

Brown's no-hitter sends Saints to finals

Written by Jim Ecker

Tuesday, 21 May 2013 23:12 - Last Updated Wednesday, 22 May 2013 20:56



Zach Brown cannot touch his toes, but he sure can pitch.

Brown tossed a no-hitter with 12 strikeouts Tuesday night as Xavier blanked Linn-Mar, 4-0, in the semifinals of the Bob Vrbicek Metro Baseball Tournament at the new Linn-Mar complex.

Brown, a senior right-hander, is a strong guy and a good athlete, but he has to bend his knees to reach his toes.

"I'm just not very flexible," he said.

It didn't matter Tuesday.

"Brownie is a battler," said Xavier Coach Dave Schemmel. "He's not going to overpower you, but he throws a heavy ball and the guys made some plays for him and got outs."

Xavier (2-0) will face Washington (2-0) in the championship game of the Metro Tournament at approximately 7 p.m. Wednesday at Veterans Memorial Stadium.

Brown did not realize he had a no-hitter until it was almost over.

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"I didn't know until I looked at the scoreboard in the sixth inning," he said. "I'm pretty happy with it. The guys did a great job behind me."



Only one ball escaped the infield during the entire game against Brown. There were six groundballs (including a snappy 6-4-3 double play), one popup to the shortstop and one harmless fly ball to right field in addition to the 12 K's.

Xavier left fielder Ryan Meaney and center fielder Bryce Grimm ran back and forth to their positions and played catch between innings, but were not needed on defense.

"I've never seen a no-hitter in college or high school, but Zach pitched great tonight," said Xavier backstop Ben Helms, who caught the gem. "The defense behind him was great. An all-around team effort. Everybody did their job."

Brown complicated his night by walking five batters and hitting another. Xavier assistant coach Jim Arp visited the mound in the first inning after Brown issued a free pass and threw six straight balls.

"He told me to finish, because I wasn't following through," said Brown. "He told me to finish, keep it down, shoot knees."

Brown helped himself in the seventh inning when he knocked down a hot one-hopper and retired Brandon Ollinger at first base for the first out. He fanned his 12th man for the second out, issued his fifth walk and finished the game with an infield grounder.

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Brown kept it basic.



"Early on he had his curveball, kind of lost it, regained it," said Helms. "His fastball was consistent. We messed around with his changeup a little bit, but mostly fastball/curveball."

Xavier scored twice in the top of the first inning, thanks partly to some leaky defense by the Lions. Brown helped his cause with an RBI triple and scored on a single by Jordan Ratz for the quick 2-0 lead.

Linn-Mar starter Austin Stroschein matched Brown strikeout-for-strikeout for four innings, but moved to third base in the fifth inning with the score still 2-0. Stroschein picked up the victory in relief for the Lions Monday night in the tournament opener against Prairie.

The Saints made it 4-0 in the sixth inning on an RBI single by Bryce Grimm and a triple to right-center by Corbin Woods. Woods is 5-for-8 in two games with two doubles, a triple and two home runs.

"It's a nice one to win," said Schemmel. "It would have been nice to score a few more runs."

Prairie clipped Jefferson, 7-6, in the first game Tuesday in the losers' bracket at Linn-Mar. The Prairie Hawks scored five times in the fifth inning to erase a 4-2 deficit.

Blake Stallman had the biggest hit for Prairie with a looping three-run double.

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Linn-Mar (1-1) will face Kennedy (1-1) Wednesday at 5 p.m. in the consolation game for third place at Veterans Memorial Stadium.

Prairie (1-1) will meet Mount Vernon (1-1) in the fifth-place game at the Linn-Mar complex Wednesday at 7 p.m. Jefferson (0-2) will play Marion (0-2) for seventh place at the Linn-Mar complex at 5 p.m.

GAME 1

JEFFERSON (6): Van Scoyoc, 1b, 3 1 0 1, Wright, cf, 3 0 0 0, Hunt, c, 4 0 2 1, Hansen, cr, 0 1 0 0, Sullivan, lf, 3 1 0 0, Larson, ss/p, 4 0 0 0, Kramer, p/ss, 4 0 2 0, McIntosh, cf, 0 1 0 0, Frazier, rf, 2 1 1 0, Neuberger, dh, 2 0 1 1, Scott, pr, 0 0 0 0, Johnson, 2b, 2 1 1 1. Totals 26 6 7 4.

PRAIRIE (7): Mougin, ss, 2 2 1 0, Becker, 2b, 3 0 0 0, Votroubek, 1b, 3 2 2 2, Butz, dh, 3 1 1 0, Adams, p, 0 0 0 0, Davison, p, 0 0 0 0, Dean, p, 0 0 0 0, Stallman, cf, 3 1 2 3, Hammer, rf, 2 0 1 2, Beckman, lf, 3 0 0 0, Digman, 3b, 2 0 0 0, Peters, ph, 1 0 0 0, Day, c, 1 0 0 0, Davison, cr, 0 1 0 0. Totals 23 7 7 7.

Jefferson 010 032 0 - 6 7 1

Prairie 200 050 x - 7 7 4

Kramer, Larson (6) and Hunt. Adams, Davison (6), Dean (7) and Day. W - Adams. L - Kramer. 2B - Hunt, Stallman. SB - Hammer.

GAME 2

XAVIER (4): Grimm, cf, 4 2 2 1, Woods, ss, 4 0 2 1, Pick, 1b, 4 0 0 0, Brown, p, 4 1 1 1, Ratz,

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rf, 2 0 1 1, Gardner, pr, 0 0 0 0, Miller, rf, 1 0 0 0, Meaney, lf, 4 0 2 0, Vega, 3b, 2 0 0 0, Harriott, ph, 0 0 0 0, Clarahan, pr, 0 0 0 0, Keller, 2b, 3 0 0 0, Helms, c, 2 0 2 0, Drahozal, cr, 0 1 0 0. Totals 30 4 10 4.

LINN-MAR (0): Banks, 3b/c, 2 0 0 0, Strellner, ss, 2 0 0 0, Stickney, cf, 3 0 0 0, Stroschein, p/3b, 1 0 0 0, McCullough, cf, 0 0 0 0, Roth, 2b/1b, 3 0 0 0, Ollinger, c/2b, 3 0 0 0, Wyant, dh, 2 0 0 0, Bettmann, lf, 0 0 0 0, Kane, 1b, 1 0 0 0, Jennings, p, 1 0 0 0, McCullough, p, 0 0 0 0, Larson, ph, 0 0 0 0, Mortensen, rf, 3 0 0 0. Totals 21 0 0 0.

Xavier 200 002 0 - 4 10 1

Linn-Mar 000 000 0 - 0 0 1

Brown and Helms. Stroschein, Jennings (5), McCullough (7) and Ollinger, Banks (5). W - Brown. L - Stroschein. 2B - Grimm, Woods. 3B - Woods, Brown. SB - Drahozal.