

Junior baseball battle will open on Monday



Gord Nychyk

Play ball!

The Manitoba Junior Baseball League opens its 1977 season on Monday with games scheduled on four diamonds in the city. Here, then, are thumbnail sketches of the MJBL's eight teams.

RIVER EAST RAIDERS

Experience is the word to use in describing the Raiders, who enter the 1977 season as champions of the MJBL. When manager Vic Bozyk fills in his first lineup card this season, it'll read virtually the same as those he had during the past three seasons.

In total, Bozyk has 10 veterans at his disposal, and four of them are all-stars — pitcher Don Thomas, shortstop Rick Bozyk, first baseman Thom Wolstencroft and outfielder-pitcher Ron Knight.

Also on Bozyk's roster is Bob Kinley, who serves as player-coach and was the league batting champion in 1975.

HOME FIELD: Gateway C.C.

LEGION 141 VETERANS

If the Veterans reach the MJBL final this season, chances are Brian Domes will have a lot to do with the success. Domes is, without question, one of the premier players in the league, and it's a safe bet that he'll make Team Manitoba and represent the province at the Canada Summer Games. He's a right-handed pitcher, he catches and Domes also finds time to play third base.

Two other players who are vital cogs in the Legion 141 machinery are first sacker Paul Jacobucci and Norm Burzuik, another hurler.

HOME FIELD: Sinclair Park C.C.

CHARLESWOOD CHIEFS

The Chiefs main aim this season is to improve on their fourth-place finish of a year ago, and they've got the tools to do it with.

Charleswood has a solid nucleus of veterans, including

few eyebrows during Goldeyes' camp — Conner Rex and Larry Falk.

HOME FIELD: Carman Fair Grounds.

NORWOOD-ST. BONIFACE LEGIONAIRES

With the entire infield intact, it would seem that Legionaires are ready to take a run at dethroning River East.

Jim Robertson, 1b, and Ken Berry, 3b, are the men at the corners for Norwood-St. Boniface, which leaves Roy Lee, 2b, and Rick Gariepy, ss, to turn the ball over for the doubleplay.

Like River East, the Legionaires are blessed with a good number of veterans, including pitchers Craig Hornby, Mark ViGier and Morgan De Pena, a hard-throwing righthander who comes to Legionaires from Transcona.

Of the rookies, first sacker Dwight (Boog) Powell and catcher-outfielder Kent Coey are the bright spots.

HOME FIELD: Provencher Park.

SPRINGFIELD INDIANS

There's only one way the Indians can go, and that's up.

Springfield finished last in 1976, but the return of pitchers Craig Christopherson and Al Edie should improve its standing.

The infield will be shored up by veteran shortstop Greg Scott and third baseman Robert Roland. Among the rookies, Kurt Lindholm, Don Scott and Dale Gibson are expected to earn spots on the roster.

HOME FIELD: Dugald, Man.

TRANScona JAYCEES

There are a lot of veterans in Transcona uniforms, but the rookies may be the players who decide Transcona's fate in the summer of '77.

Strengthening Jaycees will be eight members of last year's Midget Transcona Legion team, which won the City title. Showing up for their freshman year are Neil Fuhra, 3b, Robbie Field, of, Kurt Meier, 1b, Cal Langford, 2b, Dwight Picklyk, of, and pitchers Gord Schultz and Larry Oliver.

Meanwhile, best of the returning players are Jay Rodgers, a pitcher-infielder, and shortstop Scott Grant, who moonlights as a pitcher.

HOME FIELD: Transcona Stadium.

ELMWOOD GIANTS

The Giants are a new team but an old name.

This expansion team will rely heavily on two veteran players who come their way from other clubs. Bill Kinley, from River East, will keep things cool at the hot corner for Giants and he'll also play a big part in the offence. He was one of the league's top home run hitters in 1976.

On the mound, Elmwood's ace will be Bryan Hastman, a righthander who threw his high, hard fastball on behalf of Transcona a year ago.

Among a fine crop of rookies, pitcher Carey Candy looks to be the best. He was a Midget all-star in '76.

HOME FIELD: Chalmers C.C.