

Puk, Hammer sit as Prairie sweeps Wash

Written by Don Taylor
Monday, 18 June 2012 23:52 -

The buzz at Washington High School prior to a pair of Mississippi Valley Conference games against Prairie Monday night was about A.J. Puk and Brennan Hammer, a couple of star players who were not in uniform due to injuries.

Prairie swept the twinbill from the struggling Warriors, 15-5 and 12-0.

Washington star Puk has been sidelined with a broken thumb, but he did manage to go to a showcase event in Minneapolis last week to show the scouts his pitching skills. It was feasible because he's left-handed and the broken thumb is on his right hand.

"I had a good first inning (at the showcase)," said Puk, "but I was a little rusty so I was a little inconsistent."

"I just feel so disappointed and frustrated for A.J.," said Washington Coach Tony Lombardi. "I know how hard he works and to be taken down by an injury can be a trying experience."

The timeline on Puk is three to four more weeks of recovery. He may be able to participate in the substate tournament that begins the second week in July.

Hammer did not play due to a knee injury. He is Prairie's top pitcher and No. 3 hitter in the lineup.

"Brennan hurt himself going after a fly ball on Friday night against Linn-Mar," explained Prairie Coach Matt Thede. "He's been to the doctor and is to have an MRI on Wednesday to determine the extent of his injury, so he will not be playing tonight for sure and we don't know yet about the rest of the season."

A preliminary medical report indicated Hammer may have suffered structural damage to his

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knee, but that is unconfirmed at this point.

The Prairie Hawks (12-11, 8-6) cruised in both games, but had to rally in the opener. Trailing 5-3 in the fourth inning, the Hawks scored eight runs to take command and grab the 15-5 victory in six innings.

Tyler Votroubek and Trey Beckman led the way for Prairie with three hits and three RBIs. Mitch Peters also collected three RBIs with two doubles. Trevor Thulin, a graduated eighth grader, picked up two hits for the Warriors (3-21, 0-14).

"It is the first time that I have had two hits in a varsity game, so it was exciting," said Thulin. "I am getting used to playing varsity, so I guess I'm a little more relaxed."

The headliner for game two was Connor Steffens, who pitched a one-hit shutout in the five inning contest. The oft-injured Steffens missed much of his sophomore and junior seasons due to arm issues.

"The injuries have been frustrating, so on a night like tonight, it is so good to be able to contribute," said Steffens. "I just have to throw strikes and let the defense take care of the ball."

Brayton Carlson, Tyler Butz and Votroubek collected two hits in the nightcap for the Hawks and Butz drove in five runs. Votroubek ended the night with five hits and five RBIs.

"I've been in kind of a slump," said Votroubek, "but the extra time that I have been putting in at the batting cage is beginning to pay off."

Prairie had lost eight of 11 games before Monday. "We had kind of a slow start last season and at about this time we turned it on," said Thede. "Now we need to do it again."

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GAME ONE

PRAIRIE (15)

Velvick, cf, 4 1 2 0, Mougin, ss, 1 3 1 2, Carlson, 2b, 5 1 2 0, Butz, 3b, 5 0 1 0, Votroubek, 1b, 5 3 3 3, Beckman lf/p, 4 2 3 3, Wagner, dh, 4 2 1 1, Dean, p, 0 0 0 0, Davison, lf, 0 0 0 0, Schulte, p, 0 0 0 0, Pond, c, 2 0 0 0, Alberts, cr, 0 2 0 0, Peters, rf, 3 1 2 3. Totals 35 15 15 12.

WASHINGTON (5)

Burdt, lf, 4 0 1 1, Dobbs, 3b, 1 1 0 0, N.Dostal, p/ss, 2 2 1 0, Gillis, 1b, 2 1 1 0, G.Dostal, rf, 3 0 0 0, Rings, c, 2 0 0 0, Metzger, cr 0 0 0 0, Troendle, cf, 3 0 0 1, Thulin, 2b, 3 1 2 0, Christensen, ss/p, 2 0 0 0, Hand, p, 1 0 0 0. Totals 22 5 5 2.

Prairie	012 831 - 15 15 2
Washington	212 000 - 5 5 2

Dean, Beckman (4), Schulte (6) and Pond. N.Dostal, Hand (4), Christensen (5) and Rings. W - Dean. L - Dostal. 2B - Beckman 2, Peters 2, Burdt. SB - Carlson, Votroubek 2, Beckman, Alberts.

GAME TWO

PRAIRIE (12)

Velvick, cf, 2 2 0 0, Mougin, ss, 1 3 1 0, Carlson, 2b, 3 3 2 1, Butz, 3b, 4 0 2 5, Votroubek, 1b, 3 2 2 2, Beckman lf, 3 0 0 0, Alberts, dh, 3 0 0 0, Steffens, p, 0 0 0 0, Pond, c, 2 0 1 0, Peters, cr, 0 1 0 0, Schulte, rf, 2 0 0 0, Davison, lf, 1 1 1 1. Totals 24 12 9 9.

WASHINGTON (0)

Burdt, lf, 2 0 0 0, Dobbs, p/3b, 2 0 0 0, N.Dostal, ss, 2 0 0 0, Gillis, 1b, 0 0 0 0, G.Dostal, rf, 2 0 1 0, Metzger, c 2 0 0 0, Troendle, cf/p, 2 0 0 0, Thulin, 2b, 1 0 0 0, Harrington, ph, 1 0 0 0, Rogers, 2b 1 0 0 0. Totals 15 0 1 0.

Prairie	104 25 - 12 9 1
Washington	000 00 - 0 1 4

Steffens and Pond. Dobbs, Troendel (4) and Metzger. W - Steffens. L - Dobbs. 2B- Butz, Votroubek, G.Dostal. SB - Velvick.