

Olson tosses no-hitter as Jeff sweeps Cougars

Written by Tom Fruehling
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It was a potent 1-2 punch that helped power the Jefferson girls to a doubleheader sweep Tuesday night at Kennedy.

Young pitching phenom Alyssa Olson claimed the first no-hitter of her fast-rising career and came within a walk of a perfect game in the opener.

Her slugging catcher, Maddie Hansen, slammed two doubles in one inning to knock in three runs during a nine-run outburst in the 14-0 five-inning affair.

Then, in the nightcap, Hansen unloaded a deep two-run homer to left-center as the Class 5A No.9 J-Hawks strolled, 6-2.

Olson, a sophomore who threw only a few innings of junior varsity ball with Jefferson last year, struck out eight in raising her season mark to 16-2. The one blemish on an otherwise dominating performance was a third-inning walk to Kennedy's Rylee Steinke.

While Hansen said she disagreed with the call, Olson took full blame for the one minor misstep. "I was ahead in the count and threw her too much junk," she said.

Relying on her deceptive rise ball, she allowed only two fly balls all night. She fanned Cougar eighth grade .400 hitter Ashley Hamilton both times she faced her.

"I love catching for her," Hansen said. "She always hits her spot."

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For her part, Olson said, "It takes some of the pressure off when my teammates score a lot of runs."

The J-Hawks (28-8, 19-5 MVC) gave her a 5-0 lead in the top of the first inning on three walks and three hits.

Maddie Koolbeck knocked in two runs with a double to the fence in center. Hannah Towns brought in two more with a bases-loaded single.

Jefferson erupted for nine more runs in the top of the fifth. Thirteen batters went to the plate, and they collected nine hits.

Five of the hits went for two bases: Two by Hansen and one by Erin Kuba, Katelyn Holub and Towns.

"I've been hitting the ball real well lately," said Hansen, who leads Class 5A in RBIs. "And I like to go up there with runners on base. I enjoy high-pressure situations."

Jefferson Coach Brian Erbe said the sophomore slugger is getting better as the season goes along.

"The thing about Maddie Hansen is that she is more intent on moving runners along and knocking runs in than she is about getting home runs," Erbe said. "She's so strong, and she always hits the ball hard."

Even though she was only trying to hit a line drive in the fifth inning of the second game, Hansen's screamer easily cleared the fence in deep left-center. That gave the J-Hawks a 5-0 lead behind the strong pitching of Brooke Stauffer.

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The Cougars (12-23, 7-17 MVC) scored in the bottom of the inning after pinch-hitter Sierra Hargens opened with a single and Tianna Drahn followed with a double. Lauren Kubovec brought Hargens home on a sacrifice fly, and Hamilton got untracked with a sharp double to left to score Drahn.

“Our bats came back a little bit in the second game,” said Kennedy Coach [Katie Bova](#). “But it’s very tough to outscore Jefferson.”

Expected second-game starter Taylor Sohn did not play in the nightcap for Kennedy after suffering an injury in the first game while diving headlong for two foul balls while playing rightfield. Bova said she was held out as a precaution.

Erbe said he was pleased with his team’s effort.

“We took care of business tonight,” he said. “We’re playing at the top of our game right now.”