

LL All-Stars Defeated by Hamtramck

by Pete Kass
 One big blow ended the state tournament-hopes of the Birmingham Little League American all-stars when they lost a 5-3 extra inning tussle to Hamtramck at Grosse Pointe last Saturday. The Americans advanced to the sectional finals by edging Livonia 5-4 on the night before.

With the score knotted at three all at the end of regulation play, Birmingham pitcher Phil Isbell walked Al Musella with two away in the seventh. Ten-year old Gary Sine then followed with a blast over the left field wall which virtually sewed up the contest.

Except for one brief scoring spurge for each team, the game was a tightly-played pitcher's battle which could easily have gone either way. The locals were unable to cope with Ron Wolinski until the third frame when they put together an error, a hit and three passes for their runs.

DOUG WITTERS opened the inning with a base on balls and moved around to third as Al Foraker and catcher Mike Jackson also drew passes to load the bases with no one out. Tim Springer fanned before Jay Madonna slashed a double play ball to shortstop.

In his haste to make the play Rob Wasielewski bobbled the ball and everyone was safe with Witters scoring on the play. Isbell then drove a sharp single through the box and out over second base to chase home a pair of runs. Bob Hawkins and Bill Muenchinger struck out to end the treat.

Some shoddy fielding in the next frame permitted Hamtramck to tie it up and send the game into the decisive extra inning. Isbell, who had been breezing along with a perfect game, suddenly weakened and issued a free ticket to the first batter and then Tom Miescack doubled down the left field line to put runners on second and third.

WASIELEWSKI grounded to Madonna for what looked like the first out but Madonna juggled the ball letting the runner reach first and then threw the ball over the catcher's head letting Art Pieper score and Wasielewski get to second.

Gerry Kowbanski also hit to shortstop but again Madonna muffed the ball as another run scored. Dick Deptula slashed a grounder through Madonna's legs for his fourth error of the inning as Kowbanski raced to third and Deptula to second with three tallies across and as yet nobody out.

Wolinski then lifted a high fly to deep left field which Rod Ruddy caught. Kowbanski hesitated at third before trying to score and Ruddy whipped home a beautiful throw to nip the runner at the plate for what was the fielding play of the game. Isbell fanned Mike Dekan to end the inning.

ISBELL FITCHED a fine game as he gave up only two satisfied while whiffing eight, but he could

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not keep up with Wolinski who also allowed two hits and set down 16 men on strikes.

On the night before, the Americans had qualified for this contest by downing Livonia 5-4 on the strength of Al Foraker's hitting and pitching. Foraker stroked a three run homer in the second frame to put the locals in front. The blast followed a single by Muenchinger and a pass to Ruddy as the Americans jumped off to an early advantage.

The visitors got right back in the game in the next inning when Roger Davis clouted a four-bagger over the right field fence in practically the same spot as Foraker's to knot the count. Birmingham bounced right in the fourth with two runs to assume a 5-3 lead.

TIM SPRINGER singled with one out to start the rally. Madonna followed with his third straight hit to send Springer to third. Isbell slugged another hit to send home one run. Muenchinger then singled chasing home Madonna with what proved to be the winning run. The rally ended when Isbell was tagged out trying to steal home.

Livonia closed the gap in their half the fifth on the power of Davis as he hit his second round-tripper of the game, this time over the left field fence. That ended the scoring, however, as Muenchinger hurled the final inning to insure the victory. Foraker pitched well as he scattered seven hits and nine strike-outs over the five innings he worked.

Hamtramck	
Pieper, 1b	2
Wasielewski, ss	2
Kowbanski, cf	1
Deptula, 3b	1
Wolinski, p	1
Dekan, 2b	1
Witters, 2b	1
Sine, 2b	1
Madonna, 2b	1
Springer, cf	1
Isbell, p	1
Muenchinger, 2b	1
Stoddy, 1b	1
Witters, 3b	1
Moher, 2b	1
Total	25

Birmingham Americans	
Madonna, 2b	1
Springer, cf	1
Isbell, p	1
Deptula, 3b	1
Muenchinger, 2b	1
Stoddy, 1b	1
Witters, 3b	1
Moher, 2b	1
Total	7

LIVONIA SOUTH	
Deptula, 3b	2
Hawkins, cf	1
Davis, 1b	1
Foraker, p	1
Levanowski, 2b	1
Schuler, 2b	1
Porter, p	1
Wolinski, 2b	1
Webster, 2b	1
Sherwood, 1b	1
Total	12

BIRMINGHAM AMERICANS	
Isbell, p	1
Springer, cf	1
Madonna, 2b	1
Isbell, 3b	1
Hawkins, cf	1
Muenchinger, 2b	1
Stoddy, 1b	1
Witters, 3b	1
Moher, 2b	1
Total	9

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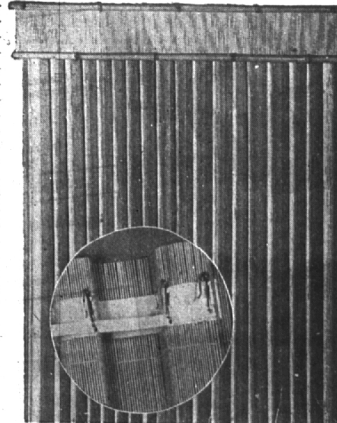
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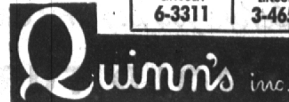
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