

C-J Sports

Kearney laxmen play on a par with Pittsford in 9-8 defeat

By Richard A. Kiley

After his team's 18-4 setback to Pittsford on Saturday, April 18, Bishop Kearney lacrosse Coach Jim Burns insisted that his Fighting Kings could play on a par with a traditionally respectable club like the Vikings.

He was right.

Burns' laxmen proved they could play Pittsford stride for stride, but they still came away with the empty feeling that accompanies every loss.

After jumping out to a stunning 6-0 lead, the Fighting Kings' offense wilted in the remaining three periods, as Pittsford (5-5) rallied for a 9-8, non-league win at Kearney (5-4) on Friday, April 24.

For awhile, it looked as though Kearney was going to tag a demoralizing and one-sided loss on the Vikings, who had played tough against Irondequoit in an 11-3 loss the day before.

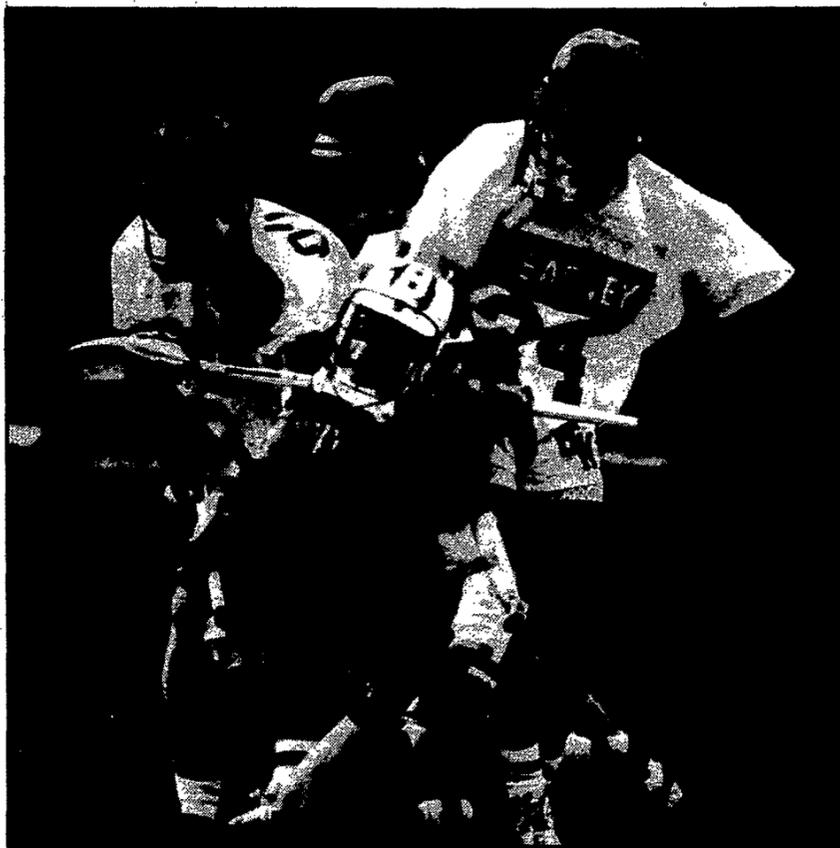
The Fighting Kings set the tone of the day from the opening faceoff, reeling off six unanswered goals against the beleaguered Vikings. Kevin Donalty scored two of his three goals for the day in the opening 1:15, capitalizing on textbook faceoff work by Dave "Beaver" Smith.

Kearney continued to pepper the Viking goal with shots in the ensuing minutes, resulting in goals by Matt Pease, Smith and Rich Shoap, and ballooning the lead to 5-0 after one quarter.

After Pease scored early in the second quarter to make it 6-0, the Vikings' dormant offense was stirred by attackman David Russell. Russell, who needs just one goal to become the all-time leading scorer for Pittsford, quarterbacked the come-from-behind win with his three goals and four assists.

The Vikings rattled off five unanswered goals of their own to pull to within two at half time. Bill Pryor opened the scoring for Pittsford. His effort was followed by two goals each from Russell and Tom Newell. Three of the five Viking goals came in seconds after Kearney penalties expired.

"A few technical penalties really slowed us down," said Burns, who pointed out that, in previous games, his players had been keeping



Jeff Goulding/Courier-Journal

Kearney defenseman Pete Arena finds his stick lodged underneath Bill Pryor's neck in a battle to gain possession of the ball.

their heads instead of taking unnecessary penalties. "We were giving them the ball, and we lost our confidence."

Burns said he would have liked to milk the clock with the advantage his club established early in the contest. "With the score 6-0, you'd like to use the time and not take so many crazy shots and lose possession. I think that's what caused our flurry (of goals) to stop" —

and caused the Viking onslaught on Kearney netminder Doug Lamendola to begin.

After intermission, the Vikings continued to take the play to Kearney, and scored their first and only man-up goal of the game. Dave Chaney scored his first of two goals on a nice feed from Russell at 4:59 of the third quarter, to pull the Vikings to within one, 7-6.

Pittsford knotted the game at 7-7 on

Chaney's second goal, with just 1:46 gone in the final quarter.

Viking defenseman Andy Clark then scored the go-ahead goal for his teammates, racing the entire length of the field to get it. Clark took a pass directly in front of his goal, galloped and weaved through Kearney defenders, and beat Lamendola with a shot in the upper right side of the net. The score made it 8-7 in favor of Pittsford.

Russell then scored the game-winning goal for Pittsford at the 5:56 mark, beating Lamendola with a quick shot in front of the Kearney net for a score of 9-7.

