



Sports

Mavericks extend winning streak to 15

MSU shuts out UND in both games of doubleheader

By Drew Lyon
Free Press Staff Writer

MANKATO — The Minnesota State baseball team subscribed to a simple formula Saturday: throw strikes, field the ball and wait for the big inning on offense.

Scoreless pitching and timely hitting proved enough for MSU as the

Mavericks prevailed in a doubleheader sweep of the University of North Dakota. Minnesota State won 4-0 and 8-0 at the MSU Baseball Complex.

The victories extended the Mavericks' winning streak to 15 games, two shy of the school record 17 games set in 1970.

In Game 1, UND's Sean Cooley

matched MSU's Dane Secott five scoreless innings, but couldn't survive the sixth. The Mavericks (who were playing the doubleheader as visitors because the game was originally scheduled in Grand Forks, N.D.) broke loose in the top of the sixth for four runs, capped by Jay

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Bresnahan's RBI single and Eric Austvold's bases-clearing double.

UND's Sean Cooley pitched 5½ innings, giving up four runs on nine hits. Secott fanned six UND batters and gave up seven hits, while lowering his ERA to a 1.96. Secott has not allowed an earned run in his last 16 innings.

In Game 2, senior left-hander Jon Bjelland left 12 UND runners on base and shook off bases-loaded jams in the third and fifth innings with inning-ending strikeouts. Bjelland fanned eight and allowed five hits, improving his record to 7-0.

Seniors Patrick Criss and Lee Hodges each pitched an inning of relief to complete 14 scoreless innings of MSU pitching Saturday.

The Mavericks only scored in four innings during the two games, but punished UND's fielding mistakes with clutch offensive production.

"I thought our hitters were a little inconsistent today," MSU head coach Dean

Bowyer said, "but they were able to capitalize when we had some runners on base."

After Bresnahan's single put runners on first and third, Josh Simon drove UND left-hander Rob Bird Horse's pitch over the left-field wall to give MSU a 3-0 second-inning lead. Simon finished Game 2 with two hits and four RBIs. The red-shirt freshman said the southpaw's slow pitches required patience.

"I was just trying to stay back," Simon said. "He was throwing pretty slow and we've been working a lot in practice on staying back on pitches."

The Mavericks added three more runs in the sixth on back-to-back home runs from second baseman Nick Gonzalez and first baseman Kyle Hoover. Gonzalez was 2 for 3 with four RBIs.

The Mavericks (24-4, 5-0 NCC) will have a chance to tie the school's win streak record today when they play two more games against UND (7-9, 1-3 NCC) at the MSU Baseball Complex. Starting time is noon.



Matt Gorrie

Minnesota State second baseman Nick Gonzalez tags out North Dakota's Tyler Frenzel during the Mavericks' 4-0 victory Saturday in Game 1 of a doubleheader at the MSU Baseball Complex.