

Tigers Baseball Routs Minooka 10-0, Crowned Sectional Champions

by Bradley Piros, Reporter
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BLOOMINGTON – The Edwardsville High School baseball team (33-4) were crowned Sectional Champions Saturday afternoon after the Tigers took down Minooka Community High School by a score of 10-0 after five innings.

Junior Gannon Burns started on the mound for the Tigers and tossed all five innings picking up nine strikeouts and only allowing three hits to earn the shutout.

“He was able to throw his pitches where he wanted,” Edwardsville head coach Tim Funkhouser said about his starting pitcher.

“It’s easy to take him for granted when he makes those pitchers over and over, but he’s competitive nature and our guys love playing defense for him. Today he was a little selfish striking out so many guys,” he said jokingly.

The Tigers scored their first run in the top of the first, as they were the away team at Illinois Wesleyan University.

Senior Spencer Stearns singled to get things started and then junior Riley Iffrig was hit by a pitch. Junior Joel Kamperworth singled and just like that the bases were loaded with only one out. Minooka pitcher Ryan Norman found himself in deep waters early on.

Senior Adam Powell hit into a fielder’s choice, but Stearns still scored to make it 1-0. Junior Cade Hardy singled to get the bases loaded again but Norman picked up the strikeout to get out of the jam with minimal damage.

The Tigers scored another run when Stearns hit an RBI single scoring senior Grant Huebner to make it a 2-0 ballgame. Burns struck out the side in the bottom of the second bringing the Tigers back up to bat, but the third inning was the only one that Edwardsville didn’t score.

More runs were scored in the fourth though.

Senior Jacoby Roberson got things started with a double then junior Cole Funkhouser singled to get him over to third. Roberson stole home after a wild pitch to make it 3-0.

Huebner put a ball in play to get Funkhouser to third. Stearns stepped up and earned another RBI after he flew out to deep center scoring Funkhouser easily. Huebner went to third on that play and eventually stole home after another wild pitch. The score was 5-0 Edwardsville after four.

“As we went through, I thought we continued to take good at bats,” coach Tim Funkhouser said postgame.

“We put a little pressure on the other team, made them make a few miscues and it turns into some runs.”

The game reached fever pitch in the top of the fifth.

Senior Adam Powell got walked to start the inning. Hardy and Roberson both laid down successful bunts to load the bases with no outs.

Funkhouser singled scoring Powell then junior Kayden Jennings hit a sacrifice fly scoring Hardy. It was 7-0 Edwardsville with runners on second and third. Stearns stepped up to the plate.

He took a curveball over the fence in left center. His three-run homerun made it 10-0 scoring Funkhouser and Roberson. It was his ninth homer of the season which leads his team. Huebner follows him with five.

Stearns delivered and had a five RBI day going 3-3. He's expected to be the starting pitcher in their next game.

After an electric at bat, all Edwardsville had to do was hold Minooka off in the bottom of the fifth, which they did after Burns picked up three more K's.

With the win, the Tigers will move on to the Super-Sectionals. They will come back up to Bloomington to play at IWU again Monday at 6 p.m. They will take on No. 9 seeded Plainfield North with winner going to state in Joliet.