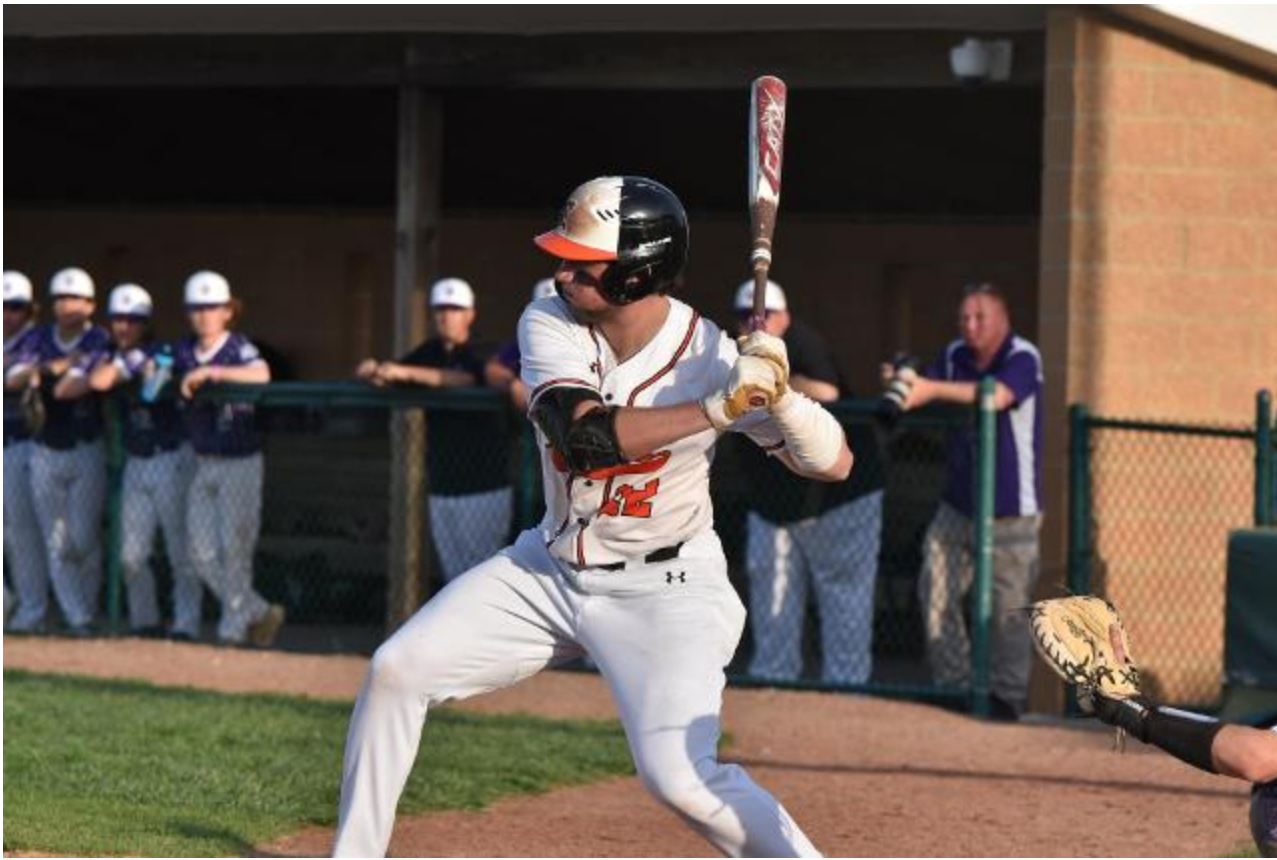


Iffrig, Huebner Homer, Tigers Score Three In First, Three In Fifth, Geggus Pitches Five Solid Innings, Tigers Win Critical SWC Game

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
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EDWARDSVILLE - Riley Iffrig hit a two-run homer in the first inning and Lucas Huebner had a solo blast over the left field fence in the third, while Logan Geggus threw five solid innings, striking out five as Edwardsville scored three runs in both the first and fifth innings in going on to a 9-3 Southwestern Conference win over Collinsville Tuesday afternoon at Tom Pile Field.

The Tigers have now won four of their last five and move to 2-1 in the SWC with the return game of the home-and-home set scheduled for Wednesday, moved up from Thursday because of storms forecast for the St. Louis area the next day.

Edwardsville was able to take advantage of opportunities, while denying Collinsville an opportunity to break on top in the first inning, which seemed to set the tone for the game.

