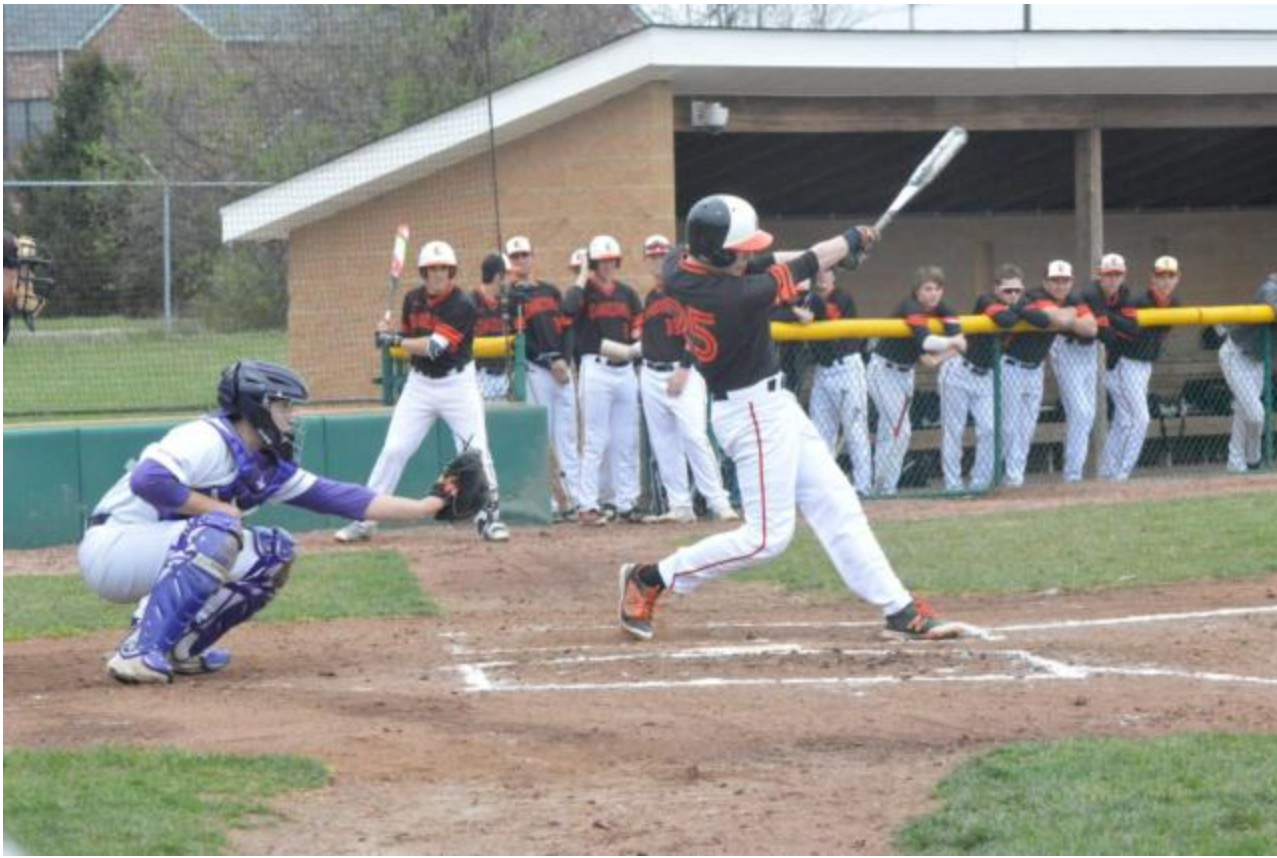


Burns, Garrett team up for one-hitter as Tigers blank Kahoks in SWC opener

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
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EDWARDSVILLE – Pitching can mean quite a bit to a baseball team.

Edwardsville's Kade Burns and Issac Garrett showed exactly what that can mean Tuesday afternoon.

Burns and Garrett, both seniors, teamed up for a one-hit, 12-strikeout performance – with Burns getting fanning 11 and only allowing one baserunner while getting the win – as the Tigers began their Southwestern Conference campaign with a 3-0 win over Collinsville at Tom Pile Field. The game had originally been scheduled for Arthur Fletcher Field, but the schools traded home dates because of wet grounds in Collinsville; the return game will now take place April 27 in Collinsville. Edwardsville went to 5-0 on the year with the win, 1-0 in the league; the Kahoks fell to 3-4 overall, 0-1 in the SWC.

“Kade plays a great shortstop,” said **Tiger coach Tim Funkhouser**, “and the one thing that really shows on the field daily whenever he plays shortstop is his ability to throw with accuracy from all over the field; he gets on the mound and he's even more accurate, and he's able to manipulate his pitches.

“What a great asset to have for our club and how he keeps his composure and the way he competes on a daily basis is fun to watch – he's been outstanding. Issac Garrett is the

same type of competitor; he has a calm presence, you wouldn't know if he gave up a couple of runs, you wouldn't know, and if he struck out seven guys in a row, you wouldn't know because he just carries himself every day.

“That's fun to play defense behind him and they pile up a fair amount of strikeouts and that's great for our pitchers.”

Burns opened the game with four straight strikeouts of Kahok batters before walking Sam Vlasak, the only runner to reach base in his five innings of work, then struck out Camden Reeves and Noah Scrum to reach six strikeouts. Edwardsville got its first run in the second when Andrew Yancik reached on an error, stole second and was chased home by a Reid Hendrickson single.

Two more Tiger runs came home in the fourth when Will Messer single and stole second before being singled home by Hendrickson; Hendrickson himself scored when Dylan Burris singled him in, but Burris, trying to stretch his single into a double, was thrown out at second for the third out of the inning.

Burns kept cruising through the Kahok lineup, fanning two more in the fourth and striking out the side in the fifth, which turned out to be his final inning of work on the mound. “He has good stuff and he was able to locate,” Funkhouser said, “A guy like that, he's tough to hit against; we've struggled against him (Burns) in our preseason and our in-season live pitching, so we know how that feels.”

Hendrickson's RBI singles were big helps for EHS as well. “We needed that,” Funkhouser said. “We didn't do that at other times when we had that opportunity where we could drive some runners in and get some runs on the board; he came up big with a ground ball up the middle and then the base hit to left – we need at-bats like that; that's going to be integral to our success.”

Garrett came into the game in the sixth and retired the side in order before dismissing the first two batters in the seventh before Jon Kovach broke up the combined no-hit bid with a shot up the middle for a single; Kovach then was erased on a force at second to end the game.

Hendrickson was 2-for-3 with two RBIs and a run scored for the Tigers, with Burns going 1-for-3, Burris 1-for-4 with a RBI, Messer 1-for-2 with a run scored and Joel Quirin 1-for-4; Yancik had a run scored. Ryan Siverly took the loss for the Kahoks, giving up two earned runs on six hits while fanning five in four innings of work; Devon Bovinette worked the other two innings and struck out one.

