The committee did a fantastic job of assigning teams to the different Sub-States.”

Jim Peck, the State 16-Year-Old Legion Director, played a major role in the administration of the Sub-State format. He, too, is pleased with the results.

“The Sub-State format created numbers equity, which we didn’t have before,” said Peck.

Some of the Districts had low numbers prior to the switch. One District included four teams and another had only six, while others had as many as 30. In setting up the different Sub-States, the committee attempted to maintain geographical rivalries whenever possible. So, for instance, Excelsior, Hopkins, St. Louis Park and Wayzata are all in Sub-State 4 together. Likewise, long-time St. Paul area rivals Tri-City, Rosetown, Hamline and North St. Paul compete in the same Sub-State 7 Tournament. The same is true in the Outstate areas. An example is Sub-State 1, which includes the three Rochester teams, as well as their Big Nine Conference rivals – Albert Lea, Austin, Owatonna and Winona.

“One by-product of Sub-State play is that it has allowed some other teams to make it to the State Tournament,” said Peck. “Two examples are Princeton and Hutchinson.”

Peck said that team strength will “ebb and flow” within each Sub-State. There are 15 of these entities, all of them with 8-10 teams.

“Since we started doing Sub-State Tournaments, only one team griped, and that was a team that was seeded ninth and lost a play-in game,” said State Legion Baseball Director Mike Perry.

Peck said the Sub-State assignments may change slightly in the future and cited one possible scenario for making a change.

“If a Sub-State loses a team and has less than eight teams as a result, we would have to move a team from another Sub-State into that spot,” he said.



Eventual winning run

Parker Hlavacek of Wayzata Legion slides into third base during a 5-2 win over Austin Saturday night at Chanhassen High School. Austin’s Jordan Hart sprawls for the throw. Hlavacek went from first to third on a sac bunt in the bottom of the eighth and scored the eventual winning run. Connor Olson drove in the run with a double, and he later scored himself. Jake Marsh was the winning pitcher for the Trojans, who are set to face Eden Prairie in the winners’ bracket final at 1 p.m. Sunday at Chanhassen High.



JEFF ATHEY

Athey hot bat

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will go.

“The next guy up has to be ready,” said Hackett. “[This is pressure time, and it’s also tired arm time.”

Next for EP is the winners’ bracket final at 1 p.m. Sunday at Chanhassen High School. If the Eagles win that one, they will assure themselves of a trip to the Central Plains Regional, which begins Aug. 7 in Bismarck, N.D.

Stars of the Day

Ty Denzer of Chanhassen hit a bases-loaded triple in the bottom of the sixth inning to key a 6-4 victory over Woodbury Blue Saturday afternoon at Chanhassen High School.

Jeffrey Kressler, Chanhassen’s catcher, went three-for-three the 6-4 win over Woodbury Blue.

Jacob Dickmeyer of Woodbury Blue went three-for-four as his team suffered elimination, 6-4 to Chanhassen.

Jake Arlt, the first baseman for Hutchinson, had two hits and knocked in four runs in an 8-4 win over the Princeton Tigers Saturday afternoon at Chaska Athletic Park.

Jake Carlson of Princeton had a three-for-three day in his team’s 8-4 loss to Hutchinson.

Zach Harris of Chanhassen tossed a complete game to beat Prior Lake 16-0. He allowed six hits.

Jeff Athey of the Eden Prairie has a string of nine consecutive hits in the State Tournament.

Wesley Young of Eden Prairie added three more hits to his tournament total in the 12-3 win against New Ulm Gold.

