

## **Top seed Red stunned by Hamline Purple — then ousted by NSP**

By Greg Schmidt

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### **Red 10, White Bear Lake 0**

In the opening round July 30 at Midway Stadium, the Red shutout White Bear 10-0 in eight innings. It was the Red's third consecutive shutout of White Bear and fourth victory in as many meetings this summer. The Red held just a 2-0 advantage until turning it on late, starting with a three-run fifth. Nick Colwell (1 for 3, 2-BB, R, 2-RBI) smacked a two-run single to right in that inning. Tri-City plated four in the eighth prompting the 10-run rule, beginning with a two-run monster shot over the StarTribune sign in right by Tommy Thompson (2 for 4, HR, 2-R, 3-RBI). Ian Goldsmith (2 for 5, 2B, R, RBI) doubled off the right field wall to make it 9-0, and he later scored the game-ender on a single to right-center by Ross LaDuke (3 for 5, R, 2-RBI). Paul Myers picked up his team-leading seventh win and never faced more than four batters per inning while fanning five. Brandon Hershey added two hits and knocked in a run for Tri-City, while David Freed (R, HBP), Jesse Nickols (BB, SF, RBI), Phil Wessberg (2B) and Jack Ries (3-BB, 2-R) added one hit apiece.

### **Red 16, Rosetown 6**

In the second round at Midway Stadium July 31, the Red trailed early, but rallied big on their way to a second straight 10-run victory, 16-6 in seven innings over Rosetown. Down 3-0 heading into the bottom of the fourth, the Red racked up six runs, capped by a two-out, three-run double from Brandon Hershey (2 for 3, BB, HBP, 2B, 4-RBI). In their next at bat, the Red again sent 10 batters to the plate and brought half of those home to extend their advantage to 11-3. They notched four straight hits to start the inning and capitalized on a couple of Rosetown miscues. In the sixth, Nick Colwell (2 for 5, BB, SB, R, 2B, 5-RBI) had a two-run double and, one inning later, he finished it with a single to left that pushed Jack Ries (1 for 3, 2-BB, 3-R, 2B, RBI) across the dish with the game-winner. Andy Gallagher became the Red's second seven-game winner, by tossing three innings of shutout relief, with just two hits allowed and two strikeouts. Tommy Thompson (3-R, BB) led the hit parade, going 4 for 5 with three RBI. Ross LaDuke and Matt Tetrick (BB) each scored three times and had two hits apiece. Ian Goldsmith added three walks, scored twice and had an RBI, while David Freed (SAC, R) finished 1 for 5. The Red finished 4-0 against Rosetown in '08.

### **Hamline Purple 20, Red 16**

Tri-City entered the third round on a high note claiming a pair of 10-run triumphs in their first two games of the postseason. But the joy ride was over in a hurry as Hamline Purple, which had lost to the Red in all three regular season tilts by a combined 21-11 score, outlasted the Red in a 20-16 slugfest at North St. Paul Aug. 1. The Purple led throughout, while building a shocking 20-4 advantage.

However, as the final score indicates, the Red fought to the bitter end, scoring a dozen unanswered runs. The lone pitching bright spot for the Red was the effort of Ethan Imdieke, who put the Hamline bats into a deep freeze after such a ferocious start. He held the Purple scoreless in the final three innings to give the Red a chance for their incredible comeback. But the amazing rally would fall short, sending the top-seeded Red into the losers' bracket against the

district's second-seed and rival North St. Paul. The 20-run showing by the Purple was the most ever scored against the Red in team history.

**North St. Paul 4, Red 3**

Both top-seeded Tri-City Red and second seed North St. Paul were expected to meet in the 2008 Fourth District playoffs, but neither team anticipated the clash being in a sudden-death knock out tilt. After both were slapped around by Hamline Purple in earlier rounds, that's exactly what happened.

The losers' bracket matchup Aug. 2 at North St. Paul was their fourth meeting of the summer. The Red had won two of the three regular season meetings, but the 39ers (30-10) were plenty confident after grabbing a win in the third tangle, less than a week before. About the only sure thing on the menu was that the outcome would be close.

Indeed, it was, as the 39ers ended the Red's '08 season, edging them 4-3. It was the third one-run game between the rivals this summer.

The other battle was a two-run difference.

North St. Paul took a 1-0 lead in the top of the second, but in the bottom of the frame the Red got the equalizer on an RBI double by Jack Ries (1 for 4, 2B, SB, R, RBI) that plated Ross LaDuke (1 for 3, R). Ries eventually stole third and scored on the errant throw to third. The 39ers quickly tied it in their next at bat and the 2-2 knot remained until the sixth, when North St. Paul moved ahead 4-2 with three hits. It wasn't an insurmountable advantage, but the Red was facing Fourth District co-player of the year, Matt Puhl (shared with Tri-City's Nick Colwell). It was the first time the 39ers' ace (7-0, 2.80 ERA) had started on the mound against the Red this summer, but he had already been labeled a 'Red killer' because of his exploits at the plate over his career. This game was no different, as he went 3 for 5 with a double, triple and one RBI. He retired eight straight at one point, until a one-out single by Ian Goldsmith (4 for 4, R) in the sixth. The Red stranded two in that inning and one more in the seventh, before finally closing the gap on a two-out RBI single in the eighth by Jesse Nickols (2 for 4, RBI, SB). But again the Red left two on base. Puhl left nothing to chance in the ninth and put down the Red 1-2-3 to lift the 39ers into the championship round, where they impressed even more by defeating the Purple twice to claim the title and a state tournament berth.

With their forfeit victory over Hamline Red in the regular season finale, the Red finishes 40-9 in 2008.

**North St. Paul 4, Tri-City Red 3  
Game 49, Aug. 2, 2008**

NSP	0	1	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	—	4	11	1
TCR	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	—	3	10	2

Puhl and Rubbelke; Freed, Colwell (8) and Tetrick. W-Puhl (7-0). L-Freed (6-1).