



GEORGE ALBANO

Tough economy even affecting local youth baseball

Did you hear about the deal the Chicago White Sox are offering their fans? You can buy an upper reserved ticket that comes with a voucher redeemable for a value meal which includes a hot dog, chips and a soft drink all for \$16.

Think about that. A family of four can go watch a Major League game and eat all for \$64. That kind of bargain may even entice President Obama to take Michelle and the kids out to watch his favorite team next time he's visiting the Windy City.

Or how about the Pittsburgh Pirates? They're offering All-You-Can-Eat-Seats. Check this out. For \$35, you get a seat in the outfield reserved section and all the hamburgers, hot dogs, nachos, popcorn, peanuts, salads, ice cream and soda you can eat and drink. Can't beat that.

In Baltimore, the Orioles are introducing Birdland Stimulus Packages designed to make trips to Camden Yards more cost effective. The San Diego Padres are offering Two-for-One specials, two tickets for the price of one for all weekday afternoon games.

In baseball-crazed St. Louis, the Cardinals are making \$7 tickets available for all 81 home games to fans 15 years old and under, and 50 percent discounts to all fans on selected dates. The Dodgers are selling 2009 tickets at 2008 prices. That's pretty laid back even for LA.

Heck, even the Yankees have \$5 tickets for certain games in their grandstand level and bleachers.

Let's face it. Just about everyone is feeling the financial sting during these tough economic times. Even in sports.

I'm sure you've noticed all the empty seats in the Legends Suite section at the new Yankee Stadium. On Wednesday afternoon, only 64 of the 146 front-row seats from dugout to dugout — which go for \$2,625 individually — were occupied.

Closer to home, many of the local youth baseball leagues in town have not been immune to the recession, either. And as 2009 opening-day ceremonies are set to take place all around the city on Saturday, there will be a slightly different look at some of the fields.

"We've turned over 12 sponsors," Cranbury League President Bob Longmuir reported. "We had to replace 12 sponsors. We have a full complement of sponsors, but it took a lot of work."

"In this difficult climate, a lot of people really sacrificed and did come through for us. Other people just couldn't. It was a challenge, but we had people step up and replace the sponsors we lost. Of course, we have some people who have been with us forever like Norwalk Glass, Rowlison Agency, Fairfield County Bank and My Three Sons. We're really grateful for them."

In West Norwalk, the Cal Ripken League also experienced the departure of some sponsorships, mostly related to the struggling economy.

"We had a few, probably five or six," Joe Parlanti, league president the previous four years and still a member of the board, said earlier this week. "They said they just couldn't do it again this year."

"As a volunteer group we just had to work a little hard-

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Hour photo/MATTHEW VINCI
Norwalk second baseman Mike Andino waits for the late throw as Steve Orgera of Stamford slides into the bag with a stolen base during the second inning on Thursday's game. Orgera drove in a pair of runs in the Black Knight's 6-4 victory.

Senators can't recover after Warde's fast start

NORWALK

By STEVE GEOGHEGAN

Hour Staff Writer

Every time the Brien McMahon baseball team got back into its game with Fairfield Warde, it shot itself in the foot.

The Senators rallied from several deficits throughout the contest but when they would close the gap, the Mustangs answered with a run or two with the aid of McMahon's miscues. It ultimately resulted in a 10-6 loss to Warde Thursday at BMHS.

It was the second straight loss for the Senators, who are now 3-3 overall, 3-2 FCIAC

HS BASEBALL

Warde	10
McMahon	6

and take on Trumbull (4-1) today. The Mustangs improved to 5-3, 3-3.

"It was one of those games where we took one step forward then two steps back," McMahon head coach John Cross said. "Warde did a good job swinging the bats, especially in the first two innings. We fought back but every single time we got a couple runs

back, we gave it away to them."

The Mustangs did most of their damage in the first two innings, hitting three home runs against starter Kenny Coppola (0-1), to take a 5-0 lead. Kyle Burns, who reached base all five times he came to the dish, had the big blow in the second with a three-run homer over the 362-foot fence in center field.

Coppola went only two innings, giving up five earned runs on five hits with two strikeouts and four walks.

"Whenever he gets the ball up, it's a problem," Cross said. "He was missing up and they

came ready to swing. The ball was flying, plain and simple."

In the bottom of the second, the Senators answered with two runs off Warde's imposing lefty starter Steve Halliday (2-0) to cut the lead to 5-2.

With one out, Taso Petridis reached on an infield error and scored on Matt Restivo's RBI triple to right center field. Restivo came home on an errant relay throw.

Joe McGowan relieved Coppola and pitched a scoreless third inning but ran into trouble in the fourth and fifth innings.

see SENATORS B4



Hour photo/MATTHEW VINCI
Brien McMahon senior defender Nick Ceme will take his solid 6-5 frame and defensive skills to an emerging University of Hartford men's lacrosse program beginning in the fall.

McMahon's Ceme ready to soar with Hawks

NORWALK

By MATTHEW DORAN

Hour Staff Writer

Nick Ceme is already well on his way to becoming a tremendous lacrosse player. When you're 6-foot-5 and can run like the wind, there's definitely a big upside.

As Brien McMahon head coach Mike Epstein pointed out Wednesday afternoon, "His best days are still ahead of him."

That's good news for both Ceme and the University of Hartford, a Division I program which signed the powerful senior defender to a partial athletic scholarship this past weekend.

Ceme, a high honors student who plans to study engineering, also received a partial academic scholarship.

"I'm very happy and excited," Ceme said. "I've got a scholarship, and that's all I can

LACROSSE

ask for."

Yes, Ceme's immediate future is set. However, if he ends up making it big somewhere down the road, Ceme might want to send a big thank-you note to his friend, Rafael Tassy.

Ceme actually grew up playing basketball. That was his first love, a game he started playing in third grade and continued through high school, eventually serving as the senior captain of the Senators this past winter.

Ceme was also a captain on the McMahon football team, starting on both sides of the line at tight end and defensive end.

Ceme never even picked up a lacrosse stick before he got to high school. He never would

see CEME B5

Wilton's Lombardo has a title on her mind

The next month could very well be the best month of Kaitlyn Lombardo's young life.

The University of Pennsylvania lacrosse player, a Wilton grad, has helped her team post a record of 13-0 overall and 7-0 in the Ivy League during her senior season. Penn has locked up the league title, and another trip to the NCAA Division I nationals is imminent.

"We have a very good team," said Lombardo. "We could have given last year's team a great game. Dartmouth gave us a great run this year. Winning the league title never

gets old. It is awesome. We are really excited, but it is a lot of tension as well."

The entire Pennsylvania team is hoping for another crack at the national championship. A year ago, Penn finished second, losing the title tilt to Northwestern University. Penn will play Northwestern in one of its final two regular-season games of the year.

"Everyone is pumped to play Northwestern," said Lombardo. "It is a relief to have the Ivy League automatic bid. We are playing for a good seed at the present time." Pennsylvania locked up the

league crown by beating Princeton, 10-5, and Brown, 14-4. Lombardo struck the back of the net in both contests.

In the win over Princeton, Lombardo scored with 4:42 left in the second period to give Penn a commanding 9-2 lead. It was pretty much the same story in the win over Brown. With 15:06 left in the game, Lombardo scored to give the Quakers a 9-3 lead.

Wilton grad Pete Smith scored one goal in each of the Middlebury College lacrosse team's wins over Skidmore

DAN CHAMNESS
COLLEGE REPORT

College (18-15) and Trinity College (12-11). Against Skidmore, Smith scored at the 9:23 mark in the first period. He also assisted four other Middlebury goals. Smith fin-

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