

step up to the plate

HART 1998

VARSIITY BASEBALL

"I love the dirt on the infield. Sliding into a base head first covers me with [it]. The best part is knocking the dirt off [my] uniform," senior Brian Barrios declared. At the same time, most of the team agreed that one of the greatest parts of baseball was hitting a ball above an opponent's head and running all the way home. Junior Tim Hutting waited eight years to hit his first home run. "It was the best feeling of my life," he described. After sophomore Jamie Shields "...hits one out of the park, [he] love[s] rounding the bases real slow and rubbing it in."

Home runs, in addition to country tunes, excited baseball players. Every day, favorite country songs echoed across the practice field as players improved their strength, skill, and agility. Their practice routine began with stretches and warm-ups; continued with infields, outfields, and game situations; and ended with batting practice. Senior Chris Wright remarked, "If you have a good work ethic in practice, you will do great in game situations." While some worked harder to sharpen skills in areas of pitching, batting, and catching, sophomore Matt Friedrichsen revealed, "I'm going to work on listening to my coach and doing what he says the *first* time he tells me."

Furthermore, because the varsity team had only fifteen players, many felt a special team bond. Secret "unmentionable" traditions kept the team tight, while embarrassing fellow team members amused the team. In addition, team dinners and speeches before every game kept most

players motivated. Sophomore Marke Horvat explained, "[Coach Murray] is an extremely demanding coach who makes [us] work very hard. I've learned so much about baseball from him in only two years. I'm wondering how much I'll know in two more years. I wouldn't want to play for anybody else."

Overall, the dedication and expectations remained high among the majority of the players. Most felt that the team worked toward greatness and would go far in League. However, players agreed that no matter how well they tried, the overall experience of baseball was well worth the effort. Sophomore Ryan Haag explained, "[Baseball] makes life more relaxing and fun, but also teaches [lessons] for later in life."

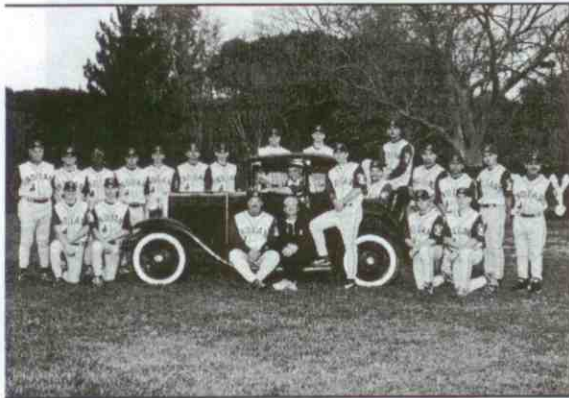
—Kristine McDowell

After defeating I senior Andy Da (right) smoo pitchers n

With the help mighty glove, Nicky M (middle right) ca pop fly that ser other tea

In perfect stance, senior Wright (far prepares for a

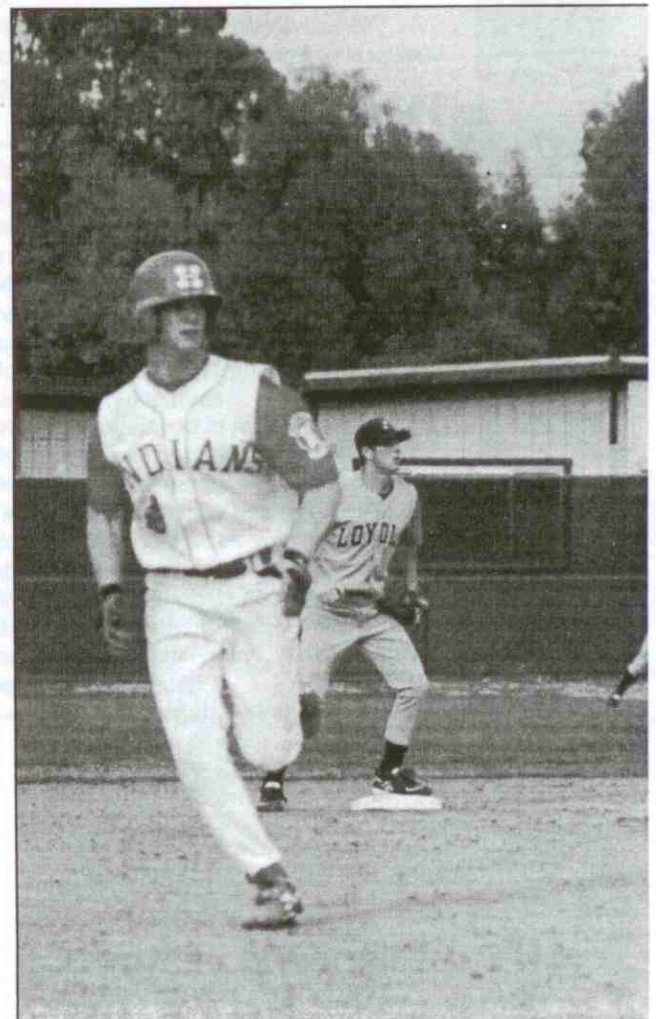
Fully extend arm, sophomore Shields (bottom musters all his st for a powerfu



