

Fargo/Moorhead Tournament Coverage

West St. Paul Makes Statement

By Greg Schmidt

June 30, 2005

An early wakeup and depleted roster led to disaster as the Red absorbed a 13-3 five-inning drubbing delivered by West St. Paul June 24 at Matson Field in the first round of the Fargo-Moorhead tourney.

The Challengers, ranked 10th in the latest state poll, belted out 16 hits against the fourth-rated Red and two of them came from an unlikely hero. Seldom used utility guy Brent Oppegard stepped in at second base and stepped up at the plate with his first home run of the season, a three-run shot in the third that gave the Challengers a commanding 7-2 lead. He added a two-run single one inning later to push West St. Paul into double digits at 10-3. Meanwhile, the Red could muster only seven hits against Kyle Barker who raised his mark to 4-0 with an ERA of 2.24.

Derek McCallum went 2 for 3 with an RBI for Tri-City. Bjorn Anderson, Joe Colwell (2B, RBI), Justin Hemauer, Sam Weber and Brady Field (BB) accounted for the remaining five hits.

It was the first double-digit defeat for the Red since the final game last season when they had their season cut short 12-2 by Northfield in the losers' bracket at the state tournament. "We're missing some guys and we just didn't have the tempo . . . some of that may be playing too many games — a little tired [the team left the Twin Cities at the crack of dawn]," Larsen said. "I told them to forget this one and go back and [check into the hotel] and get ready for tonight."

Coincidentally the 13-3 final also left the Red at 13-3 overall. West St. Paul continues to impress while improving to 10-4 despite missing several players from Henry-Sibley early in the season because of the team's berth in the state high school tournament.

West St. Paul 13, Tri-City Red 3, 5 innings (Game 16)

June 24, 2005

West St. Paul	1	2	5	4	1	—	13	16	0
TCR	0	2	1	0	0	—	3	7	4

Barker and Ohman, Nelson (4); Rosin, Porten (3) and Moen. W-Barker (4-0). L-Rosin (2-2). HR-WSP, Oppegard (1).

McCallum Leads Way Past Rival Moorhead

By Greg Schmidt

June 30, 2005

Although few on either youth-laden roster had a full understanding of the turbulent, but always entertaining rivalry between Tri-City and Moorhead, each became quick learners June 24 at Matson Field in Moorhead. The Red (14-3) struck first and last — both in impressive fashion — for a 12-7 punch to the midsection of the Blues (5-6) and their boisterous fan contingent.

The Red, more specifically Derek McCallum, built a seven-run advantage heading into the bottom of the fourth inning. McCallum had a three-run cloud kisser in the first and followed that up with the same in the fourth. But as past battles between the teams have shown, the game was far from over. The Blues went on their own scoring binge and eventually drew even in the bottom of the sixth. Momentum appeared to be shifting. Or was it?

“I think we were all pretty confident . . . even though we ran into a few tough calls by the ump, we hung with it,” said McCallum. Teammate Blake Searles enjoyed the suddenly tense atmosphere.

“There was a lot of energy in the game. They came back and we were down [mentally] but we had to come back and not let them get to us,” Searles said. The Red responded quickly. Once again it was McCallum leading the charge as he led off the seventh with a triple to left centerfield. A passed ball brought him home and put the Red back in front 8-7. But they weren’t done yet. The onslaught continued on — highlighted by run-scoring singles from Matt Frakes (1 for 1, RBI) and Searles.

“That’s why we’re such a good team. We stay tough and keep going at it,” said Searles. The five-run burst was more than enough for reliever Seth Rosin, who left no chance for another Blues comeback. The 1-2-3 seventh locked up his third win.

“[Rosin] wanted the ball and that was big,” said manager Jeff Larsen, who saw more in the victory than simple bragging rights. “I told the kids ‘you don’t know how huge this game is.’ It kind of sets up — the rest of the season . . . I look at this as how good we can be.”

McCallum (3 for 5, 2-HR, 3B) had a career high six RBI. “It was his turn to step up and then the rest of them did also. It takes something like that to get the others going,” said Larsen.

Bjorn Anderson also had three hits while Hemauer (2-BB, 2-RBI) and Searles (RBI) added two apiece.

