



Sports

MAVERICKS SWEEP BASEBALL TWINBILL



Pat Christman

Minnesota State's Scott Kemp (9) is safe at home during the second game of a doubleheader sweep of Augustana Saturday that moved the Mavericks to 12-1 in the North Central Conference.

MSU pitchers get stingy in sweep of Augustana

Secott, Bjelland hold Vikings to pair of runs in twinbill

By Brian Ojanpa
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MANKATO — When you're a proven veteran, you've earned the benefit of any doubt.

Minnesota State senior pitcher Dane Secott was cruising toward a shutout to open the seventh inning Saturday when some rivets began popping on his armor.

He hit a batter, and two more got hits, as Augustana began to make noise.

Mavericks associate head coach Matt Magers went to the mound for what appeared to be a timely pitching change.

But it was just to give Secott a breather.

The right-hander retired the

side in quick order as Minnesota State swept a North Central Conference doubleheader 6-1 and 4-1 at the MSU field.

"You always like to see guys finish games, and his pitch count was only around 80," Magers said.

"He didn't throw many sliders today, but he has two great pitches — fastball and a change — and he's just so knowledgeable. He knows how to pitch."

Secott (4-2) was roughed up a bit in his previous start against St. Cloud, but on Saturday he fell into a rhythm early.

"In the first inning my pitches were up a little bit more

than I wanted them, but Pat (catcher Ottum) and I are pretty much in synch, so that helps establish a rhythm."

Ottum helped his batterymate in the fourth inning when his chopper over the third baseman's head scored two runs to put MSU ahead 4-0.

The Mavericks played both small ball and long ball to build an early lead.

In the first inning, leadoff hitter Zach Danelson walked, stole second and third, and scored on Kosuke Hattori's infield out.

"We're a lot more aggressive this year," Secott said. "Guys know how to steal bases, and Zach sets the tone."

In the fourth, Kyle Hoover

led off with a solo homer to left, his fourth of the year.

Secott allowed four hits and fanned seven.

Eric Austvold and Ottum each had two RBIs.

In Game 2, Jon Bjelland upped his record to 8-0 with a two-hitter, fanning seven over six innings. The senior lefty from Barron, Wis., stands 19-1 in his three-year MSU career.

Danelson broke a 1-1 tie in the fourth with an RBI double, and MSU scored two more in the fifth on Austvold's single and a throwing error scoring Jay Bresnahan.

Minnesota State improved to 33-7, 12-1 in NCC.

Augustana fell to 14-20, 3-9.

The two teams play another doubleheader today at MSU, starting at 1 p.m.