Statistics for first two days

Team Batting Average

1. Eden Prairie	.421
2. Alexandria	.385
3. Tri-City Red	.368
4. Chanhassen	.336
5. Woodbury Blue	.316
6. North St. Paul	.313
7. Princeton	.310
8. Grand Rapids	.295
9. Hutchinson	.292
10. Prior Lake	.264

Team Earned Run Average

1. Wayzata	2.00
2. Chanhassen	2.31
3. North St. Paul	2.77
4. Eden Prairie	5.00
New Ulm Gold	5.00
6. Hutchinson	5.18
7. Princeton	5.54
8. Alexandria	5.91
9. Tri-City Red	6.00
10. Austin	6.23

Player Batting Average

1. Jeff Athey-EDENP	.846
2. Nick Zeroth-PRINCE	.700
3. Alec Abercrombie-TCRED	.667
Ben Mezzenga-TCRED	.667
5. Nick Lovdahl-TCRED	.556
6. Bo Lovdahl-TCRED	.545
7. Kal Lunde-EDENP	.538
Judd Davis-NEWULM	.538
9. Wesley Young-EDENP	.533
10. Travis Krueger-ALEX	.500

Slugging Percentage

1. Jeff Athey-EDENP	1.615
2. Nick Zeroth-PRINCE	1.000
3. Kevin Sampson-CHAN	.933
4. Alec Abercrombie-TCRED	.917
5. Ben Mezzenga-TCRED	.889
6. Nick Smith-CHAN	.824
7. Noah Hittle-ALEX	.789
8. Kal Lunde-EDENP	.769
9. Marcus Hahn-HUTCH	.733
10. Bo Lovdahl-TCRED	.727

On Base Percentage

1. Jeff Athey-EDENP	.895
2. Ben Mezzenga-TCRED	.800
3. Alec Abercrombie-TCRED	.750
Nick Zeroth-PRINCE	.750
5. Ross Indlecoffer-TCRED	.667
6. Judd Davis-NEWULM	.600
Dan Bollingberg-AUSTIN	.600
Josh Liberko-EDENP	.600
Bo Lovdahl-TCRED	.600
Parker Hlavacek-WAYZATA	.600

Runs scored

1. Jeff Athey-EDENP	10
2. Ross Indlecoffer-TCRED	8
Nick Smith-CHAN	8
4. Casey Hammerback-ALEX	7
Bo Lovdahl-TCRED	7
6. 7 tied at ...	6

Hits

1. Jeff Athey-EDENP	11
2. Noah Hittle-ALEX	9
Travis Krueger-ALEX	9
4. Ty Denzer-CHAN	8
Nick Smith-CHAN	8
Wesley Young-EDENP	8
Alec Abercrombie-TCRED	8
8. 9 tied at ...	7

Runs batted in

1. Kevin Sampson-CHAN	10
2. Alec Abercrombie-TCRED	8
3. Jeff Athey-EDENP	7
Noah Hittle-ALEX	7
Wesley Young-EDENP	7
Charlie Callahan-TCRED	7
7. 5 tied at ...	6

Doubles

1. Jeff Athey-EDENP	4
2. Brayden Amundson-ALEX	3
Jake Dickmeyer-WOOD	3
Noah Hittle-ALEX	3
Nick Zeroth-PRINCE	3
6. 11 tied at ...	2

Triples

1. Nick Smith-CHAN	2
2. 11 tied at ...	1

Home runs

1. Jeff Athey-EDENP	2
2. 11 tied at ...	1

Walks

1. Ben Mezzenga-TCRED	5
Jimmy Bothwell-NSTPAUL	5
Ryan Nickel-TCRED	5
4. Michael Bohlke-WAYZATA	4
Cole Kirchoff-CHAN	4
Collin Helget-NEWULM	4
Nick Smith-CHAN	4
Jack Mattson-CHAN	4
Parker Hlavacek-WAYZATA	4
Alec Abercrombie-TCRED	4

Hit by pitch

1. Ross Indlecoffer-TCRED	3
Jeff Athey-EDENP	3
3. Alex Ciola-AUSTIN	2
Kevin Sampson-CHAN	2
Marcus Hahn-HUTCH	2
Ronnie Sweeny-WOOD	2
Bo Lovdahl-TCRED	2
Jake Arlt-HUTCH	2
Charlie Horton-MPLGROVE	2
Joe Fahning-EDENP	2

