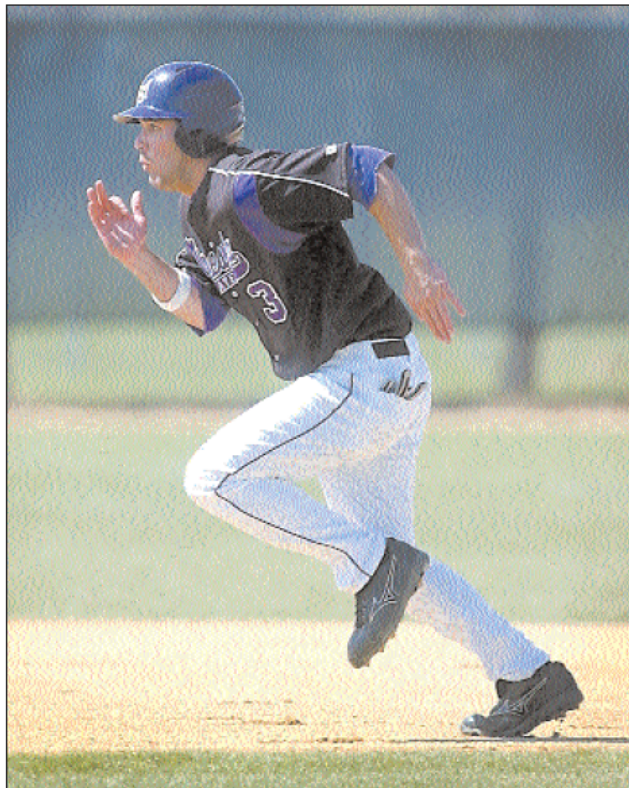


DANELSON DASHES FOR STEAL RECORD



John Cross

Zach Danelson is closing in on MSU's 29-year-old single-season stolen base record — with a teammate in hot pursuit.

Motoring

He also leads Mavericks in home runs

By Brian Ojanpa
Free Press Staff Writer

MANKATO — Zach Danelson's skill at getting down and dirty has him closing in on a Minnesota State baseball record that has stood for 29 years.

Waseca's Gene Glynn stole 32 bases during the 1978 season, then went on to a minor league career and coaching stints with several major league teams.

Danelson, who has 24 swipes, says that among other things, a good base stealer must be fearless.

"You've got to trust in yourself that the catcher won't be able to throw you out," says the junior from Great Falls, Mont.

Of course, to get to that point requires the requisite physical tools.

"Glynn was so quick," MSU coach Dean Bowyer says. "But Danelson is quick AND fast."

Interestingly, both were also basketball point guards — Glynn arguably MSU's best-ever at that position, and Danelson at Walla Walla (Wash.) Community College.

All of which ties into the nuanced decision-making involved in stealing bases.

"Zach knows when to run; he has good judgment," Bowyer says. "But he needs to stay aggressive because teams are pitching out more on him now."

Danelson started off the season on a torrid stealing pace — he had 17 coming off the Mavericks' Southern spring trips — but has since throttled back. Game situations often dictate that, Bowyer says.

"We've been hitting the ball good, so we don't run as much."

Danelson says conference play also becomes a factor.

"In the conference season we're a bit more protective of our outs, so we don't take as many chances.

MSU splits doubleheader

MANKATO — Minnesota State split a nonconference doubleheader with Upper Iowa on Wednesday, winning the opener 9-7 and dropping the second game 1-0.

Upper Iowa scored five runs in the third to go up 6-4 in Game 1, but MSU answered with five runs over the next three innings.

Josh Simon had three hits and two RBIs, and Zach Danelson had two hits and led off the game with a homer.

Tyler Sander (4-0) got the win on a six-hitter, and closer Nick Fellman worked the final two innings for his 11th save.

Game 2 was a pitcher's duel between Upper Iowa's Marshall Rogne and MSU's Patrick Lenton.

Rogne threw a complete-game two-hitter, fanning five and walking none for the Peacocks (26-15).

Kosuke Hattori and Jay Bresnahan had the Mavericks' hits.

Lenton struck out eight and gave up eight hits in seven innings.

Minnesota State (31-7) hosts Augustana Saturday in a North Central Conference doubleheader.

Please see STEALER, Page D5

STEALER: Others on team in close pursuit of record

Continued from Page D1

But (Bowyer) gives me the green light and says whenever I want to go, I can go."

Some of Danelson's base-stealing opportunities have been squelched by his own bat. You can't steal when you homer, and he hit his team-leading sixth against Upper Iowa on Wednesday.

Actually, the Mavericks are flush with top-of-the-lineup thieves. Danelson is being closely pursued by sophomore third baseman Kosuke Hattori (23 steals), and senior second baseman Nick Gonzalez has 16.

As proficient as Danelson is at basestealing, he says he was only second-best on his high school team. That honor

went to Tyler Graham, who went on to play at Oregon State and was a key cog in the Beavers' College World Series title run last year.

When Danelson gets on base, he goes about his business thusly:

"I want to know the pitcher's timing. I watch his front foot; you've just got to see the twitch."

When a righty is pitching, that twitch indicates a pitch rather than a pickoff throw, and Danelson is off running.

First-inning feel-out-the-pitcher running situations aside, he likes to run early in the count.

"Most of my steals are on the first pitch, because most pitchers don't think I'm going to go on the first pitch. But

lately, a lot of pitches have been pitchouts, and those are the types of pitches I've been caught on."

Danelson says the key to theft success is the timing of a runner's first step.

"You actually don't have to be that fast. You just have to get a good jump off the pitcher."