

Van Scoyoc no-hits Prairie

Written by Mike Condon

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Spencer Van Scoyoc watched younger brother Connor throw a gem in Jefferson's opening-round win over Mount Vernon in the Bob Vrbicek Metro Baseball Tournament on Monday.

Connor, a freshman, tossed a five-hit shutout as the J-Hawks advanced with a 5-0 win.

That left Spencer with a tough act to follow in Monday evening's semifinal match-up with a highly regarded Prairie team. The Hawks rolled to a 15-0 win over Washington in their first-round game.

Not only did Spencer Van Scoyoc follow up his brother's effort, he bettered it. The junior left-hander tossed a no-hitter, striking out eight as Jefferson advanced to the title game for the second straight year with an 10-0, five-inning win at Washington.

The J-Hawks will once again meet Kennedy for the tournament title. The Cougars advanced with wins over Xavier and Marion. Kennedy defeated Jefferson on the 2014 final.

To say there is a little competition in the Van Scoyoc household would be an understatement.

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"They are both real competitive kids," said Jefferson Coach Kyle Rodenkirk. "The Van Scoyoc boys are tough. They are in midseason form already. It's nice as a coach to be able to put them out there.

"They are always trying to one-up each other," continued the J-Hawks' coach. "I'm blessed to be able to coach a couple of guys of that caliber."

Spencer echoed his coach.

"(Connor) and I are always trying to beat each other," he said. "I had to do my best to top my little brother today."

Spencer suffered from an arm injury near the end of last season and it took him some time to regain his form.

"I started really throwing good again last fall," he said. "That just kinda carried over into the spring.

"We fixed my arm slot and now everything is smooth," Spencer Van Scoyoc continued. "When I was throwing my change-up ... my forearm got tight and that made my elbow tight."

He was smooth from the start against Prairie, striking out the side in the first inning.

"A start like that helps my confidence and I think it helps the confidence of the entire team,"

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Spencer Van Scoyoc said.

Van Scoyoc and Prairie starter Nic Mougin matched each other pitch for pitch through the first two innings. In the third, Jefferson got two runners aboard with one out. Jared Eivins hit a sharp one-hopper back to Mougin, who turned and threw high to second, allowing a run to score.

That miscue opened the door for a six-run outburst by Jefferson. Tyler Roeder, Lucas Larson and Caleb Stekl all came through with run-scoring hits off Mougin after the error.

"We've been preaching all year it is about momentum," Rodenkirk said. "It was a dogfight those first two innings. It could have gone either way.

"Our guys responded once they got the chance."

Eivins and Roeder had two hits apiece as Jefferson banged out 10 hits against two Prairie pitchers.

Mount Vernon downed Washington, 10-9, in the consolation semifinal.

Prairie 000 00 - 0 0 0 2
Jefferson 006 31- 10 10 0

Nic Mougin, Brady Alberts (4) and Corbin Day. Spencer Van Scoyoc and Caleb Stekl. WP - S. Van Scoyoc (1-0). LP - Mougin (0-1)