An illegal body check on Pittsford's Jon Cohen led to Kearney's eighth goal. Cohen laid Shoap out at the 2:53 mark, receiving a penalty in the process.

That led to Smith's second goal of the game, with 1:57 remaining in regulation. The transfer middle from Penfield converted a rebound from another Fighting King shot to pull his teammates to within one, 9-8.

Burns then used one of his two allotted timeouts with 30 seconds left in order to set up a chance for a game-tying goal. But Viking defenders thwarted Kearney's hopes for a shot, by stealing the ball at midfield.

"We were trying to get the ball across midfield, and then we would have called another timeout," Burns explained. "But it didn't happen that way."

Burns said Russell's switch to midfield in the second half, after starting the game at his normal attack position, was the key to Pittsford's offensive surge in the latter parts of the second quarter and the second half.

"(Russell's) one of the best we've seen so far," Burns said. "Defensively our game plan was to shut him down, but he was put up to midfield in the second half, and it was difficult to match him with a defender."

It was also difficult to come away with the loss, especially after an uplifting 6-5 overtime win over St. Francis of Athol Springs of Section 6 (Buffalo area) two days earlier.

Cardinals remain unbeaten; league action begins to heat up

By Richard A. Kiley

Mooney Coach Ed Nietopski likes to use the baseball diamond as a classroom, and he considers his players students of the game.

And as any good teacher or professor tries to enlighten his students, the 23rd-year Mooney coach is meticulous when it comes to educating his players on the way something should be done. If they don't grasp new concepts and ideas at first, he quizzes them until the material becomes second nature.

That's why Nietopski's ball club, made up primarily of players from last year's 12-9 team, is off to an undefeated start this season.

The players have refined their game, and are receiving high marks from both their coach and opposing teams.

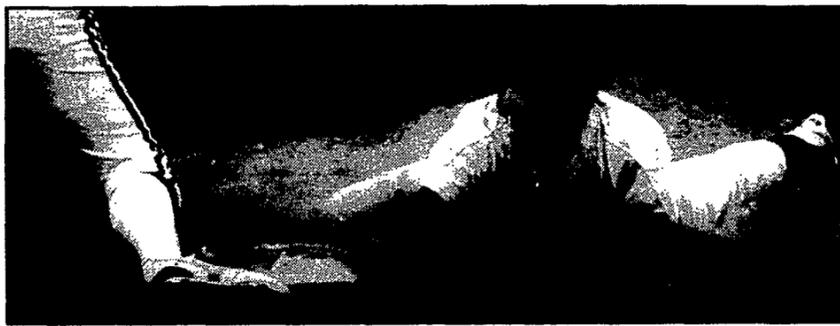
"Our pitching was quite young last year," said Nietopski, who also serves as the high school's athletic director. "And there is so much to learn in baseball; we spent a year learning the game. I knew we were going to have a pretty good ball club (this season). The boys coming back were very eager to learn. I knew they were going to be something; they're all playing smart baseball."

His players could be tabbed as the Rhodes Scholars of the City-Catholic League this season. And Nietopski, who was just voted the 1987 baseball Coach of the Year in region 1, might also deserve recognition as Teacher of the Year.

Cardinal Mooney's 7-4 win at Penfield on Thursday, April 23, was a perfect illustration of why Nietopski's club is off to a perfect mark this spring.

The Cardinals did most everything right against the Chiefs, both offensively and defensively, after a somewhat shaky start. Penfield appeared to have Mooney in trouble early, jumping out to a 1-0 lead, and had runners on second and third with none out. But thanks to a heady play by shortstop Greg Wachala, the Chiefs would do no more damage.

The freshman shortstop cleanly fielded George Childress' ground ball, and rather than conceding the run, fired home a perfect



Jeff Goulding/Courier-Journal

Brian Puffer creates a cloud of dust as he dives back to first base before Chris Gage's tag.

strike to catcher Charlie Sciortino, nailing Penfield runner Kurt Yackel. The play seemed to inspire starting pitcher Mike Magans, who retired the next two batters with a harmless infield pop-up and a strike-out.

Mooney then scored two runs of its own in the top of the second inning, capitalizing on some shabby defensive play by the Chiefs. After Rob Hrankowski's long out to deep center field, Scott Hylas walked and Sciortino was hit by a pitch. Hylas then scored on Steve Olek's misplayed ground ball to tie the score, 1-1. Wachala followed with a sacrifice bunt fielded by pitcher Chip Van Derwater, who in trying to get Sciortino at third base, threw the ball into short left field. Sciortino trotted home to make the score 2-1.

After the Cardinals added single runs in the third and fourth innings, they broke the game open with three more in the fifth.

Once again the catalyst was Wachala, who plated both Dave Brescia and Sciortino with a single to center field, bringing the score to 7-1.

Magans pitched himself in and out of trouble in the final three Penfield at-bats to nail down his second win of the season. In all, the senior righthander allowed four runs on five hits while striking out six.

"Mike had a problem locating the strike zone today," his coach said. "But he hadn't

pitched for over a week. That may have had something to do with it."

Magans is just one of several more-than-able Mooney pitchers — a situation that may give the Cardinals the advantage over Carm Urzetta's Bishop Kearney squad. While the 16th-year Fighting King coach does have senior and sophomore mound sensations in Steve Arriola and Rich Davison, he freely admits he's hurting if one of them falters.

Although his team has been hitting the ball well thus far this season, Nietopski knows the team's success to date and in the future will depend on his players' pitching.



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