

Wyant pitches Lions past Cougars

Written by Don Taylor

Tuesday, 23 July 2013 22:18 - Last Updated Tuesday, 23 July 2013 23:04



The last time Linn-Mar's Justin Wyant faced Kennedy's baseball team - one week ago - he fired a five-inning no-hitter.

The Cougars had a little more success against Wyant Tuesday night at Linn-Mar.

Very little.

Wyant tossed a three-hitter and struck out eight in Linn-Mar's 4-0 win in a Class 4A substate semifinal.

Linn-Mar (26-15) plays No.2 Iowa City West (33-7) in the substate final Wednesday night at 7 at West. The winner qualifies for next week's state tournament.

"Everything was clicking for us tonight," said Wyant. "The defense made the plays and the offense got us four runs. I attacked the hitters and it was a fun game to pitch."

"Wyant had a great performance tonight," said Linn-Mar Coach Chad Lechner. "It was one of his best games. He changed speeds and had a plan. He understood what they were trying to do and prevented them from doing it."

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The game was scoreless in the bottom of the fourth inning when Brandt Ollinger delivered a two-out, run-scoring double that plated Jimmy Roth and put the Lions on the board.

“I was looking for a fastball,” said Ollinger. “I got an inside fastball and pulled it down the line. It was important and got us out in front.”



The Lions plated three runs in the fifth on a bases-loaded walk to Roth and a two-run, two-out single by Austin Banks.

“I missed the pitch I was looking for the pitch before,” said Banks, who ended up with two hits. “So then I just wanted to put the ball in play and just dumped it over the infield and it got us two more runs.”

“We got some key two-out hits,” said Lechner. “We preach to kids to put themselves in opportunities and to know that someone will come up with the key hit to get us the runs we need. That’s the way it happened.”

Jared Staton collected two of the Cougars' three hits and was on base when Kennedy (22-19) mustered its only threat in the fifth inning.

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But with two on and one out, Wyant struck out the next two hitters to end the threat.

"I tried to time him and just sit on fastballs," said Staton. "You always expect that there will be another game, but we didn't get enough hits when we needed them."

"This was one of my most satisfying seasons, I hate to see it come to an end," said Kennedy Coach Bret Hoyer. "These kids started off 2-8 and ended up winning 22 games. This coaching staff, the seniors, and the kids understood the expectations of our program and responded with a positive effort."

Linn-Mar was swept by Iowa City West, 7-0 and 8-6, when the teams met back on June 3 at Linn-Mar. The second game went nine innings.

"West is a really good team," said Lechner. "If we play well we can get the victory we need (Wednesday) night."

KENNEDY (0): Johnson, lf, 3 0 0 0, Jacobus, ss, 2 0 0 0, Daniels, 2b, 3 0 0 0, Skow, 1b, 2 0 0 0, Paul, pr, 0 0 0 0, Maiers, c, 2 0 0 0, Fifield, cr, 0 0 0 0, Sass, 3b, 2 0 0 0, Lizarraga, p, 2 0 0 0, King, p, 0 0 0 0, Staton, dh, 3 0 2 0, Brewer, cf, 0 0 0 0, Stevens, rf, 3 0 1 0. Totals 22 0 3 0.

LINN-MAR (4): Mortensen, cf, 4 1 1 0, Strellner, ss, 3 1 1 0, Stickney, rf, 3 1 1 0, Stroschein, 1b, 3 0 0 0, Roth, 2b, 2 1 1 1, Banks, c, 3 0 2 2, Ollinger 3b, 2 0 1 1, Wyant, p, 3 0 0 0, Bettmann, cr, 0 0 0 0, Larson, lf, 2 0 0 0. Totals 25 4 7 4.

Kennedy 000 000 0 - 0 3 2

Linn-Mar 000 130 0 - 4 7 0

Lizarraga, King (6), and Maiers. Wyant and Banks. W-Wyant. L-Lizarraga. 2B-Ollinger. SB-Staton, Mortensen.

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