

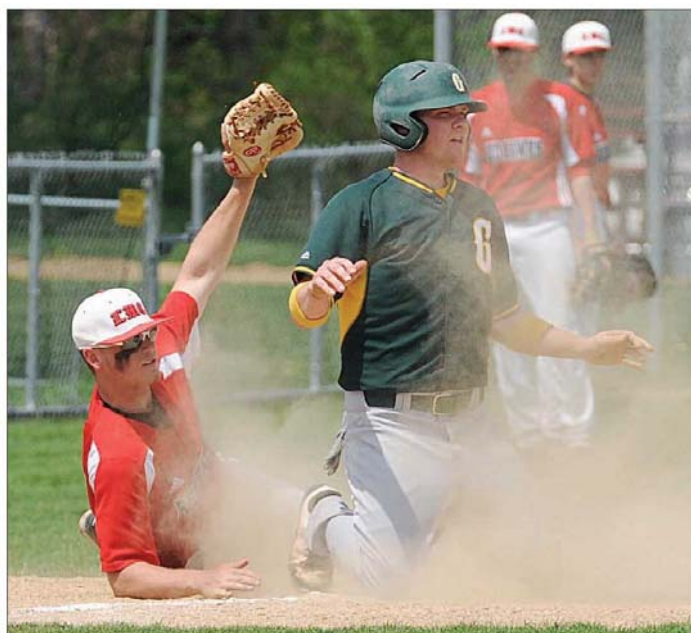


LMC baseball finishes season with split

Sports, B1

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Don Campbell / HP staff
Lake Michigan College's Nick Schultz, left, and Glen Oaks' Stefan VanderMolen check the call at third during the first game of Thursday's doubleheader. VanderMolen returned to second after the hit was ruled foul.

Bittersweet finish

LMC baseball ends season with win, but misses postseason

By AUSTIN BORNHEIM
HP Sports Writer

BENTON TOWNSHIP — The Lake Michigan College baseball team bounced back from a crushing game-one loss and multiple blown leads to end its season on a high note.



The Red Hawks pulled out an 11-10 win over Glen Oaks in the final game of the season after dropping the earlier game 12-2.

"It was a good win, a nice way to go out on the season," LMC coach Scott Ponegalek said.

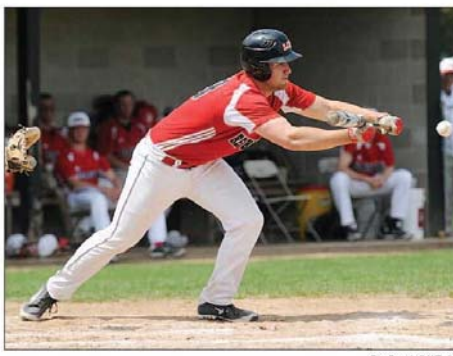
LMC (13-13 MCCA, 15-20) was playing for a postseason berth entering the day, but needed to sweep Glen Oaks (12-14, 16-28) in order to make the regional tournament. But with postseason hopes riding on a win, the Red Hawks matched their biggest loss of the season and struggled to get hits or keep the Vikings off the bases.

"We were unable to get them," Ponegalek said of the wins. "Glen Oaks hit the ball well. That happens in baseball and you can't do anything about that."

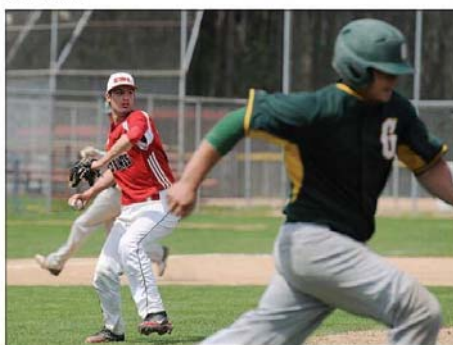
The Red Hawks rallied though in second game.

LMC came to bat in the bottom of the seventh tied with Glen Oaks 10-10 after having given up leads of 2-0, 6-2, 8-7.

Pinch hitter Andy Burton led off



Don Campbell / HP staff
Lake Michigan College's Brock Belanger bunts during the first game of Thursday's doubleheader.



Don Campbell / HP staff
Lake Michigan College's Laketon Belinger throws to first for an out.

See RED HAWKS, page B2

RED HAWKS

From page B1

the seventh with a single to left field and made his way to third on a sac bunt from Roy Napier and a ground out to second by Austin Forsythe. Following a walk to Travis Stricklin, Noah Peterson came up to bat for Nick Lawrence, who had been ejected the inning before.

Peterson eventually hit a sharp grounder to short where Theodore Rufo was unable to get a handle, allowing Burton to score the winning run.

"It was a good feeling," Forsythe said. "We were getting hype, (Travis) Stricklin was yelling and it was a great time. Nice to go out with a win."

LMC's four-run lead vanished in the fourth when the Vikings scored five to take a brief 7-6 lead. Back-to-back doubles to start the inning put runners on with no outs, but a throwing error got Glen Oaks rolling on offense. A series of walks allowed the Vikings to go ahead.

The Red Hawks retook the lead with two runs of their own in the bottom half of the fourth. A lead-off walk to Forsythe and a stolen base put a runner in scoring position.

Lawrence drew another walk two batters later before Tyler Curtis knocked in Forsythe with an RBI single. Lawrence scored a few pitches later on a wild pitch.

"It was my last game and I just wanted to go out with a bang," said Forsythe, who was 2-for-4 with three runs scored and an RBI in the second game.

LMC found itself down



Don Campbell / HP staff

Glen Oaks' Jon Miller tags out Lake Michigan College's Austin Forsythe at second base during the first game of Thursday's doubleheader.

by two entering the sixth, but again were able to answer Glen Oaks.

A Stricklin single started the inning and Lawrence doubled to score the inning's first run.

The Red Hawks thought they had tied the game when Curtis hit a ball down the left field line, but the hit was called foul by the home plate umpire.

Lawrence, who was running on the play, was nearly to home when the call was made and was quickly tossed by the umpire.

Lawrence was replaced

by Peterson, who would score a few pitches later on a Curtis ground out.

"He said something he should have said," Ponegalek said. "But our team did a good job of refocusing and getting the job done."

The Red Hawks had seven sophomores on the team, five of which are from local high schools.

"This was a special group," Ponegalek said. "They didn't give up, they fought through a lot of tough stuff and they play the game right."

GLEN OAKS 12, LAKE MICHIGAN COLLEGE 2

Glen Oaks 153 30 — 12 12 0
LMC 020 00 — 2 2 2
WP — Alexander Delk; LP — Brady Wasko.

Top hitters — LMC: Andy Young 1b; Tre Nelson 1b. GO: Delk 2 2b; Stefan VanderMolen 1b, 2b; Ryan Estep 3 1b.

LAKE MICHIGAN COLLEGE 11, GLEN OAKS 10

Glen Oaks 020 512 0 — 10 13 3
LMC 240 202 1 — 11 12 2
WP — John Foster; LP — Joseph Remence.

Top hitters — LMC: Austin Forsythe 1b, 2b; Travis Stricklin 2 1b, 2b; Nick Lawrence 2b; Nick Schultz 2 1b. GO: Theodore Rufo 3 1b; Taje Frazier 2 1b; Jalen Cox HR; Jon Miller 2b, 3b.

Records — LMC 13-13 MCCA, 15-20; Glen Oaks 12-14, 16-28.

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