Varsity Baseball: *Front Row:* J. Stotts, J. Wiley, Coach Halcovich, L. Fiscas, T. Richardson, J. Bourg, R. Haag; *Row Two:* Coach Murray, M. Horvat, C. Wright, M. Friedrichsen, J. Shields, J. Reyes, B. Barrios, Coach O'Brien, Coach Graff, Coach Snider, N. Mercado, T. Hutting, J. Baron; *Back Row:* A. Davidson, J. Gaeta, Coach Toledo.

schedule

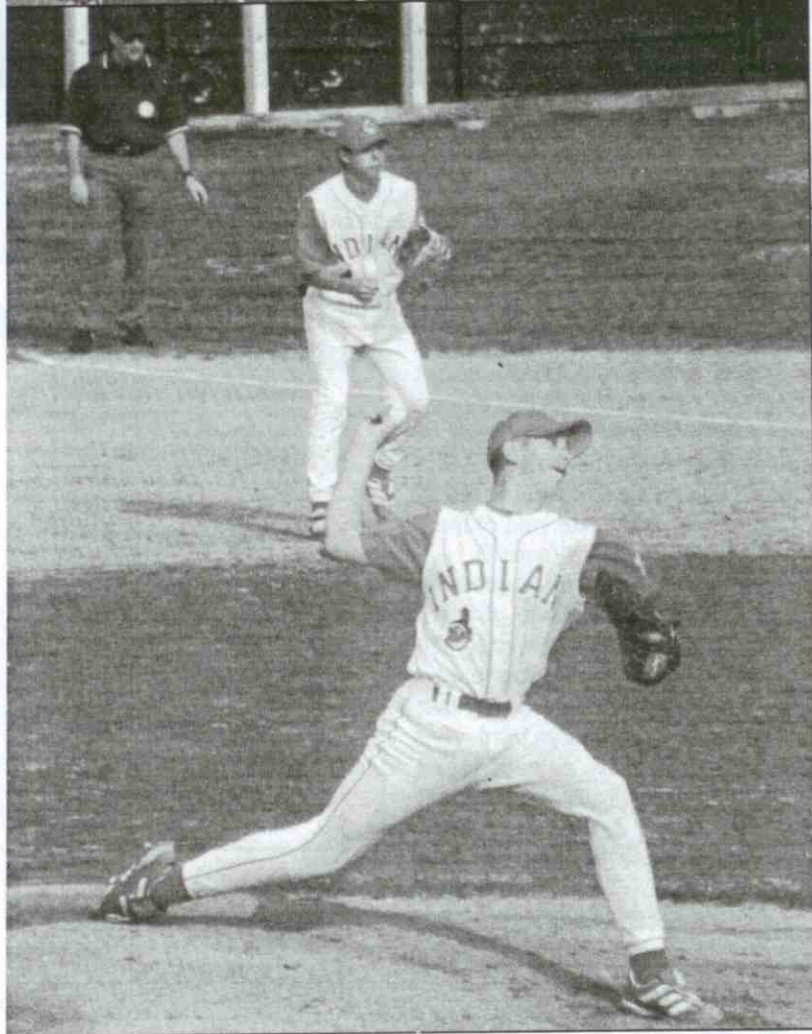
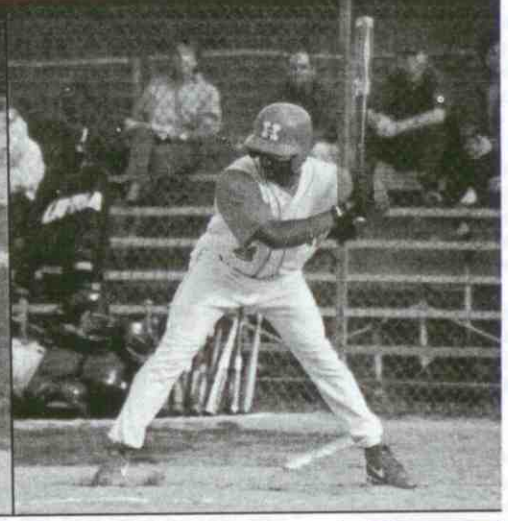
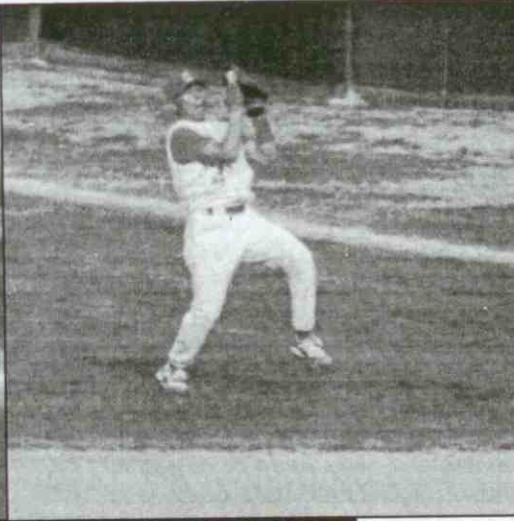
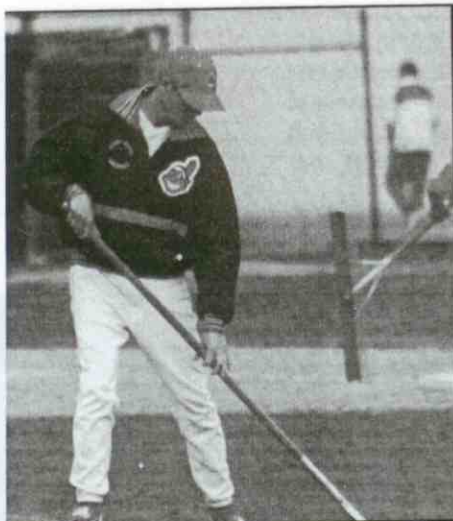
Westside Tournament
 Burbank
 Saugus
 El Dorado
 Burroughs
 Canyon
 Valencia
 Sierra Foothill Tournament
 Canyon
 Canyon
 Burbank
 Burbank
 Saugus
 Saugus
 League



Slyly, senior Jeff Gaeta steals third base when nobody's looking.

step up to the plate

11/21/1993



What position do you play? And what role do you have on the field?

Shortstop. I tell people where to go and what to do.

Why did you choose to play baseball?

College reasons and stuff, and for a college education.



j.t. stotts

How does baseball differ from other sports, like basketball?

Baseball is more of a thinking game because you have to use your head. Basketball is more of a physical sport.

What do you think makes a good baseball team?

Everybody's together and everybody likes each other. Just being smart out there.

Do you and your teammates get along all the time?

Almost everyone does.

Who influenced you to play baseball?

My dad. Once I got here, Coach Murray.

Do you ever get nervous before a game?

Yeah, sometimes. I try to stay as calm as possible.

How old were you when you started to play baseball?

About eight years old.

Who taught you how to play baseball?

Mainly, my dad and Coach Murray right now. He taught me practically everything. Coach Murray, yeah, he's been a real big help.

—as told to Rebekah Tenney