

No. 3 Cougars split with Spartans

Written by Jim Ecker

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The Kennedy Cougars and Pleasant Valley Spartans played a little game of "I've Got A Secret" during their twinbill at Herkelman Field Tuesday night.

The third-ranked Cougars and Spartans will meet again Friday night at Kennedy in the Class 4A substate tournament and neither coach wanted to give away his secrets in the final games of the regular season.

Kennedy put its varsity lineup on the field in Game 1 and cruised, 6-0, behind a four-hit shutout by Jacob Henry for its 29th win of the year.

Kennedy Coach Bret Hoyer backed off in the nightcap and cleared his bench on Senior Night, and by game's end it looked like somebody had kidnapped the Cougars and put strangers in those green-and-white uniforms.

Pleasant Valley took the second game, 10-2.

Hoyer used all 12 of his seniors in the nightcap, including a few guys who barely played the entire season. He wanted to give them a chance to perform in front of family members on Senior Night and wanted to rest some of his starters for the substate opener Friday.

Ever a perfectionist, Hoyer was not satisfied with the result in Game 2 despite having a makeshift team on the field in the latter innings.

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"I honestly thought we'd play better. We just didn't play well," he said. "They were resting their starters, we were resting some of our guys. But we expected to play well."

Pleasant Valley will return to Kennedy Friday night as the No. 6 seed in the substate tournament with a 13-24 record. The Cougars are the No. 1 seed at 29-5 and will be heavily favored, but the Cougars will have to hit the "on" switch again for the postseason tournament after winning a conference title Monday.

"It's tough for professionals to do it, so to ask 16-17-18 year-old kids to do it can be a little tough for them," said Hoyer. "We'll flush and move on and get ready for Friday night."

Game 1

Pleasant Valley	000 000 0 - 0 4 4
Kennedy	103 011 x - 6 5 1

W - Henry. L - Zupancic.

Game 2

Pleasant Valley	032 020 3 - 10 12 2
Kennedy	000 020 0 - 2 5 2

W - Banks. L - Neuhaus.