



WEEK THREE – HERE COME THE TIE BREAKERS

HITTER(S) OF THE WEEK

We have a lot of guys heating up at the plate as we hit late July. This was a tough pick this week so we're going with a tie seeing as there is no cash prize for this category. Jake Duske, and Billy Soule each were tough outs all week. Duske with 8 hits and Soule with 7. Soule also only had 11 total AB's last week which tells me he found his way on base a couple of more times via the walk, just doing what Billy does game in and game out. Duske not only had 8 hits on the week but scored 5 runs, the most of any Bulldog as they stayed unbeaten.

PITCHER OF THE WEEK

Surprise surprise!! Dassel-Cokato has some pitching. Tyler Zweibohmer picked up the win Wednesday night in a tough road game at Loretto. Z threw all 9, also struck out 9, gave up one earned run helping the Saints take down the Larks 5-2. At the conclusion of the weekend, Loretto and D-C have identical records, this win is going to be key for the Saints here down the stretch. As week three's theme is tie breakers.

GAME OF THE WEEK

Old North Star League East rivals Loretto and Maple Plain met Sunday afternoon at Arnold Klaers Field. We'll fast forward to the bottom of the 8th inning with the Diamond Devils up 2-1 in a pitcher's duel between Donny Schroeder and Max Marshall. Ben Leuthner of Loretto started off the inning with a walk. Koch then bunted him over to second. Tyler Maher sent one deep to left field that came up just short of a homerun, instead tied the game with an RBI double. Josh Gullickson came in to run for Tyler Maher as his brother Nathan stepped up to the plate. Nathan sent a base hit through the left side of the infield that SS Danny Fafinski was able to get a glove on and keep it from trickling in to left. Herb Koch being aggressive coaching third sent Gullickson home. Fafinski's throw from shallow left skipped off the catcher's glove allowing Gullickson to score putting the Larks up 3-2. Matthew Bohlke who came in to pitch for the Larks in the 7th ended up shutting the door on the Diamond Devils in the 9th giving them a much needed win to stay in the hunt for a bye to regions.

FUTURE FEATURE GAME

Friday, July 24 Hutchinson at Delano – 7:30pm

The Huskies and Athletics are sitting 2nd and 3rd in the league respectively and meet Friday night in Delano. The two teams have had some epic matchups over the past few years and a rivalry is starting to blossom as the two school districts are now in the same conference with many players going against each other since their early teenage years. This year it means a great deal more as the two will matchup only one time in this condensed season, and fighting for second place.

WEEK IN REVIEW

Buffalo and Hutch had a battle of the dogs on Sunday afternoon, with the Bulldogs pulling away late for a 12-3 win putting them at 8-0. Buffalo will be heavy favorites in their Wednesday night game vs. Waverly, and Friday night at home game vs. Maple Lake. Could we have our first undefeated team since 2011? The 2011 St. Michael Saints went a perfect 10-0 winning the North Star League North division. The 1967 Loretto Larks (I'm guessing they were the Larks back then) went 14-0 in route to a perfect season. Records do not show if Herb Koch was a rookie manager in 1967 or not. And the 1962 Delano Athletics also went a perfect 14-0. It's only happened three times in the leagues 70-year history. Number four is well within the reach of the Bulldogs. Maple Lake will be a tall task however as they sit 1 game out of the third seed, and two and half back for the second seed. The Lakers have a tough schedule this next week with DC, Buffalo, Howard Lake and Delano, however Maple Lake has always had a knack for finishing the season strong.

This past weekend we also inducted two new members in to the North Star League Hall of Fame. One of my all-time favorites Ben Borrell of Howard Lake and one of my favorites so long as he wasn't in the lineup in Tim Thode of Hutchinson (He was an ultimate Delano A's killer for most of his career). Borrell had a long career as an Orphan dual threat player manning center field at Howard Lake, yet also being a tough pitcher, and hitting right in the middle of some pretty fierce Mike Gagnon led lineups in the 2000's. Borrell may have hit a bomb off of you, or struck you out, but he was always ready to have an adult beverage with you after the game no matter the outcome. Thode on the other hand was a true Dirtbag! Playing a relentless third base, not afraid of using any limb to get in the way of a ball headed for left field. Was a solid gap hitter and was always up there to take some major hacks at the dish. My two favorite attributes however about Thode are the fact that he played in turf shoes late in his career, and instead of wearing batting gloves, he coated his hands in dirt and chalk before stepping in to the box.

WHO'S HOT???

Owen Boerma (Litch) 8 IP/ 2 ER/ 11 K's
Max Otto (Delano) 7 IP/ 0 Runs/ 8 K's/ Win
Dan Van De Steeg (Hutch) 7-16 .437 BA/ 3 RBI/ 3 Runs/ 3B
Matt Piechowski (Hutch) 7-14 .500 BA/ 3 RBI/ 4 Runs/ 3B
Andrew Moynagh (Waverly) 5-9 .555 BA/ 2B
Steve Boger (HL) 6-11 .545 BA/ 4 Runs/ 2B
Brad Bickmann (HL) 6-12 .500 BA/ 2 RBI/ 2 2B/ 3 Runs
Danny Fafinski (MP) 6-13 .461 BA/ 4 Runs
Billy Soule (MP) 7-11 .636 BA/ 2 RBI/ 2B/ Run
Colton Haight (Buffalo) 6-14 .428 BA/ 4 Runs/ RBI/ 2B
Jake Duske (Buffalo) 8-15 .533 BA/5 Runs/ 2 2B
JD O'Donnell (Buffalo) 6-13 .461 BA/ 6 RBI/ 4 Runs/ 2 2B
Brett Renshaw (Buffalo) 6-14 .428 BA/ 4 RBI/2B/ 3B/ Run

FROM THE ARCHIVES - 1984

The league once again became a ten-team league as a new team from Elk River entered the league. The current team from Rogers, (mostly Elk River players), moved to Elk River. The league was also busy as Delano-Maple Lake were to host the 1984 State Tournament. Below are the final regular season standings. The league decided to rename each division from East and West, to Northern and Southern.

NORTHERN

Buffalo	18-4
Maple Lake	14-8
ER Orioles	12-9-1
STMA	9-13
ER Red Devils	5-16

SOUTHERN

Hamel	18-3
Delano	12-9
Long Lake	11-11
Loretto	6-16
Maple Plain	4-17-1

Long Lake and Hamel were play-off champs and advanced through the regions to the state tournament. In state action Long Lake defeated Eagle Bend 5-0, and then lost to Arlington 7-4. Hamel defeated Corliss 5-1, Crookston 14-11, before bowing out to Burnsville 10-8. Selected for the All-Tournament Team was Jay Soule from Hamel (Billy Soule's uncle!)

The top two pitchers in the league were Rod Enerson of Long Lake with a 2.65 ERA, who was given the Most Valuable Pitcher Award and K. Fitzgerald of Buffalo with a 3.03 ERA. The batting champ and League MVP was Ron Haskins of Buffalo who hit .466 and the runner up was his teammate S. Brower at .444 (Not sure either are high enough averages to crack the 2020 Bulldog lineup)