

Keller tosses 3-hitter as Saints split

Written by Jim Ecker

Thursday, 05 July 2012 22:32 -

Mitch Keller enjoys watching his older brother Jon pitch in the Big Ten Conference for the Nebraska Cornhuskers.

Some of it appears to be rubbing off.

Keller tossed a three-hitter Thursday as the Xavier Saints drubbed Dubuque Senior, 12-1, in five innings in the first game of a Mississippi Valley Conference doubleheader at Ken Charipar Field on a steamy night.

Dubuque Senior took the second game, 8-6.

Jon Keller was an all-state pitcher for the Saints before joining the Cornhuskers. Mitch is a tall right-hander, just like his brother, and he's developing into an effective pitcher for Xavier as a sophomore.

Keller has a 4-0 record and 4.20 ERA following Thursday's strong outing and he leads the staff in victories.

"He's matured as a pitcher," Xavier Coach Dave Schemmel remarked. "His knees were knocking early in the season. He was so nervous out there.

"He's starting to become a pitcher and not a thrower."

Jon Keller compiled a 4-1 record at Nebraska this season as a sophomore after going 3-6 as a freshman, making him 7-7 in two years.

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"We usually go every weekend that he pitches," Mitch Keller said.

"In the offseason, he always works with me at Perfect Game. He comes down and works on my mechanics and stuff I need to work on and new pitches."

Keller said he's gotten some good tips from his brother, who is pitching in the Cape Cod league this summer.

"Probably staying closed (during the delivery) and being fearless," he said, relating the brotherly advice. "Not being passive, being aggressive against all hitters."

Keller got in mild trouble in the top of the fourth inning Thursday with a walk, single and RBI double, all with nobody out, but he wriggled out of the jam with only one run crossing the plate.

Keller struck out Dubuque Senior's cleanup hitter, then Xavier catcher Mack Mattke picked a runner off third base for the second out. Keller got the third out on a fly ball.

Keller struck out four batters, giving him 33 strikeouts in 30 innings. He also walked four batters and hit a man.

Schemmel said he anticipates Keller being one of his top pitchers for the Class 4A substate tournament that begins next week.

Bryce Grimm went 3-for-3 in the first game and drove in three runs for the Saints (18-13, 13-11). Josh Tipton went 2-for-2 with three RBIs. Corbin Woods and Mitch St. Andrews drove in two runs. Zach Brown and Jake Harriott scored three runs.

The Saints rallied in the bottom of the seventh inning of the nightcap, cutting an 8-3 deficit to

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8-6, but the game ended when Woods hit a line drive to the right fielder with the tying runs on base.

Mattke went 3-for-3 and drove in two runs in the nightcap. Harriott and St. Andrews had two hits. Woods scored twice.

Austin Clemens pitched a complete game in the nightcap for Dubuque Senior (17-19, 10-14).

GAME ONE

DUBUQUE SENIOR (1)

Grant, ss, 1 1 1 0, Janes, c, 2 0 1 0, Schueler, c, 0 0 0 0, Merritt, 3b/1b, 2 0 1 1, Jantsch, p, 2 0 0 0, Geste, p, 0 0 0 0, Zelinskas, 2b, 0 0 0 0, Powers, 1b, 2 0 0 0, Somerville, 3b, 0 0 0 0, Capesius, lf, 0 0 0 0, Hensen, dh, 1 0 0 0, Blake, 2b/p, 0 0 0 0, Thill, cr, 0 0 0 0, Steines, rf, 1 0 0 0, Bradley, rf, 0 0 0 0, Clemens, cf, 2 0 0 0. Totals 13 1 3 1.

XAVIER (12)

Woods, ss, 2 0 1 2, Grimm, cf, 3 1 3 3, Pick, 1b, 3 0 0 1, Mattke, c, 3 0 0 0, Brown, 3b, 0 3 0 0, Harriott, rf, 1 3 1 0, Meaney, lf, 1 2 0 0, Tipton, dh, 2 3 2 3, Keller, p, 0 0 0 0, St. Andrews, 2b, 3 0 1 2. Totals 18 12 8 11.

Dubuque Senior 000 10 - 1 3 2

Xavier 144 3x - 12 8 0

Jantsch, Gesie (4), Blake (4) and Janes; Keller and Mattke. W - Keller (4-0). L - Jantsch (1-4). 2B - Merritt, Tipton. SB - Grant, Brown.

GAME TWO

DUBUQUE SENIOR (8)

Grant, 1b, 4 2 2 2, Capesius, c, 2 1 1 1, Thill, cr, 5 1 2 0, Jantsch, lf, 4 1 2 1, Powers, rf, 3 0 0 1, Jones, ss, 3 0 0 0, Somerville, dh, 1 1 1 0, Clemens, p, 0 0 0 0, Zelinskas, pr/cr, 0 1 0 0, Janes, cf, 2 1 0 0, Blake, 2b, 4 0 1 0. Totals 28 8 9 5.

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XAVIER (6)

Woods, ss, 4 2 1 0, Grimm, cf, 3 1 1 0, Pick, dh/p/1b, 2 1 1 1, Schulte, p, 0 0 0 0, Scott, p, 0 0 0 0, Herder, cr, 0 0 0 0, Mattke, 1b/p, 3 0 3 2, Schemmel, cr, 0 1 0 0, Brown, 3b, 4 0 0 0, Ratz, rf, 3 0 0 0, Meaney, lf, 0 1 0 0, Harriott, lf/rf, 3 0 2 1, Hammerberg, c, 3 0 0 0, Meaney, cr, 0 0 0 0, Tipton, ph, 1 0 0 0, St. Andrews, 2b, 4 0 2 2. Totals 30 6 10 6.

Dubuque Senior 121 200 2 - 8 9 1

Xavier 002 010 3 - 6 10 2

Clemens and Capesius; Schulte, Scott (3), Pick (5), Mattke (7) and Hammerberg. W - Clemens (4-2). L - Schulte (1-2). 2B - Pick.