



# The Gazette

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## 20 years ago: Rochester A's vs. New Ulm Gold

The end of this game is never forgotten

By Tim Engstrom

Two people on the opposite ends of a legendary American Legion Baseball game that took place in New Ulm in 2003 met by chance at Mayo Field on Friday and took time to talk about the shared memory.

"It was one of the most dramatic endings I've observed in my life," said New Ulm resident and 2nd District Baseball Director Vern Kitzberger.

Rochester resident Mike Badger was the pitcher for the Rochester Post 92 A's back then. They were facing New Ulm Post 132 Gold for the Central Plains regional championship. The winner would go to the American Legion World Series. New Ulm was the host, and Kitzberger was on the host committee. His assigned role was being in charge of the venue. He



**Vern Kitzberger, left, and Mike Badger chatted Friday at Mayo Field about a dramatic Legion Baseball game they both were part of 20 years ago.**

wasn't the 2nd District director back then.

A heavy thunderstorm parked over town during the ninth inning. People were huddled under any surfaces they could find as they waited out the downpour. Streets were full of water. John-

son Park was just soaked. The rain fell for more than two hours.

By this time the pitching mound was mud, Badger said. The Central Plains Regional Tournament director called the wait off at midnight and decided to resume play at noon. There were two

outs. The count was 3 balls and 1 strike, with players on first and second.

"The people who arrived at 12:01 p.m. missed the end of the game," Badger said.

That evening, A's coach Keith Kangas suggested to Badger that he throw a strike to get a full count and possibly pick off the runner on second.

The next day, the crew had Johnson Park back in shape.

With his first pitch, Badger threw a strike. He got the ball back and came to a set. The baserunner on second, Dusty Wilfahrt, began to move, and Badger whirled and threw to his second baseman, Dan Lyons. A rundown between second and third ensued. Wilfahrt was out near third base. Game over.

The Rochester A's defeated New Ulm Gold 6-4.

"New Ulm still talks about that game, but it was a loss to a quality team and a well-coached team,"

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**Wayzata Post 118 #1 coach Marshall Dalziel paces near the third-base coaching box July 21 at Substate 11. He has been coaching the team for three years, and already they made state.**

## How does Wayzata coach attract top talent?

By John Sherman

A longtime problem for American Legion Baseball coaches nationwide has involved the loss of key players to travel teams.

Wayzata Post 118 #1 coach Marshall Dalziel doesn't get all of the players he wants every year but does a lot better than most.

What does he do to attract the top ballplayers in his school district?

"When they come to us, they know they're going to play a lot of baseball," he said. Of all the teams

in the State Division I Tournament, Wayzata is among the most active with a record of 21-17 going into the championship bracket of state.

"Seven of our players have at least 100 plate appearances this year," Dalziel said.

Another way Dalziel makes Wayzata Legion Baseball attractive is time on the road. The Wizards took baseball trips to Fargo-Moorhead and Omaha, Neb. this season and played local tournaments in Delano and Eden

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# Recaps from Friday games of the tournament

## GAME 17

Northfield 042 100 00 7 12 4  
Foley 042 001 01 8 9 0  
Hughes, Kaiser (8), Mellgren (8) and Cahoon. Peterson, Gapinski (7) and Jenhis, Peterson (7). WP Gapinski. LP Kaiser.

Foley earned a berth in the championship bracket by winning 8-7 in the bottom of the eighth over the Northfield River Rats. Two Foley batters walked to open the bottom of the eighth, the an overthrow at first base on a sacrifice bunt ended the contest. In addition to picking up the win in relief, Bryce Gapinski was three-for-three at the plate. Trey Emmerich added two hits for the Falcons. Gapinski and Emmerich each hit a home run. Jake Geiger starred for Northfield with three hits.

## GAME 18

Wayzata 100 000 2 3 11 0  
Duluth 010 000 0 1 6 0  
Skoro and Pribula. Teachworth and Hudoba. WP Skoro. LP Teachworth.

In one of the best-pitched games in this season's tournament, John Skoro was the winner in his duel with Jack Teachworth of the Duluth Cubs. Skoro threw 50 strikes on 77 pitches. Teachworth threw 77 pitches. Jonathan Pribula, Gaard Swenson and Charles Gearen each had two hits for Wayzata. Jayger Atkinson had two hits to lead the Cubs.

## GAME 19

Bemidji 020 300 0 6 10 0  
Mpls Post Office 000 300 1 4 9 3  
Neadeau, Lundwuiust (4) and Ganske. Shirley, Hass (5) and Moyer. WP Neadeau. LP Shirley.