"We're proud of the way our guys showed some patience, but particularly in the first inning," said Tigers head coach Tim Funkhouser. "I thought we really took some good at-bats, Collinsville's been winning a lot of ball games and we've seen the two guys they'll probably start this week. Their left-hander gave us a lot of problems last year, we didn't put many good swings on them and we were able to lay off some pitches that he made early in the game. And then, he settled in a little bit; we were still able to scratch out some runs. So that was good to see and then, we added to it later. So it was good to see our offense keep pressing."

Geggus also pitched well, getting out of trouble in the first inning and pitching very effectively in his five innings of work.

"I thought Logan Geggus did a great job," Funkhouser said. "stepping up in the first inning with a runner on third and was able to get out of the inning without a run. And then, after that, when they were able to get some guys on, we didn't field the balls well on some bunts and we didn't make some plays there. But he was really sharp on the mound."



Geggus has pitched well for the Tigers, having the quality start today and has also done well coming out of the bullpen when needed.

"Yeah, he's been steady for us all year," Funkhouser said. "And I would say beyond steady. He's been a guy we can count on to throw five, five-plus and he was able to do that, throw five innings today. And Collinsville's got some guys throughout the order that can give you problems, they've got some speed, they can do some different things. So, we'll enjoy the victory tonight, but the same token is we're going to be right back at it tomorrow and we have a lot of respect for their team."

Iffrig also had a good outing at the plate and it was his first inning homer that set the table for the rest of the game.

"Yeah, that was a good at-bat," Funkhouser said. "Nice, controlled swing, too, hit into the wind. And the ball jumped off and he was able to get the barrel on it. In batting practice today, he was kind of overswinging on some, trying to do too much. And it was just nice to see him really put a great swing on a ball, especially with two outs, a runner on third. And that was a big two runs early for us in the game."



The Kahoks led off with Carter Hendrickson reaching on an error by the right fielder to start the game and stealing third, but he was left stranded as Geggus struck out the side to get out of the jam. The Tigers took advantage when Cole Funkhouser led off with a walk, one of five in the first innings, and one-out later and on a 1-1 count, Iffrig got a hold of a pitch and sent in over the fence in right field to give the Tigers a 2-0 lead. Caeleb Copeland drew a walk and one out later, walks to Kayden Jennings, Huebner and Lucas Krebs forced home another run to make it 3-0 before a strikeout ended the inning.

The Kahoks got a run back in the second when Kolby Anderson drew a walk and stole second, went tot third on a ground out and scored on a Luke Weller ground out to second to cut the lead to 3-1. Edwardsville got the run back in the bottom of the inning, starting with a leadoff double by Funkhouser, who stole third and came in on a sacrifice fly to right by Joe Chiarodo to make it 4-1.

Collinsville got that run back in the third, starting with a leadoff walk to Darren Pennell, who stole second and came home on a RBI single by Harrington. After Harrington was caught stealing, a walk and a single put runners on first and second, but a double play ended the inning. In the bottom of the third, Huebner cracked a 1-1 pitch with two out over the left field fence to give the Tigers a 5-2 lead.

Kolby Anderson led off the fourth with a double for the Kahoks, going to third on a ground out and scoring after a walk to Weller on a grounder to first by C.J. Schaaf to make it 5-3. But it would be as close as Collinsville would get, as in the home half of the fifth, walks to Copeland, Andrew Hendrickson and Jennings loaded the bases, where Huebner singled home a run to make it 7-3, then a double off the bat of Krebs brought in two more runs to make it 8-3. In the sixth, Chiarodo and Iffrig were hit by pitches and walks to Copeland and Hendrickson brought home another run to make it 9-3, but a double play and strikeout ended the inning.

In the seventh, the Kahoks got a two out single from Ethan Bagwell, but Hunter Baugh, who came on in the sixth, got the final out to give the Tigers their 9-3 win.

Collinsville is now 10-5, while Edwardsville goes to 13-5, with the two teams set to play the return game today at 4:30 p.m. at Fletcher Field in Woodland Park. The Tigers are then set to play two games at McCracken County High in Paducah, Ky., on Saturday at 12:30 p.m. and 3 p.m., then play another SWC series against Alton, the first game Apr. 25 at home and the return game Apr. 27 at Alton, with both games starting at 4:30 p.m. Funkhouser is very pleased with the way his team has been playing and looks ahead to the upcoming competition.

"Yeah, we appreciate the opportunity to do what we do each day," Funkhouser said, "and be around the kids. And the kids compete, so it's a fun environment and we know that there's some days that are a little tougher than others, but overall, the challenge of seeing what we can do each day is really enjoyable. And I think our guys enjoy that too."

