

Miller City Wildcats 18-4

1984 State Champions

Sitting left to right – Kathy Leis, Roger Wenzinger, Jeff Hermiller, Mike Lammers, Tom Lehman and Connie Wenzinger. Kneeling – Linda Morman, Scott Schroeder, Dave Warnimont, Leroy Johnston, Chris Brown, Bruce Kreinbrink and Jody Rump. Standing – Asst. Coach Marty Zender, Mark Lammers, Jeff Morman, Greg Ruhe, Steve Alt and Coach Dan Kern.

In 1983, Miller City with an 18-3 record had an incredible tournament run and finished as the State Tournament Runner-Up. With Leroy Johnston and Jeff Hermiller returning as two of best pitchers in the area, the Wildcats were again looking for a possible trip to the State Tournament in 1984.

The Wildcats struggled in the first tournament game when they defeated Pandora-Gilboa 9-6. The Sectional Final win over Cory Rawson was much easier, 9-0.

The District Tournament was a classic with Ft. Jennings 17-3, Ottoville 16-1, Riverdale and Miller City 14-4. Miller City trailed Ottoville 1-0 until Roger Wenzinger hit an opposite field homer to tie the game and Leroy Johnston singled to win it 2-1. In the District Finals, Miller City met the Fort Jennings Musketeers and their ace Keith Norbeck. Fort Jennings. Miller City fell behind early 4-0 but came back to defeat Fort Jennings 5-4.

In the Regional Tournament Miller City defeated North Central 5-1 on a Thursday afternoon. Jeff Hermiller was overpowering as he faced 26 batters, giving up 3 hits, 3 walks and had 9 strike outs. The Wildcats next opponent

was Northwood which had a blowout on Thursday. Since Northwood was able to save their ace pitcher for the game on Saturday, the odds were in Northwood's favor. However, the 'baseball gods' sent a rain storm through Findlay and rained out the game. Since the game was moved to Sunday, Jeff Hermiller got the extra rest he needed for another powerful pitching performance, 23 batters faced, 3 hits, 0 walks and 7 strike outs. Miller City won 5-0.

Miller City defeated Bethel 6-2 in the State Semi-Finals. Luck was again in Miller City's favor when Jeff Hermiller, who injured a finger on his pitching hand in a farm accident, was able to struggle through for a tough win. This set up the State Final game with Tuscarawas. It was a classic battle back and forth until the bottom of the 7th with a tie score of 3-3. With one out and Jeff Hermiller on first, Bruce Kreinbrink doubled to left field scoring Hermiller. However, something happened to Jeff as he was heading for home. He slipped and fell down as he rounded third. His agonizingly slow and stumbling trip to the plate made it excruciating for the Wildcat fans. But, he eventually got there and the Miller City Wildcats had won their second State Baseball Championship 4-3.