Bemidji won a close one over Minneapolis Post Office 6-4. Hunter Bodina and Ty Lundeen led Bemidji's attack with two hits each. Parker Neadeau was the winning pitcher. Isaac Hass had two hits for Post Office.

## GAME 20

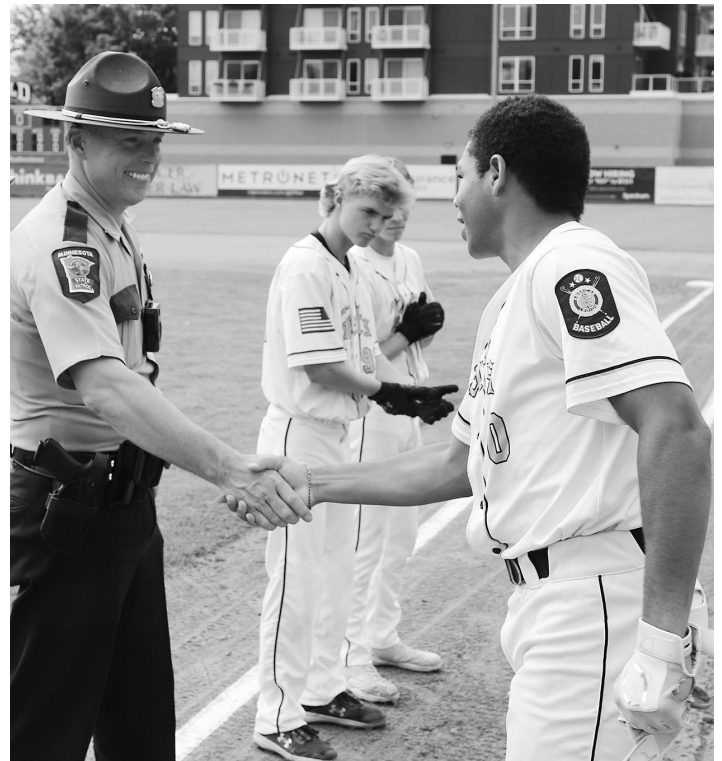
Winona LeJetz 001 000 4 5 8 1  
Delano 100 100 0 2 3 1  
Carlson, Connor (5), Brown (5) and Heftman. Denisen, Winter (5), Jones (6). WP Jones. LP Brown.

Winona LeJetz scored four runs in the top of the seventh to defeat Delano 5-2. A two-run single by Cole Schossow was a key hit for Winona. Three Winona pitchers held Delano to only three hits.

## GAME 21

Tri-City Red 000 001 0 1 6 3  
Mankato American 102 004 x 2 2 3  
J. Price, Purcell (6) and R. Price. McCormick and Willaert. WP McCormick. LP J. Price.

Peyton McCormick improved to 3-0 as a pitcher by throwing a six-hitter to defeat Tri-City



Northfield's Kamden Kaiser shakes the hand of Minnesota State Patrol Chief Matthew Langer. Langer threw out the first pitch of the first game Friday at Mayo Field.

Red 7-1. Derek Rundle and Landon Metcalfe each posted two hits for the winners. Tri-City Red's six hits were by six different players.

## GAME 22

Sartell 100 071 0 9 8 1  
Hastings 001 010 5 7 9 2  
Simones, Boesen (7), Schulte (7) and Thompson. Vanderhoef, Seleski (5) and Teigland. WP Simones. LP Vanderhoef.

It was do-or-die time for both Sartell and Hastings in a Pool 3 game at Hudson Field. Sartell prevailed 9-7 to advance to the championship round. Hastings made the game suspenseful with five runs in the bottom of the seventh inning. Wesley Johnson and Jordan Fish had two hits each to spark Sartell's offense. Tanner Anselment and Gavin Odman each had two hits for Hastings.

## GAME 23

Rochester Redhawks 100 400 0 5 5 1  
Eden Prairie 020321 x 9 15 0  
Brandt, Mathern (4) and Prindle, Condon (5). Hutchison, C. Meadows (4) and Goetze. WP Hutchison. LP Brandt.

Eden Prairie, the No. 1-ranked team in the Scheels Statewide Legion Poll held off

a strong challenge from the Rochester Redhawks to win 9-5 at Massey Field. Hitting told the story as the Eagles outthit the Redhawks 15-5.

Joey Goetze, Nick Macheledt and Aiden Keranen came alive with the bats, each providing three hits, Vinny Dykstra had two hits. Eden Prairie rested some of its key personnel in this battle of unbeaten teams, including shortstop Joey Flom, catcher Dawson Miller, second baseman Nick Thompson and star hitter Seth Tierney.

