



Sports

MINNESOTA STATE 7, BETHANY LUTHERAN COLLEGE 1



Luke Gronneberg

Bethany baserunner Tyler Carlson finds himself sandwiched between Minnesota State's Jay Bresnahan (left) and Dan Woodall, who made the tag. MSU won the annual intercity matchup.

Tournament tuneup

Vikings overmatched in teams' second annual meeting

By Brian Ojanpa
Free Press Staff Writer

MANKATO — With both teams looking ahead to the start of their conference tournaments on Thursday, it was the bullpens that did most of the heavy lifting Monday.

Minnesota State and Bethany Lutheran College went through a combined 11 pitchers in an intercity baseball matchup the Mavericks won 7-1 at MSU Baseball Complex.

It was the second-ever meeting between the two schools. The annual game began last year, when Bethany made the transition from a two-year to four-year program.

"It's a good thing for our community, but it doesn't help our power rankings at all," said MSU coach

Dean Bowyer, whose NCAA Division II Mavericks will host the North Central Conference tournament.

Also on Thursday, Bethany will play in the four-team Upper Midwest Athletic Conference tournament in Duluth. The UMAC is in the process of attaining Division III status.

Monday's game pretty much went according to form, with MSU's talent edge decidedly in control.

The Mavericks got all the runs they needed on Tony Altavilla's three-run double in the fourth inning.

The Mavericks added a pair of runs in each the fifth and eighth innings.

Bethany tallied its run in the sixth inning, when Luke Hagen

walked and later scored on Josh Anderson's groundout.

The NCC regular-season champion Mavericks head into the conference tourney with all hands on deck.

"We're lucky. We've been healthy all year," Bowyer said.

Not so for Bethany, as coach Ryan Kragh recited a list of ailing players.

"I wouldn't say we're completely healthy, but we're getting better," Kragh said.

"This was a good tuneup for us, because (UMAC favorite) St. Scholastica has pitchers with similar speed to what we saw today.

"We gave a pretty decent effort, but obviously we're overmatched. MSU is one of the better Division II teams I've seen. They hit and they play D. And if they put it all togeth-

er, they have a chance to do some damage."

MSU collected seven hits — five off Vikings starter Joe Sigfrinius, who went 4 $\frac{2}{3}$ inning to take the loss.

Andrew Vlasak, the second of seven MSU pitchers, pitched two scoreless innings to get the win.

Bethany had three hits — singles by Tyler Carlson and Hagen, and Andy Dollerschell's double.

Notes

It was the type of mix-and-match game that kept a scorekeeper busy. For example, after MSU's Ben Kaus completed his one-inning stint on the mound, he went to right field — and promptly threw out a Bethany runner at home by 15 feet... Home plate umpire Tim Murry dropped as if he'd been shot after taking a pitch full force in the lower-neck area. He took a few moments to gather himself, then resumed duties.