

North falters late in Lakes showdown

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Through eight innings, the Northern Division team appeared headed for a victory in a Land O' Lakes all-star baseball game at Howards Grove last Sunday.

Unfortunately for the host Northern squad, fortunes turned in the ninth inning when the Western Division stars scored three times and pulled out a 5-4 win at Memorial Park.

Although the North took a 4-2 lead into the top of the final frame, the West quickly rallied. After a bases-loaded walk forced in a run, Scott Carberry's two-run single gave the West its first lead of the game.

The North — whose roster featured players from seven teams, including Saukville, Port Washington and Grafton — built a 3-0 lead before the West fought back.

In the first inning, Grafton's Jordan Clark reached on an error, moved to third base on singles by Saukville's Cole Granrath and Tony Wheaton and came home on a passed ball to make it 1-0.

The North stretched the lead to 3-0 in the fourth when Chris Gallun was hit by a pitch and scored on a homer by Thiensville-Mequon teammate Brady Bingham.

The West answered with single runs in the fourth and fifth innings, setting the stage for the ninth-inning dramatics.

Ernest Castro, a member of the Brookfield Bulldogs, finished with two hits, including a homer, and was named the game's most valuable player.

Wheaton and Bingham each had two hits for the North.

Elected as North's co-players of the game were Bingham and starting pitcher Casey Johnson, a Saukville player who worked three scoreless innings.

Grafton reserve outfielder Mike Pruefer appeared in his first all-star game, becoming the third generation of his family to do so. He was preceded by two other Pruefers — his father Mickey and grandfather Don, the latter of whom was elected to the league's Hall of Fame in 2002.

In the other Land O' Lakes all-star game Sunday, the Eastern Division defeated the Southwest, 12-6.

In the only Northern Division game played last week, Cedarburg defeated host Port Washington, 11-4, on July 7.

The win improved the Mercs' first-place record to 12-0.

Cedarburg grabbed a 4-0 lead in the third inning and stretched the margin to 10-0 before Port scored in the eighth inning.

Steve Hopfensperger pitched the first seven innings for the win. He scattered six hits and five walks and struck out 12.

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The Mercs took control in the third on a two-run single by Robby Proehl and Paul Hanschke's RBI double. Hanschke added a two-run double in the sixth.

The Lakers, who slipped to third place with a 7-4 record, spoiled the shutout by scoring three times in the eighth. After an error and wild pitch led to the first two runs, Chad Zutter singled in another.

Cedarburg was led by a four-hit effort from Proehl, and Hanschke had three hits.

Port's offensive leaders were Zutter with three hits and Chris Laurishke and Brad Young with two apiece.

This week, division play was scheduled to resume with a full slate of games.

In 7:30 p.m. contests Wednesday, Grafton was to play at Port Washington while Plymouth hosts Saukville.

On Friday, Port will host Howards Grove at 8 p.m.

In another local game Sunday, Saukville will host Grafton at 1 p.m.