## GAME 24

St. Michael 170 020 3 13 12 3  
Prior Lake 001 002 0 3 6 4  
Gust, Barrett (2), M. Johnson (2), Bredeson (3), Slates (5) and Giancarlo. Dombeck and Glass. WP Dombeck. LP Gust.

St. Michael came out with guns blazing in a battle of undefeated teams against Prior Lake at John Adams Field. Evan Saunders and Ryan Luster each had three hits for the Mikes and Dillon Glass added two. Evan Dombeck pitched a complete game for St. Michael. Dominik Giancano led Prior Lake with three hits. To avoid burning up pitching for Saturday, Prior Lake sent six men to the mound.



The St. Michael Mikes of Post 567 were in good spirits Friday before their game at Adams Alumni Field against Prior Lake. They won 13-3.

# Foley duo hits the long ball in 8-7 victory Friday

Falcons soar into the 8-team bracket

By John Sherman

Over the last five years, and even before that, American Legion Baseball players from the small Central Minnesota town of Foley have proved they can compete with the big boys from the Twin Cities.

Foley battled for its place in the championship bracket, and earned it with an 8-7 win over Northfield in eight innings Friday.

There wasn't a spectacular hit or play to end the contest in the bottom of the eighth. Instead, it was some well-executed small ball. Two walks set the table, and then Northfield made an error on a sacrifice bunt that allowed Josiah Petersen to score the winning run.

Trey Emmerich and Bryce Gapinski, who hit home runs in the game for Foley, discussed their success in a postgame interview at Mayo Field.

"We found some barrels today," Emmerich said. "We didn't know a lot about Northfield, but we had played them in the State VFW Tournament last year.

"We got going with some small ball in the eighth," Gapinski said.

With teams like Sartell and St. Cloud Chutes in the St. Cloud area, the Foley Falcons have intense rivalries. "We don't need to go to the cities to find competition," Gapinski said.

Emmerich, who pitched a victory earlier in the tournament, said the team Foley would most like to



Foley Post 298 center fielder and pitcher Bryce Gapinski, left, shakes the hand of his teammate, pitcher and right fielder Trey Emmerich, on Friday at Mayo Field.

play at state is Sartell. The feeling on the Sartell side is probably mutual since there are the two best teams from Central Minnesota.

From coach Jim Von Wald's standpoint, the best thing about Emmerich and Gapinski is that they can both play Legion ball again next season. They will be seniors at Foley High this fall.

**Gavyn Wirth balances himself after choosing not to swing in a game against Northfield on Friday.**



## Recaps from the last 4 ballgames on Thursday

### GAME 13

Mankato American 600 435 x 18 12 2  
Foley 031 001 x 6 8 5  
Swalve and Kopesky. Owen, Micholski (5) and Frisbie (6) and Jennissen. WP Swalve. LP Owen.

Mankato American had the highest-scoring game of the first day, beating Foley 18-6. Caeden Willaert led the attack with three hits. Dylan Kopesky had two hits. Logan Swalve pitched a complete game.

### GAME 14

Eden Prairie 110 000 0 2 5 1  
Mpls. Post Office 000 000 0 0 3 1  
Macheledt and Miller. Conway and Shirley. WP Macheledt. LP Conway

In the lowest-scoring game of the tournament so far, Eden Prairie edged Minneapolis Post Office on the three-hit pitching of Nick Macheledt. Washburn gave up a run in each of the first two innings for the only scoring of the contest. Nick Thompson, Dawson Miller, Seth Tierney Carter Arneson and Connor Meadows each

had one hit for Eden Prairie. Ryan Coffman, Milan Arado and Tommy Lyman each had a hit for Post Office.

### GAME 15

Sartell 032 314 x 13 10 0  
Duluth 000 100 x 1 2 1  
Schlangen and Thompson. Fladmark, Cole (3), M. Olson (6) and Hudoba. WP Schlangen. LP Fladmark.

Brett Schlangen of Sartell pitched a two-hitter to set down Duluth 13-1 at Hudson Field. Drew Geiger, Andrew Ritter and Kaden Lewis each had two hits for Sartell. Joey Nick had both of Duluth's hits.

### GAME 16

Prior Lake 010 020 2 6 12 0  
Delano 120 001 0 4 4 1  
Stelzig, Schonhoff (6), Bodine (7) and Keeney. Collings, Bruett (7) and Engelman. WP Schonhoff. LP Collings.

Prior Lake remained undefeated in the state tourney with a 2-0 win over Delano at John Adams Field. Three Prior Lake pitchers held Delano to four hits with Greg Schonhoff recording the win in relief of starter Joe Stelzig. On the offensive side Stelzig had three of Prior Lake's 12 hits.

