

Dostal sparks Wash; Puk exits in style

Written by Jim Ecker

Friday, 14 June 2013 22:49 - Last Updated Friday, 14 June 2013 23:22



Shortstop is the glamor position on any baseball team. The best athlete plays the position. Pretty girls think he's cute.

Noah Dostal abandoned that glamor spot to become the catcher for Cedar Rapids Washington this year. Catching is a hot, dirty, dangerous job that gets overlooked by fans.

Dostal voluntarily changed spots this year. In fact, it was his idea.

"I like it," he said Friday night. "It's where I belong."

Dostal starred for the Warriors as a catcher and hitter Friday as the Warriors swept a Mississippi Valley Conference doubleheader from Waterloo West, 8-5 and 16-6 in six innings, at the Washington field.

Dostal went 5-for-7 with five runs, five RBIs, a double, two triples, a home run, a stolen base and sacrifice bunt. He also caught all 13 innings as the Warriors raised their records to 9-6 overall and 7-5 in the MVC.

"It was great. I needed that," he said of his outburst. "My bat hasn't been strong for the whole season, really. I finally relaxed in the box and got even swings."

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Dostal did a good job at shortstop for Washington last season, but the Warriors needed a new catcher this year and Coach Tony Lombardi wasn't sure what to do.

"I told him I could catch, and Coach Lombardi wanted to see it," said Dostal. "So I showed him and he said, 'All right.'"

Actually, it was more like ALL RIGHT!!!

"If you're a football coach, you figure out who your quarterback is and things blossom from there," said Lombardi. "If you're a baseball coach, you better have a catcher.



"We needed a catcher. And Noah said, 'Well, I catch.' And I'm like, 'Yeah, OK, but you're our shortstop.'"

Rocky Lombardi, the coach's son and a talented eighth grader, became the new shortstop and has done a credible job for a rookie. Dostal became the new catcher and has drawn raves from his coach.

"He's just terrific," said Lombardi. "He's our best shortstop, too. We know that. But he affects our team on every pitch at catcher.

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"No disrespect to anyone else, but he is the difference on our team between last year and this year."

Dostal was a catcher from the fourth grade through ninth grade before moving to the infield.

"I was always a catcher," he said. "I'd catch every single game. I just had to play in the infield because we didn't have any other guys."

Dostal will be joining the Kirkwood baseball team as a "utility" guy who can play the infield, catch or pitch.

A.J. Puk, another difference-maker, played his final games for Washington Friday before leaving for the University of Florida June 22. He went 3-for-6 in the doubleheader and left a calling card when he socked a three-run homer to left-center field in the fourth inning of the nightcap.

"Yeah, that was a good way to go out," said Puk. "I thought about it before the game, but not during the game. I was lucky I got a pitch and I drove it."

The Washington coaches gave Puk his own giant baseball card as a going-away present between games of the doubleheader. Puk joined the Washington varsity as an eighth grader and is the only first team prep All-American in Washington baseball history.

Waterloo West fell to 5-13 overall and 2-10 in the Valley.

GAME 1

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WATERLOO WEST (5): Evans, cf, 3 1 1 0, Medina, 2b, 4 0 1 0, Fricke, ss, 4 2 2 0, Ohrt, 3b, 3 1 1 1, Draeger, 1b/p, 4 0 1 1, Ticknor, p/1b, 2 1 0 0, Ubbelohde, c, 2 0 0 0, Conrey, rf, 2 0 0 0, Price, lf, 3 0 0 0. Totals 27 5 6 2.

WASHINGTON (8): Dostal, c, 3 2 2 3, Nichols, 3b, 4 0 0 1, Puk, 1b, 1 1 0 0, Burdt, rf, 2 0 0 0, Gillis, dh, 3 0 0 1, Hand, pr, 0 0 0 0, Matsuda, 2b, 2 1 1 1, Lombardi, ss, 3 1 1 0, Akers, cf, 1 2 1 0, Troendle, p, 3 1 1 0. Totals 22 8 6 6.

Waterloo West 013 010 0 - 5 6 2

Washington 040 103 x - 8 6 1

Ticknor, Draeger (6) and Ubbelohde. Troendle and Dostal. W - Troendle. L - Draeger. 2B - Fricke, Ohrt. 3B - Dostal. HR - Dostal. SB - Nichols, Burdt, Akers.

GAME 2

WATERLOO WEST (6): Evans, cf, 3 0 0 0, Diaz, ph, 0 0 0 0, Medina, ss, 3 0 0 0, Ticknor, ph, 1 0 0 0, Fricke, c, 3 1 0 0, Jones, ph, 1 0 0 0, Ohrt, 3b, 3 2 2 1, Draeger, 2b, 3 2 2 0, Ubbelohde, dh, 2 1 0 0, Shepherd, 1b, 2 0 1 1, Conrey, p, 3 0 2 2, Ticknor, cr, 0 0 0 0, Black, p, 0 0 0 0, Price, lf, 3 0 0 0, Stoakes, rf, 0 0 0 0. Totals 27 6 7 4.

WASHINGTON (16): Dostal, c, 4 3 3 2, Hand, ph, 1 0 0 0, Nichols, 3b, 3 3 0 1, Puk, 1b, 5 3 3 3, Burdt, rf, 4 2 2 0, Gillis, dh, 4 1 3 2, Matsuda, 2b, 3 1 1 1, Lombardi, ss, 4 0 2 2, Bentley, ph, 0 0 0 0, Akers, lf, 3 1 1 1, Rogers, ph, 1 0 0 0, Troendle, cf, 2 2 0 0, Wenndt, ph, 0 0 0 0, Christensen, p, 0 0 0 0, Loeffelholz, p, 0 0 0 0. Totals 34 16 15 12.

Waterloo West 000 240 - 6 7 5

Washington 230 461 - 16 15 4

Conrey, Black (5) and Fricke. Christensen, Loeffelholz (5) and Dostal. W - Christensen. L -

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Conrey. 2B - Draeger, Dostal, Puk. 3B - Dostal. HR - Puk. SB - Fricke, Draeger 2, Dostal, Akers.