

Prairie sweeps to top of Valley Division

Written by Don Taylor

Friday, 14 June 2013 23:11 - Last Updated Friday, 14 June 2013 23:29



Prairie and Cedar Falls sat atop the Valley Division of the Mississippi Valley Conference with 7-3 records going into their baseball doubleheader at Prairie Friday night.

When the smoke cleared, the Hawks were all alone in first place after sweeping the Tigers, 3-0 and 6-3.

"We tell our kids that every game is that game. Every game is playing for the championship," said Prairie Coach Matt Thede. "It's been a long week, but right now, (near) the halfway point, we are on top."

It was about pitching for Prairie (14-6, 9-3). Brennan Hammer toed the rubber in the opener and scattered five hits while striking out nine batters in six innings. Ty Mouglin picked up the save in the seventh.

"I really enjoy pitching in games like this where so much is on the line," said Hammer. "I wanted to go out and put us in a position to win the game."

"My curveball was working and I mixed up my pitches and kept them off-balance."

Tyler Votroubek's two-run single in the first inning proved to be all Hammer needed. Votroubek also singled in the third and scored the Hawks' third run.

"I have really been struggling," said Votroubek. "I've been working with Coach and I waited on a curveball and drove it through the infield."

"These games are important, but they are all important. We have to keep it rolling."

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The second game began with Prairie in trouble in the first inning. The Tigers (10-5, 7-5) had the bases loaded and nobody out.

Mitch Adams calmly struck out Cedar Falls clean-up hitter Clint Fletcher and the next batter hit a ball to shortstop Mougin, who turned in a sensational double play to end the inning.

Cedar Falls stranded 22 runners in the doubleheader and scored all three of its runs in the last inning of the second game. The Tigers had five hits in each game.

Adams went six innings, striking out seven and giving up three hits in the nightcap.

"After my defense saved me in the first inning, I settled down and got the job done," said Adams. "I didn't throw many curveballs and we managed to get the outs when we needed them."

Hammer and Dylan Becker had two hits for the Hawks in the second game. Hammer drove in two runs and Becker scored twice.

"I got jammed on the first hit that I dribbled out toward second and beat it out," said Becker. "My second hit was a fastball that I went the other way with and ended up with a double out of it."

Prairie upset top-ranked Ankeny on Thursday, then took sole possession of the Valley Division lead on Friday.

"We are not surprised," said Becker. "We are expected to win and so we are just doing what is expected of us and right now we are in first place, but there is a lot of season left."

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"It's pretty cool to be in first place," said Hammer. "But nothing is set in stone. We have a lot of games left to play, but it feels good."

Prairie still has seven MVC doubleheaders on its schedule.

"These guys believe in each other," said Thede. "We had a good week at 6-and-1 with timely hitting, pitching and some pretty good defense."

Cedar Falls was led offensively by Chris Balthazor, Alonte Boone and Hunter Schiefelbein. They all had two hits.

GAME 1

CEDAR FALLS (0): Watters, 2b, 3 0 0 0, Sole, c, 4 0 0 0, Deines, 1b, 3 0 1 0, Fletcher, lf, 3 0 0 0, Miller, 3b, 4 0 1 0, Boone, dh, 3 0 0 0, Kuntz, p, 3 0 0 0, Balthazor, rf, 3 0 2 0, Schiefelbein, cf, 1 0 1 0, Mozena, ss, 3 0 0 0. Totals 27 0 5 0.

PRAIRIE (3): T.Mougin, ss/p, 2 1 1 0, Hammer, p, 3 1 1 0, N.Mougin, 3b, 0 0 0 0, Butz, 3b/ss, 3 0 0 0, Votroubek, 1b, 3 1 2 2, Davison, lf, 3 0 1 0, Stallman, cf, 3 0 1 0, Beckman, dh, 3 0 1 1, Day, c, 0 0 0 0, Peters, rf, 3 0 0 0, Becker, 2b, 3 0 1 0. Totals 25 3 8 3.

Cedar Falls	000 000 0 - 0 5 0
Prairie	201 000 x - 3 8 2

Kuntz and Sole. Hammer, T.Mougin (7) and Day. W - Hammer. L - Kuntz. Sv - T.Mougin. 2B - Balthazor. SB - Schiefelbein.

GAME 2

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CEDAR FALLS (3): Watters, 2b, 3 0 1 0, Sole, c, 3 1 0 0, Deines, 1b, 1 1 0 0, Fletcher, lf, 3 1 1 1, Balthazor, 3b, 0 0 0 0, Boone, dh, 3 0 2 2, Westerman, p, 0 0 0 0, Corson, p, 0 0 0 0, Kuntz, cf, 2 0 0 0, Mozena, ss, 2 0 0 0, Schiefelbein, rf, 3 0 1 0. Totals 24 3 5 3.

PRAIRIE (6): T.Mougin, ss, 3 1 1 1, Hammer, rf, 2 1 2 2, Butz, 3b, 3 1 1 1, Votroubek, 1b, 4 0 0 1, Benson, pr, 0 1 0 0, Davison, lf, 2 0 0 0, Beckman, dh, 2 0 0 0, Adams, p, 0 0 0 0, Milks, p, 0 0 0 0, Peters, ph, 1 0 1 0, Stallman, cf, 3 0 0 0, Day, c, 0 0 0 0, N.Mougin, c, 2 0 0 0, Becker, 2b, 2 2 2 0. Totals 24 6 7 5.

Cedar Falls 000 000 3 - 3 5 2

Prairie 001 032 x - 6 7 1

Westerman, Corson (5) and Sole. Adams, Milks (7) and Day, N.Mougin (1). W - Adams. L - Westerman. 2B - Becker. SB - Becker.