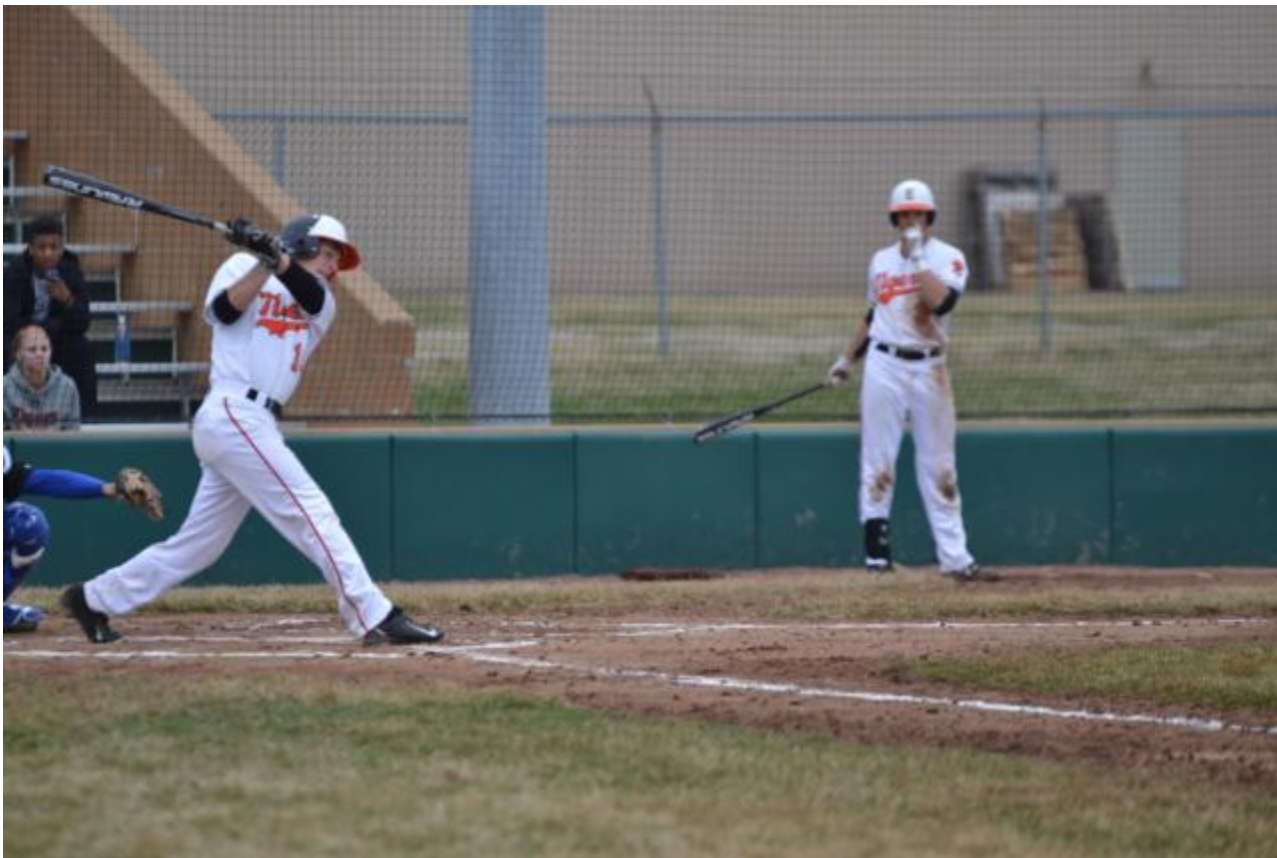


Edwardsville bats unload for powerful eight-run inning

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
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EDWARDSVILLE – So far this season, Edwardsville's baseball team has shown they're the masters of the big inning.

The Tigers put up an eight-run inning against Civic Memorial and a 11-run inning against Greenville – both of them wins – so far this year.

Going up against Kirkwood Thursday afternoon at Tom Pile Field (the game, originally scheduled for the southwest St. Louis County suburb, was moved to Edwardsville because of wet grounds), EHS struck big once again, putting up six in the third and another five in the fourth to down the Pioneers 13-2 in four-and-a-half innings.

And just like their wins over the Eagles and Comets, nearly everyone on the Tiger roster contributed in some way to the rout.

“We certainly got some big plays and big hits against a really good team,” said Tiger coach Tim Funkhouser. “We got some really good at-bats today, especially when we were patient at the plate.

“We're getting a better understanding on how to work the count and we've got guys who are really competitive. That's going to help us.”

One example was Joel Quirin, who came in as a pinch-hitter in the third and worked the count to 3-2 and fouled off several pitches before stroking a RBI double. “That's the thing,” Funkhouser said. “We're looking for opportunities to have guys contribute. That at-bat showed a lot of poise.”

Edwardsville jumped out to a quick 2-0 lead in the second that started when Matthew Zielonko drew a walk and moved up on a Fahd Shakeel single. Shakeel then stole second and, one out later, Zielonko came home on a Jake Garella groundout to the pitcher. Shakeel then scored on a RBI single from Bailey Zimmer and just like that, the Tigers found themselves in front.

Kirkwood countered with a run of their own in the third when, with two out, Chris Berry singled, then three straight walks from Chris Robinson – who had relieved starting pitcher Daniel Lloyd – brought home Berry to cut the lead in half. Undaunted, the Tigers began their six-run explosion in the third with one-out walks to Trey Riley and Zimmer. Mitchell Krebs brought home a run with a single and, after Collin Clayton walked, Brock Wiemer doubled to right to bring home Zimmer and Clayton with one away to make it 8-1 in Edwardsville's favor.

A Connor Cline triple brought home another run for the Pioneers in the fourth, and then EHS went on another five-run tear, highlighted by a bases-clearing double by Wiemer that brought home three runs and give Edwardsville enough to bring the game to an early end.

Weimer led the Tiger attack with two doubles in four at-bats and five RBIs, while Zielonko was 1-for-1 with a walk and was hit by a pitch, scoring three runs. Zimmer was 1-for-1 with two walks and two runs scored.

Edwardsville took their record to 3-0 on the year, while the Pioneers fell to 0-1.