

# Batter's Box

North Star League News

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## Game of the week:

Friday night at Litchfield, Joey Hyde took the ball for the Blues hoping to keep the dangerous Buffalo bats at bay, and he did just that throwing 7 strong innings, giving up 5 runs on 7 hits striking out 4. Manager John Anderson said Hyde dealt with runners on base all night, but always found a way out of jams as Litchfield knocked off Buffalo 7-5. On the offensive side for the Blues, one and two hitters Cody Klabunde and Andrew Loch each went 3-4, scoring a combine 3 runs on the night. Youngster Avery Liestman and Kal Volinkaty each drove in 2 runs. The game changer occurred in the bottom of the fifth when Volinkaty hit a double that Bulldog outfielder Josh



Kyle Bode (Maple Plain) Don't even have to change the picture this week. Bode continues his dominance on the mound logging a 1 hit complete game shutout last week where he struck out 11.

## Standings

	LEAGUE		OVERALL	
	W	L	W	L
Delano	11	3	13	9
Buffalo	12	4	12	6
Loretto	11	4	11	9
Hutchinson	10	4	18	4
Maple Lake	8	7	15	10
Howard Lake	7	8	11	12
Litchfield	6	8	9	11
Maple Plain	6	9	8	9
Cokato	6	12	6	14
Dassel-Cokato	5	11	7	21
Waverly	2	14	7	22

## Game of the week cont.

Fussy couldn't quite get a glove on that scored two runs and kept the Blues in front for good. The Blues did most of their damage in the first four innings as they scored 6 runs off of Bulldog starter Mike Weber. The Blues now have a record of 6-8 and have half game lead over Maple Plain for the 7<sup>th</sup> seed in regions; however, they now find themselves only a half game out of the number 6 spot and a game and a



Keenan Hodgkin (Loretto) was 6-12 on the week hitting .500 driving in 2 runs and adding a double.

half from 5<sup>th</sup> place. Litchfield has a very manageable schedule the rest of the way and a key game with Maple Plain looming on Wednesday, July 21<sup>st</sup> at home, which could decide who doesn't have to play in the league playoffs.

## Looking Ahead:

### TAKE YOUR PICK!!!!

Maple Lake, Howard Lake, Litchfield, and Maple Plain are all within 2 games of one another and one team will have to fight in out in league playoffs to make regions. Your guess is as good as mine as to who that will be as we have several games coming up between those four. Howard Lake travels to Maple Lake on Wednesday night to kick the week off and both teams are coming off of tough loses on Sunday. This next Sunday Howard Lake travels to Maple Plain to see if we can get any more separation between these four teams. My bet would be that when I'm writing this next week, we won't know any more than we do today. But..... It'll make for another great stretch run in the North Star League, and I haven't even mentioned the fact that the top 4 teams in the standings are separated by one game.

## BLT's top 10'ish Power Rankings:

2020 North Star League Fan of the Year 'BLT' will bring us weekly power rankings in 2021. These will be based on the combination of games recently played plus league standings.

\*\*Last week's ranking in parenthesis\*\*

- 1-Hutchinson Huskies (7)
- 2-Loretto Larks (4)
- 3-Maple Lake Lakers (2)
- 4-Litchfield Blues (5)
- 5-Buffalo Bulldogs (1)
- 6-Delano Athletics (3)
- 7-Howard Lake Orphans (6)
- 8-Dassel-Cokato Saints (9)
- 9-Maple Plain Diamond Devils (10)
- 10-Cokato Kernels (8)
- 11-Waverly Stingers (11)



Ben Luethner (Loretto) was 8-14 on the week for a .571 average. Luethner also scored 6 runs, drove in 4, and hit 2 doubles a big fly.

## Who's Hot?

- Jordan Flick (DC) 9 IP/ 1 run/ 5 hits/ 5 K's-WIN
- Kyle Bode (MP) 9 IP/ 0 runs/ 1 hit/ 11 K's-WIN
- Colton Petron (Lor) 7 IP/ 0 runs/ 4 hits/ 9 K's-WIN
- Nick Kaye (Lor) 9 IP/ 0 runs/ 3 hits/ 10 K's-WIN
- Gavin Wolff (ML) 7 IP/ 0 runs/ 1 hit/ 9 K's-WIN

## Players of the week:

Ben Luethner (Loretto) was the catalyst last week for the Larks as they continue to win win and win North Star League games.

Luethner went a stunning 8-14 last week for a .571 average, scoring 6 runs, driving in 4, and hitting 2 doubles and a homer.

Kyle Bode (Maple Plain) is our first back to back pitcher of the week. We had some great pitching performances but Bode's one hit shutout with 11 K's sets him above the rest. Bode has won his last 3 decisions for the climbing Diamond Devils.

## Throwback Thursday:

1992

WEST	W	L
Maple Lake	14	2
Elk River	11	8
Buffalo	11	8
Monticello	5	14
Becker	2	17

EAST	W	L
Delano	12	4
Loretto	11	5
STMA	8	8
Maple Plain	4	12

The North Star League added two new teams for 1992 as Becker and Monticello joined the league. Maple Plain moved from class B to C by having the state board grant their petition to move down a class. This left Delano and Maple Lake as the only B teams in the league with the rest being class C.

Buffalo and Loretto won their respective league playoffs advancing to the Region 11 playoffs. In the opening round Loretto defeated Sartell 2-1 on a ninth inning homerun by Herb Koch. Buffalo defeated Ultimate Sports 10-5 in their first game. In the second round Buffalo lost to Sartell 2-1 as a fielding error allowed Sartell to tie the game in the ninth inning, with Sartell scoring the winning run in the bottom of the 12<sup>th</sup>. Loretto defeated Sartell 8-0 for the region championship.

Riley Decker (ML) 6-10/ .600/ 4 RBI/ 2B/ run

JD O'Donnell (Buff) 5-10/ .500/ 2 2B's

Josh Fussy (Buff) 4-7/ .571/ run/ 2B/ RBI

Ben Luethner (Lor) 8-14/ .571/ 6 runs/ 4 RBI/ 2 2B/ HR

Keenan Hodgkin (Lor) 6-12/ .500/ 2 RBI/ run/ 2B

Jack Paulson (Del) 5-12/ .416/ RBI/ 2B/ run

## Throwback Thursday cont:

Maple Lake won the Section 3 championship and Delano was Section 5 runner-up allowing both teams to advance to the state tournament. The league played across two sections because of a state rule that the host teams of the State Tournament (Jordan) were automatically seeded as the Section 5 champion, giving section 3 two extra teams in the state tournament.

In the first round of the state tournament Loretto defeated Henning 5-0, Maple Lake defeated St. Cloud 3-1. Delano defeated Cold Spring 1-0 behind a no-hitter thrown by Tom Traen. Tom walked 2 while striking out 11.

In the second round Dassel-Cokato defeated Loretto 8-3, Coon Rapids defeated Maple Lake 3-0 while Delano defeated Hamel 4-2. In the third round New Ulm defeated Maple Lake 2-1 while Delano lost to Miesville 4-2.

In the fourth round Delano defeated New Ulm 11-9 in a game that was completed at 3am due to a rain delay of the days previous games. Delano then had to play the next day at 11 am losing to Hamel 5-0 with Delano only having scratched out 1 hit, by Todd Traen. Delano showed great fatigue in the loss while the eligibility of Hamel's starting pitcher remains in question to this day. Herb Koch was selected to the Class C all tournament team from Loretto, while Tom Traen and PJ Hanson were selected to the Class B all tournament team from Delano.