Individual Earned Run Average

1. Jimmy Larson-PRIORLK	0.00
Zach Harris-CHAN	0.00
Brendan Broady-WAYZATA	0.00
Jake Drew-ALEX	0.00
Jake Marsh-WAYZATA	0.00
Logan Graves-CHAN	0.00
Alex Ciola-AUSTIN	0.00
Jamin Hesby-WAYZATA	0.00

Brett Schulze-MPLGROVE	0.00
Josh Gaworski-TCRED	0.00

Opposing Batting Average

1. Jimmy Larson-PRIORLK	.071
Josh Gaworski-TCRED	.071
3. Jamin Hesby-WAYZATA	.118
4. Alex Ciola-AUSTIN	.143
Brett Schulze-MPLGROVE	.143
6. Jayden Fleck-HUTCH	.156
7. Zach Lauzon-NSTPAUL	.174
Jake Marsh-WAYZATA	.174
9. Hunter Even-CHAN	.176
10. Brendan Broady-WAY	.192

Innings pitched

1. Damon Rademacher-PRIN	9.0
Jimmy Larson-PRIORLK	9.0
Wyatt Peterson-NEWULM	9.0
Lawson Zenner-PRIORLK	9.0
Quinn Gibson-ALEX	9.0
6. Jayden Fleck-HUTCH	8.2
7. Gus Varland-NSTPAUL	8.0
Austin Gohl-SARTELL	8.0
Noah Johnson-GRAPIDS	8.0
Holden Schmidt-TCRED	8.0

Batters struck out

1. Gus Varland-NSTPAUL	15
2. Jimmy Larson-PRIORLK	11
3. Jake Drew-ALEX	9
Nick Hanson-PRIORLK	9
Lawson Zenner-PRIORLK	9
Damon Rademacher-PRIN	9
7. Jake Marsh-WAYZATA	8
8. Jake Reinartz-AUSTIN	7
Hunter Even-CHAN	7
Max Meyer-WOODBURY	7

Batters SO out looking

1. Jake Drew-ALEX	5
2. Nick Hanson-PRIORLK	4
Gus Varland-NSTPAUL	4
4. 8 tied at ...	3

Wins

1. Jake Marsh-WAYZATA	2
2. 22 tied at ...	1

Saves

1. Nick Zeroth-PRINCE	1
Chad Clute-CHAN	1
Mitchell Kurth-HUTCH	1
Gabe Knowles-NEWULM	1
Nate Conner-AUSTIN	1

Wild pitches

1. Grant Baumetz-HUTCH	4
2. Holden Schmidt-TCRED	3
Henry Wirtjes-ALEX	3
4. Luke Hallbeck-PRINCE	2
Josh Gaworski-TCRED	2
Jake Dickmeyer-WOOD	2
Mason McMahon-MPLGR	2
Logan Graves-CHAN	2
Dan Bollingberg-AUSTIN	2
Lucas Pumper-PRIORLK	2

Game summaries for Day Two

Game 17

Alexandria 201 410 000 8 16 1

Tri-City Red 101 010 100 4 8 1

Gibson and Hittle. N. Lovdahl, Schmidt (5) and Meyer. WP Gibson, LP N. Lovdahl.

Pitcher Quinn Gibson pitched a complete game and his catcher, Noah Hittle, had three RBIs on four hits as Alexandria eliminated Tri-City Red from the State Tournament Saturday morning at Chaska Athletic Park. Left fielder Ben Mezzenga led Tri-City Red with three hits and three stolen bases. Tri-City Red finished the season 24-12.

Game 18

Hutchinson 300 000 023 8 8 3

Princeton 000 101 002 4 11 2

Corrow, Ellenson (6), Kurth (8) and C. Arlt. Rademacher and Archer. WP Corrow, LP Rademacher.

