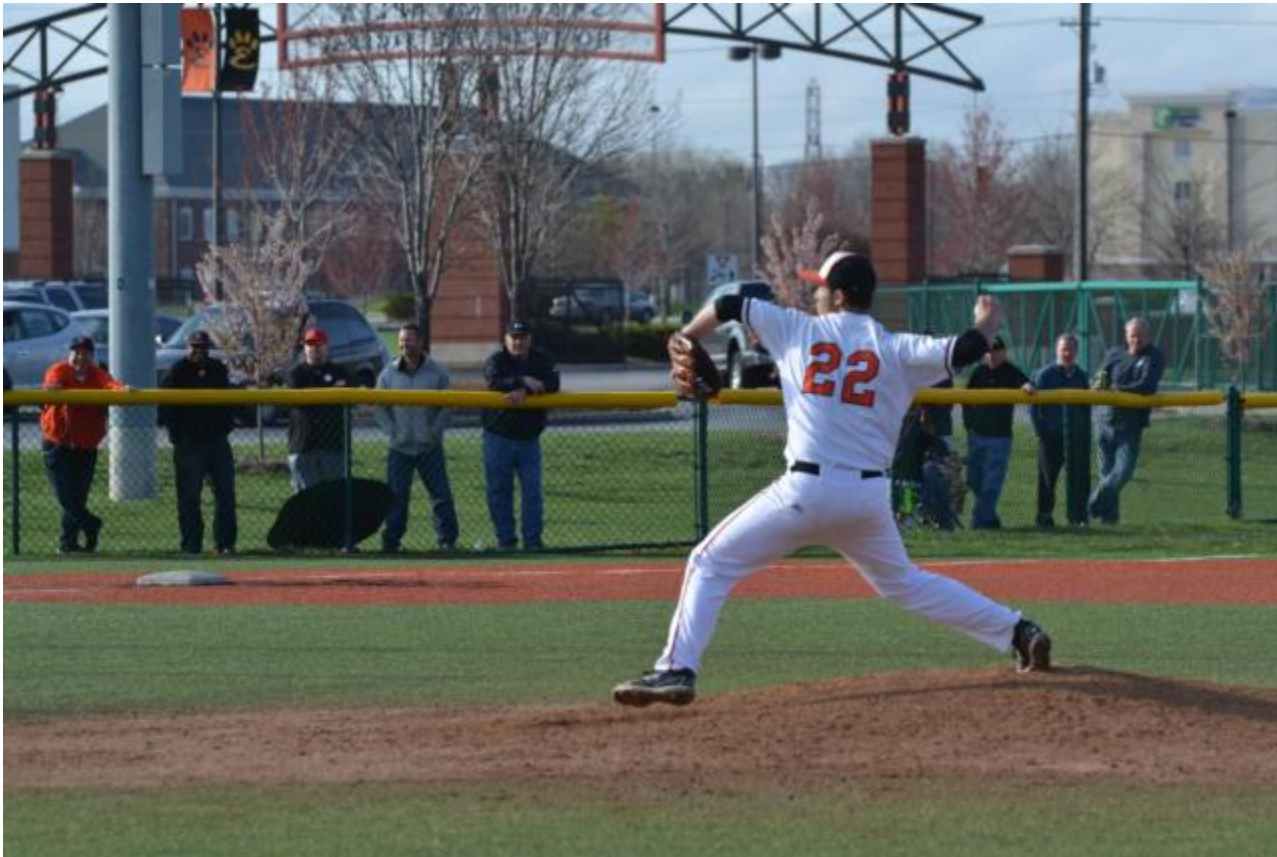


Strong pitching, hitting guides Edwardsville to ninth straight baseball win

by Brent Feeney, Sports Writer
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Edwardsville's baseball team managed to beat the thunderstorms that swept through the area Tuesday morning and early afternoon, thanks to an artificial turf field they have.

Not only did the Tigers beat the storms, they also beat a third straight Southwestern Conference opponent, this one being Belleville West as Aaron Jackson and Jake Garella teamed up to limit the Maroons to two hits in a 10-0, six-inning win Tuesday evening.

And in the process, they managed to find ways to beat the Maroons' starting pitcher Matt Klosterman simply by making adjustments at the plate during their at-bats.

“He's (Klosterman) got good stuff,” said Tiger coach Tim Funkhouser. “He competed well and made some good pitches. We made some adjustments and found a way to get some hits off of him.

“Matt Zielonko, for instance, really stayed patient and laid off some pitches to make him pitch to him in the zone. Once we did that, we were able to have some good at-bats.”

“Matt really competed well,” said Maroon coach Todd Baltz, “but once they started stringing some hits together, it was tough, so we tip our caps to them. You can't give them a lot of opportunities, they'll find a way to take advantage of them.”

Edwardsville got their first run on the board in the second, when Zielonko was hit by a pitch and, two outs afterwards, Bailey Zimmer delivered a RBI double to bring in Zielonko and make it 1-0 in the Tigers' favor.

The Tigers broke it open in the third when, with the bases loaded, Dylan Burris delivered a triple to clear the bases and give Edwardsville a 4-0 lead. In the fifth, Aaron Jackson led off with a single and Zielonko was hit by a pitch to award him first. A Fahd Shakeel sacrifice was good to move up the runners and then Garella tripled home Jackson and Zielonko to make it 6-0 in EHS' favor.

The Tigers finished off the Maroons in the sixth when Burris walked and Jordan Hovey hit a ground-rule double to right-center. Collin Clayton doubled home Burris and Hovey and the next two batters walked to load the bases. Garella then brought home a run by drawing a walk and Zimmer hit a sacrifice fly to center to bring home the game-ending run.

The Tigers, who went to 9-0 overall and 3-0 in the Southwestern Conference, travel to Belleville East for a 4:30 p.m. game Thursday. The Maroons fell to 4-9 overall and 1-2 in the league.

