

Tigers 19-0: Winning Run In Eighth Inning Over Liberty North, Allow Three Hits, Take Lead In Fourth To Defeat Liberty

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OZARK, Mo. - The Edwardsville baseball team scored the winning run on a passed ball in the bottom of the eighth inning to defeat Liberty North 3-2, then got a run in the fourth and held Liberty, Mo., to three hits in winning over the Kansas City-area school 4-3 in a split doubleheader at US Ballpark in Ozark, Mo., just south of Springfield.

The wins were the two closest games the Tigers have had so far this season as Edwardsville stayed undefeated at 19-0 to start the season. The Liberty teams are two of the better teams in Kansas City.

In the game against Liberty North, the Tigers jumped out to a 2-0 lead in the bottom of the first when Riley Iffrig doubled home both Grant Huebner and Spencer Stearns on the first pitch. The Eagles pulled to within 2-1 on a bases-loaded walk in the third, then tied the game in the fifth on an infield single, a hit batsman, a sacrifice and a ground out to second that tied the game 2-2.

Cade Hardy led off the Edwardsville eighth with a single to right, Kayden Jennings drew a one-out walk and a Cole Funkhouser single loaded the bases. On a 2-1 pitch, the ball got away from the catcher, allowing Hardy to score the winning run on a passed ball to give the Tigers the 3-2 win over the Eagles.

Iffrig had three hits and drove in two runs in the game for Edwardsville, while Funkhouser had three hits and Huebner, Stearns, Caleb Copeland, Hardy, Jacoby Roberson and Jennings all had hits. Logan Geggus had five strikeouts on the mound, while Alec Marchetto fanned two.

In the second game against the Blue Jays, the Tigers jumped out in front in the opening inning once again, as Iffrig singled home Huebner with the game's first run, then Adam Powell's RBI single scored Iffrig to make it 2-0. Edwardsville expanded the lead to 3-0 in the second on a Stearns single back to the box that the pitcher couldn't handle, allowing Luke Range to score.

Liberty tied the game in the third, scoring two runs on errors, then tying the game on a successful squeeze bunt back to the box that allowed the tying run to score on the out at first.

The Tigers took the lead back in the fourth with two out when Stearns, who started on the mound, helped himself with an RBI single to center to score Huebner and make it 4-3. From that point, Stearns and Joe Chiarodo shut down Liberty as the Tigers held on to the win to go 19-0.

Powell had three hits and an RBI for Edwardsville, while Stearns, whose six-game homer streak ended in the opener against Liberty North, had two hits and two RBIs,

Grant Huebner came up with two hits, Iffrig had a hit and RBI and both Copeland and Lucas Huebner also had hits.

Stearns struck out three in his six innings of work on the mound, while Chiarodo pitched the seventh to earn the save.

The Tigers return to Southwestern Conference play this week with a series against Belleville West, with the first game Tuesday at Tom Pile Field and the second game at West on Thursday, both games starting at 4:30 p.m. Edwardsville plays at Civic Memorial on Apr. 29, then hosts DeSmet Jesuit May 2, with both games starting at 4:30 p.m.