

# Joe Harmala

Dassel-Cokato

1968 MVP

Class B

**In his own words:** This was the DC Saints second year of existence; most of the guys hadn't played in the state tournament before. The Wright-Star League was highly competitive especially with rivals Delano, Hamel, and Loretto; each game with them was an intense battle. Frankly, we were either naive or relieved just getting out of our league and region playoffs that we didn't allow ourselves to think the state tournament teams could be any tougher.

Leavenworth was where we took batting practice; it was a precursor to the Field of Dreams with cornfields surrounding the outfield. Our draftees, Jerry Seuss, Tom and Paul Ditty, all of Delano, hit so many balls out of the smaller ball park into the cornfields we finally had to tell them their BP was over! It was a great setting that all of us remember fondly.

Our first game was against Embarrass. The memories have faded into the past a bit but I recall our first inning being a bit shaky. Our right fielder threw out a runner at home and our first baseman caught a rocket headed for the right field line and we got out of that inning giving up one run; we went on to win 11-1. Tom Ditty threw the next game against Owatonna with brother Paul behind the plate; we won 7-1 Jerry Seuss, a crafty left-hander, beat Lawrence Lake 6-4 in game three. The semi-final was an 11-0 win over Norway Lake to advance to the championship game against Meisville. The Ditty boys came through again and we took home the trophy with an 8-3 victory. The bats were alive and well as we banged out near 50 hits in those five games while playing sound defense in the field. Each player contributed throughout the season and it continued right on through the state tournament.

This began a great run by these "first generation" Saints with most of the original team staying intact. Retirees were replaced by high school graduates during the following eleven years. The team was back in the state tournament in '70, '72-76, and '78, runners-up in '73 and '76.



- Joe Harmala, Dassel-Cokato, 1968
- Played second base and pitched
- Won two games
- Pitched 17 innings
- Allowed one earned run for the tournament
- Had a tournament ERA of 0.52
- Struck out 15
- Batted .435, going 10 for 23 at the plate.



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