



Mooney pitcher Scott Delgatti seems to carry the weight of responsibility by himself.



Jefferson coach Jim I
third on a two base



Cardinal Mooney coach Ed Nietopski signals his men to ease up.

Cardinal Mooney Wins

Photos and Text
by JOHN DOSER

"We play a lot of games, we make mistakes, but the kids learn. Most of 'em played a lot last year. They get real hungry that way and once they get a taste of it, they love it."

Those words of Cardinal Mooney baseball coach Ed Nietopski partly sum up the "big secret" of his winning successes with Cardinal Mooney baseball teams.

His collection of underclassmen (only four seniors on the team) went out this season with a quick start and won all 22 ballgames for Eddie's second unbeaten season in five years.

It's unusual in baseball for teams to win all their games particularly when the maximum number of games are scheduled, but Nietopski did it twice.

He had solid pitching this season from three unbeaten pitchers who won 20 games among them.

Mooney won a lot of shutouts (credit the hurlers), won a lot of one-run games (Mooney doesn't collapse in the clutch) and won a lot of games in the final innings (six players bettered .300 at bat, another beat .400).

They won the "biggie" also, in typical Mooney fashion.

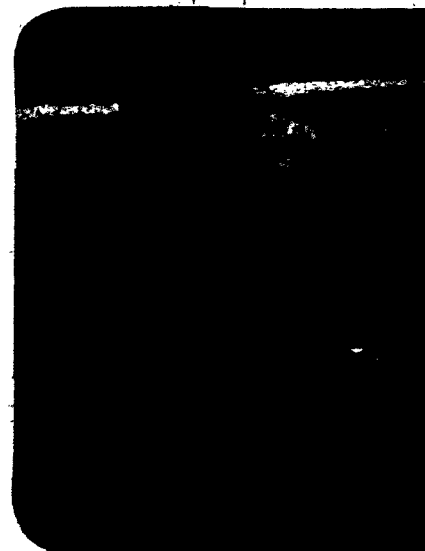
Scoreless championship game going into the bottom of the seventh before 1,200 fans under the Silver Stadium lamps.

One out. Bases loaded. Dave Mercendetti sends a ground ball to the mound. Jefferson pitcher Jim Steffan fields the ball flawlessly, wheels, fires to home for the force out. Two outs.

Jeff catcher Dave Pisano throws to first base for the double-up to end the inning and send the ballgame into extra innings.

But instead he hit Mercendetti in the back, the ball rolled off and away, and Bill Lasky streaked home from second base with the game-winning run and a 1-0 Mooney City-Catholic League championship.

Which is what these photos are all about.



Jefferson's Dave Pisano slides



Mooney catcher Jim Volkmar vs
baseman Greg Westo