**Tri-City Red 12, Moorhead 7 (Game 17)
June 24, 2005**

**TCR 3 0 1 3 0 0 5 — 12 13 1
Moorhead 0 0 0 3 2 2 0 — 7 10 3**

S. Weber, Rosin (6) and Field; Ziegler, Pieterick (7), Stone (7) and Dahl, Pieterick (4), McLister (7). W-Rosin (3-2). L-Pieterick (0-1). HR-TCR, McCallum 2 (2).

Ries Goes Distance

By Greg Schmidt
June 30, 2005

The Red was in serious need of a pitching gem after surrendering 20 runs in their previous two games.

Enter Mark Ries (3-1, 2.11 ERA). The third-year veteran was nearly flawless in a 4-1 win over Omaha Northwest (6-12) June 25 at Jack Williams Stadium in Fargo. Ries scattered six hits and struck out three while allowing one unearned run in his complete game outing. Chase Traeger (2 for 4, 2B) led off the game with a single and moved to third on singles by Justin Hemauer (1 for 4) and Brady Field (1 for 3, HBP). A wild pitch put Traeger back in the dugout. The game-winning hit arrived in the second on an RBI double down the left field line by Derek Moen (1 for 3, 2B, RBI). The Red (15-3) went up 4-0 with a run-scoring double from Derek McCallum (1 for 3, BB, 2B, RBI) in the fifth.

**Tri-City Red 4, Omaha Northwest 1 (Game 18)
June 25, 2005**

**TCR 1 2 0 0 1 0 0 — 4 7 2
Omaha Northwest 0 0 0 0 0 1 0 — 1 6 2**

Ries and Field; Drvol and Grell. W-Ries (3-1). L-Drvol (0-1).

Red Walks over Fargo — Sprints Back to Third Place Finish

By Greg Schmidt

June 30, 2005

The Red (16-3) recorded only two hits, but amazingly still secured a 6-4 triumph against Fargo June 25 at Jack Williams Stadium. Aluminum pings weren't necessary as the home plate umpire opted for an extremely tight strike zone, one that would make major league umpires chuckle. The result was a team record 15 free passes for Red hitters.

The Red didn't get their first hit until the fourth when Chase Traeger (1 for 3, BB, SAC, 2-RBI) smacked an RBI double to right-centerfield for a 3-0 advantage. Fargo broke the shutout in the bottom of the frame, but the Red's walk festival couldn't be stopped as Derek Moen (0 for 2, BB, RBI, SAC) drew a bases-loaded pass in the top of the fifth. A pitching change didn't alter the pattern as Cory Sheets (0 for 1, SB, 3-BB, RBI) made it 5-1 on another walk. That was more than enough for spot starter Blake Searles (5-H, 4-SO), who handled the zone much better handing out only three gifts through the first six innings.

However, the strike area shrunk even further — almost to the size of the baseball — in the seventh and Fargo was able to fill the bases with one out to end the day for Searles. In his biggest challenge of the summer, reliever Seth Rosin stood strong despite being greeted with a hit, an error and a grounder that closed the gap to 6-4 before he fanned the next batter to boost the Red (3-1) into third in the standings. That position held up after the final game against fourth place Eau Claire was rained out the next day.

Only seven teams competed in the tourney after Eagan bowed out at the last minute. West St. Paul (4-1) claimed first because of the head-to-head tiebreaker over Bismarck (4-1). Omaha-Northwest (2-3) took fifth followed by Moorhead and Fargo.

The Red finished with three straight wins with the last two sparked by superb pitching. "We talked a lot about it this morning [prior to the double header]," said manager Jeff Larsen. "I told the guys 'you can pitch,' but if you don't have tempo we're in trouble and everything goes flat . . . the pitcher leads your orchestra — that's the tempo."

Tri-City Red 6, Fargo 4 (Game 19)

June 25, 2005

TCR 0 0 2 1 2 0 1 — 6 2 2

Fargo 0 0 0 1 0 0 3 — 4 6 1

Searles, Rosin (7) and Moen; Ebert, Shockman (5) and Nygaard. W-Searles (2-0). L-Ebert (2-1).
