

Saints swept by Kennedy juggernaut

Written by Jim Ecker
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The Xavier Saints enjoyed some good moments on Senior Night Thursday, but they were no match for the softball juggernaut that resides at the other end of 42nd Street NE in Cedar Rapids.

The third-ranked Kennedy Cougars began swinging the moment they arrived at Bob Erusha Field and never stopped until they swept the Mississippi Valley Conference twinbill, 11-3 and 18-7, with 40 hits in the doubleheader.

Kennedy raised its records to 31-3 overall and 22-2 in the conference as it battles Iowa City West for an MVC title. Xavier fell to 13-24 overall and 9-15 in the league with the season dwindling to just a few more games.

The Cougars feature lusty hitting and aggressive baserunning that puts pressure on all opponent all night. Sydney Kinney led the onslaught with seven hits in the doubleheader, including a 5-for-5 performance in the nightcap, but it was hard to find a Cougar who did not have a good night at the plate.

Tianna Drahn, Ashley Hamilton, Peyton Baskerville and Camryn Jeffords all had five hits for Kennedy, while Megan Weber and Jenna Schwartzhoff had four hits apiece. Hamilton socked a home run and drove in five runs in the nightcap and Jeffords had four RBIs in that second game.

The Saints swung the bats themselves, but not to the same degree as the Cougars. They collected 10 hits against Schwartzhoff (12-3) in the first game and they had nine hits against Ashley Winterowd (12-0) in the second contest.

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Charlotte Richards, Jamie Feltes and Hannah Williams had two hits apiece for Xavier in the first game and Feltes blasted a home run. Stephanie Wehr had three hits for the Saints in the second game, while Feltes and Williams had two more safeties.

The second game got ugly when Kennedy scored nine runs in the seventh inning, but the Saints had their chances to make it a much closer game. Xavier pulled within 9-4 in the bottom of the sixth inning and had two runners on base with nobody out, but Drahn made a sensational diving catch in center field to rob Kailee Becker of a base hit and turned the catch into a double play.

The doubleheader lasted nearly five hours and featured 39 runs.