

Fullard is RBI machine for Eagles

Written by Jim Ecker

Tuesday, 03 April 2018 04:29 -



Izaya Fullard has a dream assignment for the Kirkwood baseball team.

He bats third in the lineup behind Korry Howell and Taylor Jackson, a pair of premier table-setters for one of the best-hitting junior college teams in America.

"I've got Taylor and Korry hitting in front of me and they're doing a great job of getting on," Fullard said Monday. "Even if they only get singles, they're most likely going to end up on second and third (with stolen bases).

"It makes it a lot easier to put the ball in play and get RBIs."

Fullard, a freshman infielder from Iowa City West, enjoyed another productive day at the ballpark as the seventh-ranked Eagles split an ICCAC conference doubleheader against Iowa Central at the new Mount Mercy ballpark.

Kirkwood won the first game, 12-5, but dropped the nightcap, 9-8.

Fullard went 4-for-9 in the doubleheader and drove in two runs, giving him 39 RBIs in 25 games. That's an average of 1.56 RBIs per game and ranks seventh in NJCAA Division II baseball.

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When Fullard gets in the batter's box, there are usually people on base who are ready to score.

"Our lineup from top to bottom, I think, is one of the best in the country honestly," he said. "We have guys at the bottom of the order who could be at the top for any other school.

"If we keep doing our thing and those guys keep getting on base, that makes it easy for me and I think we're going to be real special."

Fullard is hitting .433 for the Eagles, who are batting approximately .340 as a team for the campaign.

Kirkwood won its 12th straight game in the opener on a wintry day in Cedar Rapids, but Iowa Central scored six runs in the eighth inning of the second game to salvage the final contest of a four-game series.

The Eagles are 21-4 overall and 5-1 in the conference, good for first place ahead of Southeastern at 6-2.

Fullard hit .421 with 11 homers and 60 RBIs as a senior at Iowa City West last year. He was recruited by a string of major colleges during his prep career but did not get the offer he wanted.

"It was weird, honestly," he remarked. "As a freshman Iowa started looking at me. Missouri was looking at me, too, and then Nebraska and Indiana. I had a lot of pretty big schools looking at me.

"I was kind of set on Iowa, really wanting to go there, and it didn't really work out at the time."

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He had offers from South Dakota State and Southern Illinois-Edwardsville, but decided to enroll at Kirkwood and let things percolate.

"I felt like coming here, I can get a second chance of going to that big school and even possibly getting drafted," he said. "Coming here is just a great fit for me."

Fullard's given legal name is Izaya Ono-Fullard, with his last name a combination of his mother and father's last names, but he's going by Fullard at Kirkwood. "It's quicker," he said with a smile.

Howell scored three runs and had two stolen bases in the first game Monday. Jackson collected two hits, a double and four RBIs. Ellison Hanna had three hits and two RBIs, Cal Clark had two hits and three RBIs, and Chili Moseley had three stolen bases.

Hunter Lee (4-0) struck out 10 batters in 4 1/3 innings for the victory. Cameron Cowan struck out six batters in 2 2/3 innings, giving the Kirkwood hurlers a total of 16 whiffs in seven innings.

Spencer Wiskus, another Iowa City West product, went 3-for-4 for Kirkwood in the second game. Hanna had two more hits and Kal Youngquist had a homer and two RBIs.

Iowa Central fell to 5-3 in the conference after beginning the series with a 4-0 record.

GAME 1

Iowa Central 000 140 0 - 5 7 1

Kirkwood 003 324 x - 12 11 1

W - Lee (4-0).

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GAME 2

Iowa Central 001 101 060 - 9 9 1
Kirkwood 001 002 040 - 8 10 0