# Rochester went on to win Legion World Series

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Kitzberger said.

He said New Ulm Gold coach Dave Kuenz was classy in defeat.

Post 92's team went on to win the American Legion World Series, held that year in 100-degree heat in Bartlesville, Okla. They defeated Cherryville, N.C., in the title game 5-2 in late August. As is tradition, they attended Games 1 and 2 of Major League Baseball's World Series that fall. It was the Yankees versus the Marlins.

# Scooters are how Wayzata likes to roll

*Continued from front page*

Prairie. The trip to Rochester this week has offered more opportunities for team bonding.

"Our guys can't wait to get back to the hotel, so they can ride scooters," Dalziel said.

In their three games so far, the Wizards have a total of 35 hits and two wins. They beat Sartell 5-3 and Duluth 3-1 and lost to Hastings 9-6. Wayzata won Pool 3 in a tiebreaker with Sartell, which also finished 2-1.

"The guys on the team really buy into the program," Dalziel said. Wayzata has four of the best players from the Wayzata High School team that won the Lake Conference championship this year — shortstop Jake Berkland, catcher Jonathan Pribula, pitcher-outfielder Gaard Swenson and pitcher John Skoro.

Asked for his impressions of the Div. I State Tournament, Dalziel said, "This is what we play for. When you play travel ball you have tournaments. When you play Legion ball, you can have the opportunity to compete in state, regional and national tournaments."

# 'Gus' celebrates his 61st season as an umpire for Legion Baseball

By John Sherman

Dick Gosse's career as a sports official has spanned 61 years, and throughout that time he has umpired American Legion Baseball along with high school league football, baseball basketball and, later, volleyball.

Gosse, who is known as "Gus" among umpires, coaches and fans, is not working the State Division I Legion Tournament in Rochester this week. He is 86 years old and has a town team game in Pine Island that he will be umpiring on Sunday. Gosse was in the crowd at Hudson Field Thursday morning watching two younger umpires call the play in the opening round of the State Legion Tournament.

Between innings, he shared his passion for officiating in general and American Legion Baseball in particular.

"I have never been in this for the money," he said. "I had a good job, and I have a great time officiating. When you're at the State Legion Baseball Tournament, you see kids from around the state who you don't see during the regular season in Southeast Minnesota. You spot kids who have a load of potential."



**Dick "Gus" Gosse began umpiring Legion Baseball in 1962 in the Rochester area.**

Gosse is even more interested in watching young umpires than young players. When he talks with young umpires, gives them several basic tips: 1. Pay attention, 2. Treat people with respect and they will treat you with respect, 3. When someone is unhappy with a call, take the time to explain it, 4. Study the rule book and the case book and 5. When you have a question you can't answer, ask one of the officials in your association who knows the rules, upside and down.

"We have a mentorship program for experienced officials to

help younger officials through the Rochester Area Officials Association," the elder statesman said.

Over his long career, Gosse has worked many games in state baseball, basketball and football tournaments. He is honored when his performance merits a post-season assignment.

In addition to officiating sports, Gosse is an active athlete. He plays for a Minnesota all-star 85-and-over men's slow-pitch softball team. Since he joined senior softball he has helped Minnesota teams win three national championships and eight world titles. "I pitch and play second base and shortstop," Gosse said.

One of the family activities Gosse enjoys is watching Major League Baseball with his wife and two daughters. "We have watched games at 30 different Major League parks," he noted. Jay Buckley Baseball Tours, based in LaCrosse, Wis. has offered an excellent opportunity for the family to enjoy baseball together. The family also enjoys spending time on their houseboat.

What does the future hold for Gosse? "One of the things I would like to do is officiate for 65 years," he said. "I have no plans to retire."

## Saturday quarterfinals

Mankato Post 11 American vs. Sartell Post 277, 10:30 a.m., Mayo Field

Eden Prairie Eagles vs. Prior Lake Lakers 10:30 a.m., Massey Field

Winners play each other in a semifinal game at 4:30 p.m., Mayo Field

Wayzata Post 118 Wizards vs. Foley Post 298 Falcons, 1 p.m. Mayo Field

St. Michael Post 567 Mikes vs. Rochester Post 92 Redhawks, 1 p.m., Massey Field

Winners play each other in a semifinal game at 7 p.m., Mayo Field



**Hastings Post 47 Raiders batter Sawyer Tjomsland reacts after striking out to end the game on Friday in a 9-7 loss to Sartell. The Raiders lost a close tiebreaker to Wayzata and Sartell in Pool 3, which played its games at Hudson Field. Three of the four teams finished 2-1. The tiebreaker was fewest runs allowed.**