

Warriors fall in Puk's mound farewell

Written by Don Taylor

Tuesday, 11 June 2013 22:16 - Last Updated Wednesday, 12 June 2013 13:38

It was the last night pitching on his home mound and Washington's A.J. Puk delivered in a pitchers duel Tuesday night against Kennedy.

So did Cougars hurlers Zach Daniels, David King and Derek Jacobus.

When the smoke had cleared the Cougars took a 2-0 Mississippi Valley Conference victory.

Kennedy also beat the Warriors Monday night at Kennedy, 10-0.

Puk, who was selected in the 35th round of the Major League Baseball First-Year Player Draft on Saturday by the Detroit Tigers, is headed to the University of Florida to start summer school. He was pitching for the last time as a Warrior.

"When you have a young team like we do, you need a beacon; someone to show the way, be an example showing what it takes to be successful," said Washington Coach Tony Lombardi. "That is what A. J. has been for this team. He has a tireless work ethic and our kids needed that example."

"This was a bittersweet evening," explained Puk. "The last start, the great memories, great friends from every year; but now it's time to look forward to the next step in my baseball career. I will be starting workouts and classes at Florida and beginning a new chapter."

Puk threw a complete game five-hitter, striking out eight and giving up one earned run.

But Daniels, King and Jacobus combined to toss a four-hit shutout for Kennedy. Daniels went five innings to pick up the win and Jacobus got the seventh inning save.

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"I tried to make them hit the ball to my teammates and their defense does the job," said Daniels. "The better they do, the more confidence I get, and the better I do."

Kennedy (5-7, 4-5) scored an unearned run in the third inning on two Warrior errors and got the insurance run in the seventh when Jared Staton delivered an RBI single on his second hit of the night.

"With a man on second I was looking to hit the ball on the right side," explained Staton. "My approach got me a base hit in right field to drive in the run."

Matt Stevens also collected two hit for the Cougars.

"We've been a bit concerned about our defense," said Kennedy Coach Bret Hoyer. "Our defense has been improving and it was excellent tonight. We need a few more games but we are developing in the right direction."

"Puk has been a really good pitcher throughout his career, so to get a win like this is never easy."

Puk had two hits for Washington (7-6, 5-5).

"I got mostly fastballs away early in the count and went with the pitches," said Puk. "The first hit was driven a little better but I got barreled up on both of them."

"We are too inconsistent," said Coach Lombardi. "That is what young teams do. We need to be able to execute in key situations and we aren't quite there yet."

KENNEDY (2) Jacobus, ss/p, 3 0 1 0, Smetzer, ph, 0 1 0 0, Skow, dh, 3 0 0 0, Moa, lf, 0 0 0 0,

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Staton, 1b, 3 0 2 1, Maiers, c, 2 0 0 0, Lizarraga, 2b, 3 0 0 0, Johnson, cf, 3 0 0 0, Stevens, rf, 3 0 2 0, Sass, 3b, 3 0 0 0, Daniels, p, 3 1 0 0, King, p, 0 0 0 0. Totals 26 2 5 1.

WASHINGTON (0): Dostal, c, 3 0 0 0, Nichols, 2b, 3 0 0 0, Puk, p, 3 0 2 0, Burdt, rf, 4 0 0 0, Gillis, 1b, 2 0 0 0, Matsuda, 3b, 3 0 1 0, Lombardi, ss, 2 0 1 0, Akers, lf, 3 0 0 0, Troende, cf, 3 0 0 0. Totals 25 0 4 0.

Kennedy 001 000 1 - 2 5 0

Washington 000 000 0 - 0 4 3

Daniels, King (6), Jacobus (7) and Maiers. Puk and Dostal. W - Daniels. L - Puk. Sv - Jacobus. 2B - Stevens, Puk. SB - Staton.