

## Saints flub chance to upset Rams

Written by Jim Ecker

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Growing pains can be a terrible thing for a ballclub that is not accustomed to winning.

For Exhibit A, consider the Xavier baseball team.

The Saints had their chances to upset Dubuque Senior in a Mississippi Valley Conference doubleheader at Ken Charipar Field Monday night, but those growing pains got in the way and the Rams grabbed both contests, 7-5 and 4-3.

Dubuque Senior has the best record in the MVC with a 12-1 mark in conference games and Xavier has one of the worst at 1-13, yet the Saints could have won either game.

The little things kept the Saints from winning either affair.

In the opener, the Saints had runners at first and second in the bottom of the seventh when Sam Meyers put down a perfect bunt that should have pushed both runners into scoring position, but the runner at second base forgot there was also a runner at first, broke back toward second and was an easy out on a force play at third.

The Saints did not score in the inning and lost, 7-5.

In the second game, the Saints botched a pair of rundowns on defense with Dubuque Senior runners at first and third. The first time, the runner from third scored with two outs while the Saints chased the runner from first.

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The second time, the Saints threw the ball away and let the go-ahead run score in the top of the seventh after Xavier had rallied for a 3-2 lead in the bottom of the sixth.

Xavier did enough good things to win either game, but those breakdowns in basic fundamentals doomed them to a pair of tough defeats.

The Saints fell to 3-17 overall and 1-13 in the conference. Dubuque Senior advanced to 17-5 overall and 12-1.

Bryce Charipar went 3-for-4 with a double and two RBIs for Xavier in the first game. Bryce Schulte went 3-for-4. Kyle Bradley socked a two-run homer for Dubuque Senior and drove in three runs.

Meyers gave Xavier six strong innings on the mound in the second game and left with a 3-2 lead, but the Saints could not hold on.

Xavier hosts Kennedy Wednesday night.