Noah Corrow was the winning pitcher for Hutchinson, working five strong innings before relievers Cole Ellenson and Mitchell Kurth took over. Damon Rademacher pitched a complete game for Princeton. Hutchinson's offense revolved around clean-up hitter Jacob Arlt, who had two hits and four RBIs. Marcus Hahn had two hits and scored three runs.

Game 19

Prior Lake 000 021 001 4 10 1

North St. Paul 001 100 000 2 7 2

Zenner and Keating. L. Varland, Rubbelke (8) and Foote. WP Zenner, LP L. Varland.

In a State Tournament elimination game Saturday morning, Prior Lake topped North St. Paul 4-2. Lawson Zenner allowed seven hits and struck out nine in pitching a complete game for Prior Lake. Second baseman Jake Eitreim led the Lakers at the plate with three hits. Gus Varland and Jake Piegras each had two hits for North St. Paul, which finished the season 29-16.

Game 20

Woodbury Blue 000 010 300 4 10 0

Chanhassen 002 004 00X 6 10 0

Gehrt, Wilkerson (6) and Holte-Macera. Graves, Tirevold (7), Clute (8) and Kressler. WP Graves, LP Gehrt.

Chanhassen catcher Jeffrey Kressler had a perfect three-for-three day at the plate, but the biggest blow of the game was a three-run triple in the sixth by Chanhassen shortstop Ty Denzer. Three Chan pitchers combined for the victory with Logan Graves earning the decision.

Game 21

Hutchinson 610 311 23 17 17 1

Alexandria 002 004 01 7 14 2

Piechowski, Ellenson (7) and C. Arlt. Wirtjes, Radtke (2), Bressel (5) and Hittle. WP Piechowski, LP Wirtjes.

In a game that featured 31 hits, Hutchinson won in eight innings by the 10-run rule. Noah Corrow had four RBIs on three hits for Hutchinson and teammate Marcus Hahn hit a home run. Catcher Noah Hittle homered for Alexandria.

Game 22

Chanhassen 421 502 2 16 17 0

Prior Lake 000 000 0 0 6 1

Harris and Kressler. Cady, Koopman (3), Eitreim (7) and Keating. WP Harris, LP Cady.

Zach Harris, Chanhassen's 6-foot-5 pitcher, blanked Prior Lake on a six-hitter, while his teammates feasted on Laker pitching with 17 hits. Kevin Sampson had four RBIs for the winners, while Jared Davidson went three-for-four.

Game 23

Eden Prairie 100 042 203 12 17 0

New Ulm Gold 000 002 100 3 7 3

Ehresman, Christensen (7) and Safgren. Forbrook, Batt (6), Fischer (7), Guggisberg (9) and Kannegiesser. WP Ehresman, LP Forbrook. Home Run: Athey (Eden Prairie).

Eden Prairie moved to 3-0 in State Tournament play with a 12-3 victory over New Ulm Gold Saturday afternoon at Chanhassen High School. Jeff Athey continued his hot hitting with a perfect night that included a home run, a double, a single, a walk and a hit by pitch. Wesley Young added three hits for EP, as the Eagles improved to 34-6.

Game 24

Austin 200 000 000 2 5 2

Wayzata 000 002 03X 5 6 1

Ciola, Conner (6), Bollingbrook (8) and D. Gasner. Stolt, Hesby (2), Marsh (7) and Olson.

Wayzata trailed 2-0 for more than half of its game against Austin Saturday night at Chanhassen High School. The Trojans tied the score on a two-run double in the bottom of the sixth inning. Three runs in the bottom of the eighth gave Wayzata an insurmountable lead. Catcher Connor Olson hit a two-run double for the eventual winning run. A heads-up base running play by Wayzata's Parker Hlavacek was a plus in the big inning. He went from third to first on a sacrifice bunt by Cam Keenan. Griffin Schneider led Wayzata with two hits. Dan Bollingberg went three-for-five to lead Austin.