

Saints claim 1st MVC softball crown

Written by Mike Condon

Monday, 08 July 2013 22:40 - Last Updated Wednesday, 10 July 2013 00:22

There have been many titles won in girls athletics since Cedar Rapids Xavier opened in 1998.

One of the few missing crowns was a Mississippi Valley Conference divisional title in softball. That was crossed off the list Monday night.

The Saints got the sweep they needed to secure the Valley Division championship, downing Cedar Rapids Washington, 15-6 and 7-1, on the Washington diamond.

Xavier, ranked No. 7 in Class 4A, finishes regular-season play at 28-11 overall, 20-6 in the league. Cedar Rapids Prairie, which swept its twinbill against Dubuque Hempstead, finished a game back at 19-7. Washington, which opens Class 5A tournament play Saturday at Cedar Rapids Jefferson, fell to 14-24, 7-19.

Balance has been the key for the Saints and it was again on Monday. Xavier pounded out 29 hits in the two games with every starter collecting at least one hit.

Senior first baseman Jenna Schulte and freshman third baseman Jamie Feltes each had six hits in the twinbill. For Schulte, her big night came at the right time.

"I kinda have been struggling a little bit," she said. "It was nice to come back with a big game."

Schulte was 4-for-4 in the opener, including a double and a three-run homer to left. As a four-year member of the program, to see the Saints come through and win a division title was something she didn't foresee during her freshman year.

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"This is nice because it will get more respect for softball," Schulte said. "I would say a lot of this has to do with our coach (Nikki Price). She's changed the program in a good way. I was lucky to have her as my coach for my senior year."

Price was equal in her praise for the senior first baseman.

"She did very well tonight," Price said of Schulte. "We had a rough week last week. We went to Ottumwa and played some very tough (Class) 5A schools. We talked about getting in those tough atmospheres against tough teams and that was what was going to make us better. Jenna took that to heart."

In the opener, Washington led 1-0 entering the top of the second, only to see Xavier pound out eight consecutive hits en route to an eight-run inning. Schulte and Feltes had doubles in the inning.

"Tonight we really stressed going out and playing relaxed," Price said. "We wanted them to have fun, enjoy the moment and play their game and that's what they did."

The 8-1 lead was cut to 8-5 in the bottom of the second. Emily Oler, one of seven eighth graders on the Warriors' roster, had a two-run homer to center to highlight the four-run frame. Warriors' Coach Fanaye Wooldrik was please that her team was able to make a dent in the lead, but was quick to credit Xavier.

"Xavier is a great hitting team," she said. "They came out and you could see from the start that they wanted to win a conference championship."

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"We're a resilient bunch," Wooldrik said of her team. "We're a bunch of young ones and we came in off a nice run of a few wins lately. They weren't about to lay down and go away without a fight. The definitely showed that."

The Saints quickly regained control in the third. Winning pitcher Erin Drahozal powered a long three-run homer to center, the key blow in a four-run inning. Schulte capped off the game with a two-run homer to left.

Washington had 10 hits off Drahozal in Game 1. Junior Bria Lenten went 3-for-3, scoring twice.

Feltes got Xavier started quickly in the nightcap. Her double to right drove home a run in the first and she scored on Morgan Breitbach's single to right.

Xavier senior Jacey Wiebold was strong on the mound in Game 2. She allowed only three singles, two by Lenten, and just one walk. Feltes and junior shortstop Hayley Deutmeyer each had three hits for Xavier, which added three more runs in the fourth and a single tally in the sixth.

Next up for Xavier is a Class 4A tournament game at home Saturday night against the winner of an opening-round game between Davenport North and North Scott.

"Davenport North or North Scott, either one is going to be a tough game," Price said. "We're hoping we play well and hopefully things will go our way."

Between games, Washington honored its two seniors, Megan Jonas and Kirsten Peterson, both playing their final home games with the Warriors.

GAME 1

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XAVIER (15): A. Schwach, 2b, 5 2 2 2, Galligan, lf, 4 2 1 0, Schulte, 1b, 4 3 4 5, Drahozal, p, 4 1 3 3, J. Schwach, cr, 0 0 0 0, Feltes, 3b, 4 1 3 0, Breitbach, rf, 5 1 1 1, Miller, c, 2 0 0 0, Helms cr, 0 1 0 0, Deutmeyer, ss, 4 1 1 0, Colston, cf, 3 3 1 1. Totals 35 15 16 12.

WASHINGTON (6): Lenten, 3b, 3 2 3 0, K.Peterson, ss-p, 3 0 1 1, Bruner, 1b, 4 0 1 1, D.Riley, dp 1 0 0 0, Arrington, lf, 0 0 0 0, Puk, ss, 3 0 1 0, A.Riley, c, 4 2 1 0, Jonas, rf, 3 0 1 0, Oler, 2b, 3 1 1 2, Schroeder, cf, 3 0 0 0, C.Peterson, p-lf, 2 1 1 0. Totals 29 6 10 4.

Xavier 084 003 0 – 15 16 1
Washington 141 000 0 -- 6 10 4

Drahozal and Miller. C. Peterson, K. Peterson (2) and A. Riley. W - Drahozal. L - C. Peterson.
HR - Drahozal, Schulte, Oler. 2B - Schulte, Feltes, Lenten, K. Peterson.

GAME 2

XAVIER (7): A. Schwach, 2b, 5 1 1 0, Galligan, lf, 3 1 1 0, Schulte, 1b, 5 1 2 0, Drahozal, dp, 4 2 1 2, Wiebold, p, 0 0 0 0, Feltes, 3b, 4 2 3 1, Breitbach, rf, 4 0 1 3, Miller, c, 3 0 1 1, Helms cr, 0 0 0 0, Deutmeyer, ss, 4 0 3 0, Colston, cf, 4 0 0 0. Totals 36 7 13 7.

WASHINGTON (1): Lenten, 3b, 3 0 2 0, K.Peterson, ss, 3 0 0 1, Bruner, p, 3 0 0 0, D.Riley, dp 3 0 0 0, Schroeder, cf, 0 0 0 0, A.Riley, c, 3 0 0 0, Jonas, rf, 3 0 1 0, Oler, 2b, 3 0 0 0, Arrington, rf, 1 1 0 0, C.Peterson, lf, 2 0 0 0. Totals 24 1 3 1.

Xavier 300 301 0 – 7 13 0
Washington 001 000 0 - 1 3 3

Wiebold and Miller. Bruner and A. Riley. W - Wiebold. L - Bruner. 2B - Feltes. 3B - Feltes. SB - Helms.