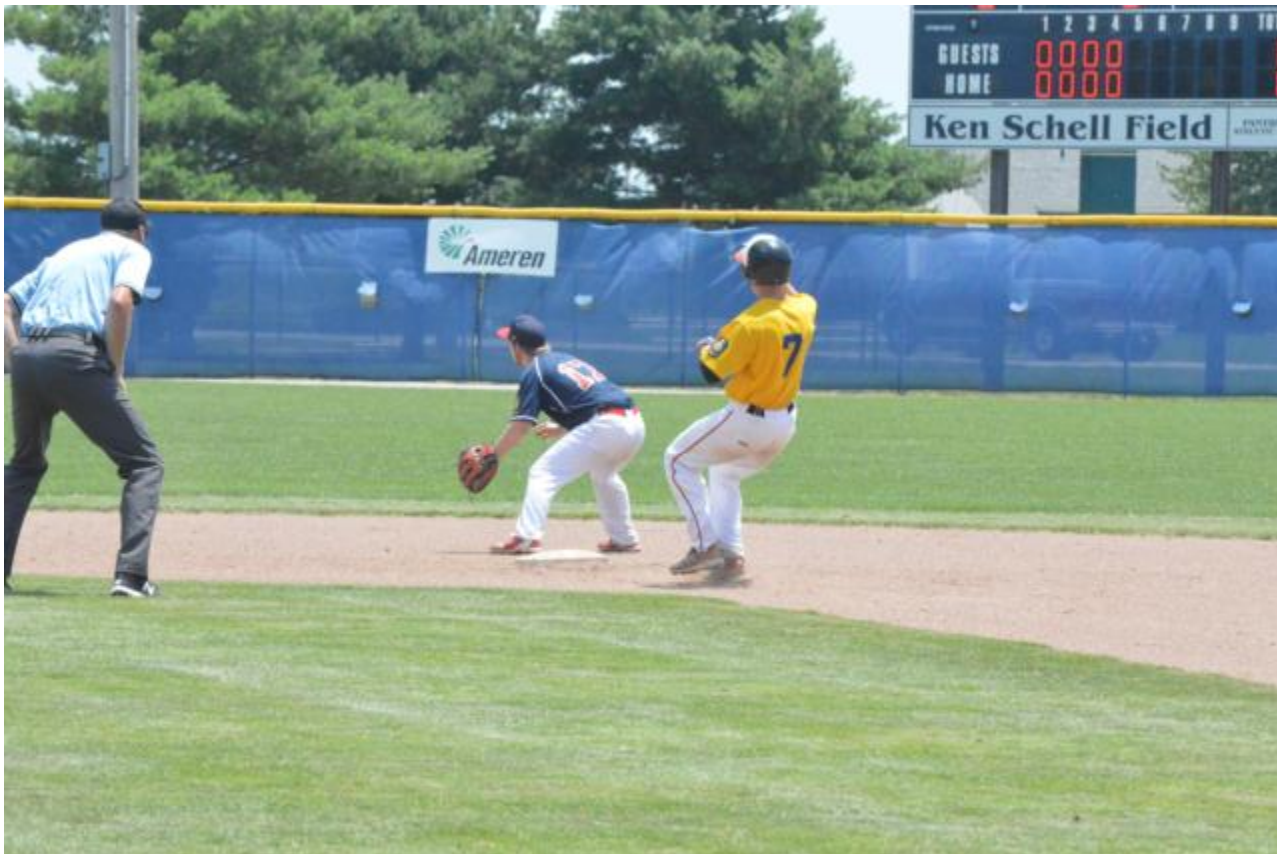


Edwardsville Legionnaires win two in Firecracker opening day

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
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JERSEYVILLE – Edwardsville American Legion Post 199’s baseballers got off to a good start Saturday in the annual Firecracker Tournament with a pair of wins over Jerseyville Post 498 and Quincy Post 37 at Ken Schell Field.

Post 199 defeated Jerseyville 11-0 in five innings in their Saturday morning opener, when got a three-hit shutout from Zach Seavers Saturday afternoon in a 2-0 win over Quincy to move to 2-0 in their group going into games today against Jefferson City,

Mo., and Elgin, Ill., also at Ken Schell; the semifinals and final are set for Belleville's Whitey Herzog Field Monday morning and afternoon.

Post 199 manager Ken Schaake credited his pitching for setting the tone in the wins. "One of the first things I said (to the team after Saturday's second win) to the team was two good wins, but all starts on the mound," Schaake said. "(Reid) Hendrickson was on today with 10 strikeouts; he walked four and hit one, but didn't give up a hit until the last inning. He's been struggling a little bit this year, but he came on strong and it was a good outing for him.

"(Zach) Seavers comes in (in the second game) and pitched like he's capable of and keeps people off-balance and his fastball's got a little bit more zip in it this year; he keeps the ball down – that's a good thing for him. If he gets the ball up, he's not an overpowering pitcher."

While the win was good, Schaake noted a few mistakes his team made. "It could have been better," Schaake said. "We had a few baserunning mistakes and we were a little anxious at the plate, but we'll take that."

Against Post 498, Edwardsville got out to a 3-0 lead in the first and put up four more runs in the third before scoring a run in the fourth and three runs in the fifth to invoke the short-game rule for the tournament (an eight-run lead after five). Alex Schreiber had a bases-clearing double in the first give Edwardsville the lead while Mikey Hampton had a double in the third and Chase Gockel had a two-run single in the fifth to help put the game away.

Hendrickson conceded just one hit in the fifth, a double to John Collins, and struck out five in a row at one point of the game – three of them called third strikes.

Against Quincy, Edwardsville's runs came on a Tate Wargo RBI single in the fifth that brought home Wyatt Engeman and from a Schreiber RBI single in the sixth that scored Gockel; Seavers fanned five for the day in getting the win.

Edwardsville will meet Jefferson City at 12:30 p.m. today and follow with a game against Elgin at 3 p.m.; Versailles was set to meet Jeff City at 10 am. today and will take on Elvin at 7:30 pm. this evening to complete group play.