

Nearad tops national stats again for KCC

Written by Metro Sports Report

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FORT DODGE - Taylor Nearad led the nation in four categories last season when she was named the National Junior College Player of the Year.

The Kirkwood star is doing it again this season.

Nearad went 5-for-8 Sunday with a double, home run, five runs scored and three RBIs as the second-ranked Eagles swept a conference doubleheader from 15th-ranked Iowa Central, 9-0 and 13-3, in Fort Dodge.

Nearad leads all NJCAA Division II players this season in hits (70), runs (69), doubles (23) and triples (7). She also ranks fifth in RBIs (53) and sixth in home runs (12) and is hitting .511.

Last year, Nearad led the nation in homers (30), RBIs (129), hits (145) and runs (114) and ranked second in doubles (31), third in triples (11) and third in batting average (.602).

Kirkwood has numerous players on the national leader boards again this season after sweeping Iowa Central.

Maddie Hansen leads the nation in RBIs (62) and ranks third in homers (13). Lexi Kinnaird leads the nation in pitching victories (17) and strikeouts (179).

Lexi Ferrari is third in RBIs (58), Monika Bevans is fifth in RBIs (53), Angie McBeain is sixth in victories (13) and DoniRae Mayhew is 10th in home runs (11).

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The Eagles have slugged 72 homers in 37 games, a pace of nearly two homers per game, and their pitchers have allowed only six round-trippers.

Kirkwood is hitting .452 as a team, compared to .207 by their opponents, and has outscored the opposition 448 to 55.

Ferrari belted two home runs Sunday. Nearad, Morgan Frost, Hansen, Mayhew and Bevans also connected, giving Kirkwood seven home runs in the twinbill.

Ferrari, Frost, Hansen, Mayhew and Bevans all had three hits in the twinbill. Ferrari and Mayhew drove in four runs. Nearad, Hansen and Bevans had three RBIs.

Kinnaird (17-2, 1.49 ERA) tossed a four-hit shutout in the first game with seven strikeouts and no walks. She has struck out 179 batters in 113 innings, with only seven walks all year.

McBeain (13-0, 1.82 ERA) collected the victory in Game 2 and Kinnaird pitched one shutout inning in relief with two more strikeouts.

Kirkwood raised its records to 35-2 overall and 13-1 in the conference. Iowa Central fell to 30-15 and 9-7. DMACC leads the league with a perfect 14-0 record.

GAME 1

Kirkwood ▯ ▯ ▯ **103 05 - 9 9 0**
Iowa Central ▯ **000 00 - 0 4 2**

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W - Kinnaird. L - May

GAME 2

Kirkwood █ █ █ **232 006 - 13 14 0**
Iowa Central █ **110 001 - 3 6 3**

W - McBeain. L - Binder.