

Boone state title remembered

By WILL SCHAUB

BOONE — It's hard to imagine a high school pitcher having a better season than Boone's Jack Mustapha had 20 years ago.

Mustapha carried the Toreadors to the state baseball title that year, allowing only seven hits and no earned runs in 56 and two-thirds innings. He pitched three no-hitters and a one-hitter in the state tournament, including a 2-0, no-hitter over Burlington in the championship game.

All this, despite being debilitated much of the season with a case of infectious hepatitis.

"Winning the championship was the highlight of my high school career," said Mustapha, who had a career pitching record of 30-2, "but I had more fun getting there than winning the actual game.

"We had fun playing baseball — it wasn't work to us. We carried the equipment in our own cars and practiced without the coach if we had to. That was the most important part of our ballclub — having fun."

Fun took a holiday for Mustapha two games into the season, however. He came down with infectious hepatitis and spent the next two weeks in the hospital. When he came out, his weight had dropped from 190 pounds to 150. He had very little stamina the remainder of the season, though one would have had difficulty convincing opposing batters of that fact.

"The doctors traced the origin of the hepatitis back to a milk jug a kid close to where we practiced lived. He used to bring water for us in it, but he neglected to wash it out. That's where the germs came from. Fortunately, I was the only one on the team who got sick," Mustapha said.

With or without their ace right-hander, though, the Toreadors were still a powerhouse. "This team wasn't built overnight. The seniors were the first class to go through the entire Little League program. Plus,

primarily the same team that won the state title made it to the final four in the Babe Ruth World Series in New Jersey three years earlier."

With Mustapha serving as the catalyst, Boone High School's 1965 club began to jell midway through the season.

"Toward the end we never played a whole game. We'd finish in the fifth inning because of the 10-run rule. Our secret was to get the other teams so mad that they couldn't play effectively against us," said Mustapha, who went on to play baseball for a year at Iowa State University before joining the Army.

"I think Bill Sapp (Boone's coach) was the real key to our success, though. We all rallied around him and he made us want to play. We never heard him swear and he rarely raised his voice, but if he was upset, we knew it.

"Another thing you have to remember is that Boone was a baseball town back when we played. We always had between 60 and 100 fans at our games because the town was behind us."

Sapp, who guided Boone's varsity baseball squad to two state baseball titles (the other being in 1967) over a 19-year span, is the only coach ever to be voted into the Iowa Boys' High School Athletic Association Hall of Fame while still coaching.

Of the 1965 team, he said, "We had a bunch of young guys that could play outstanding ball. They wanted to play and they were good.

"We were strong in every position and they were all powerful hitters. It's hard to beat a team that bats over .300," said Sapp, who retired from coaching in 1968 but remains in charge of the audio-visual room at BHS.

"At that time, the athletics weren't split up into divisions (classes) so you played whoever you came up against. There were over 350 teams at that time and we won the title.

"The thing I remember about that season is that we had to come back from the championship and beat Ames to tie Newton for the conference title," Sapp said. "We passed the hat at the Ames game and grossed over \$400. That gives you an idea of how many people were at the game.

"I could talk about that team all day, but it was a real sound team, they were good hitters, they could run, and they won."

One of the best hitters was center fielder Marty Rinehart. "It was quite a thrill to win the state championship," said Rinehart.

"Mustapha's pitching was a leading factor in our success, but on the whole it was a team effort," he said.

Rick Davis, in his fifth year as Boone's current varsity baseball team, was the catcher on the championship team.

"It was the most exciting moment of my life. It was the greatest feeling knowing that we were the best, and really towards the end of the season, no one else even came close," said Davis.

"The individual talent on that team was incredible. We were really an awesome bunch. Mustapha was the best pitcher that Boone has ever seen and a lot of the guys went on to play college ball," said Davis, who himself went on to play for Iowa State and was a member of the 1970 team which played in the College World Series.

"Bill Sapp built Boone's baseball reputation. He was by far the best coach I ever had, even when I played college and semi-professional ball. I try to pattern my coaching after him more than anyone else. He knew how to motivate his team and he knew how to win," said Davis.

Members of the 1965 championship team were: Marty Rinehart, Bruce Geerdes, Kelly McMullan, Steve Crandell, Bob Hopkins, Mike Harris, Ted Hora, Bud Morris, Rick Davis, Charley Lind, Don Riker, Clyde Hovick, Bruce Conlin, Dan McDevitt, Al Dannatt, Mike Rinehart, Jack Mustapha and Rick Neely.