

Cougars nip J-Hawks in epic battle, 12-11

Written by Jim Ecker

Tuesday, 09 July 2013 23:20 - Last Updated Wednesday, 10 July 2013 00:46



The Cedar Rapids Jefferson J-Hawks didn't know when they were licked in their ballgame at Kennedy on Tuesday night.

Unfortunately for Jefferson, neither did the Cougars.

Kennedy rallied for two runs in the bottom of the seventh inning and topped the J-Hawks, 12-11, on a game-winning single by Andrew Johnson.

Jefferson scored three runs in the top of the seventh to take an 11-10 lead, but the Cougars tied the game on a double by Derek Jacobus and won it on Johnson's clean single to left.

"That was a dogfight," said Jefferson Coach Kyle Rodenkirk. "That's exactly what you want when you come to the yard.

"Tip your caps to those guys. We'd knock them down, they'd get right back up. It was fun."

The J-Hawks (9-26, 7-17) picked themselves off the canvas as well, but the Cougars (17-13, 13-7) had the final at-bats and made them count.

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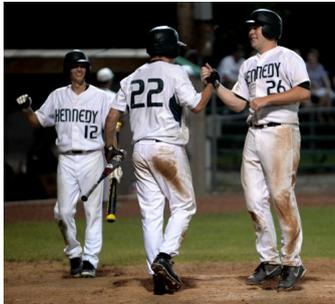
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"There's never any quit with these kids," said Kennedy Coach Bret Hoyer. "They just battle and battle and battle."

Brock Skow did serious damage for the Cougars with three doubles, a two-run homer and three RBIs. His homer to deep left-center snapped an 8-8 tie and gave Kennedy a 10-8 lead in the bottom of the sixth.

"That Skow kid," mused Rodenkirk. "We couldn't get him out. That's a big-league night right there."



Skow, the designated hitter, went 4-for-4 and all four of his extra-base hits were rockets.

"Coach Hoyer tells us to stick with the routine. I'm just hitting the ball where it's pitched," said Skow

. "I think that's the best game I've had. I credit my teammates for getting on base in front of me.

"It feels good," he said. "Coming back, fighting back."

Both clubs used four pitchers. Hoyer gave the ball to Jacobus in the top of the seventh with a 10-8 lead and two men on base, but Jacobus struggled with his command and the J-Hawks ended up scoring three runs without the benefit of a base hit to take an 11-10 lead.

Jacobus, gamely playing on a sore foot, was disappointed in himself when he left the mound after the top of the seventh. "That feeling in the dugout was terrible," he said. "A lot of

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frustration."

Fortunately for Jacobus, he made amends in the bottom of the seventh.

Ben Sass ignited the rally for Kennedy when he doubled to right-center with one out in the bottom of the seventh. Miles Moa was hit by a pitch, putting runners on first and second.

Jacobus came to the plate to face Jefferson relief pitcher Layne Sullivan with the tying and winning runs on base. He belted a double to deep right field and Sass scored the tying run. Moa stopped at third, making it 11-11 with runners at second and third with one out.

Jefferson gave Zach Daniels an intentional walk to load the bases and set up a force play at home plate, but Johnson spoiled the strategy with his sharp single to left.

"I looked for a fastball," said Johnson. "I got one and just drilled it."

Lightning was moving toward the ballpark from the west in the bottom of the seventh, but the lightning tracker said the latest bolts were 24 miles away, safely beyond the 10-mile rule that would have forced a 30-minute suspension.



Johnson saw the lightning, but tried to ignore it.

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"That was the last thing I was thinking about," he said. "I was just trying to score those runs to win the game."

The Cougars were happy to escape with the victory after losing to the J-Hawks, 7-3, Monday night at Jefferson.

"Oh, man," Johnson said after the seesaw three-hour victory. "It was too close for comfort, I'll tell you that. Our defense and pitching need to do a lot better."

Kennedy committed five errors.

Spencer Van Scoyoc drove in four runs for the J-Hawks with three sacrifice flies and a bases-loaded walk.

Jefferson hosts Davenport North in a single game Wednesday night. Kennedy travels to Dubuque Hempstead Wednesday afternoon to finish a doubleheader that was suspended earlier this season.

JEFFERSON (11): Van Scoyoc, cf, 0 1 0 4, Frazier, rf, 5 2 0 0, Hunt, 3b, 2 1 1 2, Colbert, c, 3 0 2 2, Hansen, cr, 0 0 0 0, Sullivan, lf/p, 5 0 0 1, Kramer, 1b/p, 2 2 1 1, Koering, dh, 2 3 1 0, Johnson, 2b, 0 0 0 0, Larson, ss, 3 2 2 0, Wright, p/1b/lf, 0 0 0 0, Scott, p, 1 0 1 1, Karlan, ph, 1 0 0 0. Totals 24 11 8 11.

KENNEDY (12): Jacobus, ss/p, 3 1 2 1, Daniels, 2b/ss, 3 1 1 1, Johnson, cf, 4 2 2 2, Maiers, c, 3 0 0 1, Jurgensen, c, 0 0 0 0, Skow, dh, 4 2 4 3, Hargens, p, 0 0 0 0, Smetzer, p, 0 0 0 0, King, p, 0 0 0 0, Henry, 2b, 0 0 0 0, Stevens, rf, 3 0 0 0, Staton, 1b, 4 1 1 0, Sass, 3b, 2 3 1 0, Brewer, lf, 0 1 0 0, Lizarraga, ph, 1 0 1 1, Moa, lf, 1 1 0 0. Totals 28 12 12 9.

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Jefferson 210 212 3 - 11 8 1

Kennedy 030 403 2 - 12 12 5

Wright, Scott (2), Kramer (4), Sullivan (7) and Colbert. Hargens, Smetzer (5), King (6), Jacobus (7) and Maiers, Jurgensen (5), Maiers (7). W - Jacobus. L - Sullivan, 2B - Hunt, Colbert, Kramer, Larson, Jacobus, Skow 3, Sass.
HR - Sk
ow