

Sports

Lynx roll over Rams

A.L. tops another ranked team

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To find a pattern in Abraham Lincoln's 2010 baseball season is not easy.

With Monday's convincing 14-8 victory over previously unbeaten Class 3-A No. 2 Glenwood at Lincoln Field, the Lynx have now won their third game of the season over a state-ranked opponent within a two-week span. A.L. also defeated Sioux City North and Lewis Central, both ranked in Class 4-A at the time.

The wins are part of the Lynx's current 7-6 record. Some victories, like Monday's, came against the best competition in the state.

Some losses, like last week's doubleheader split with Sioux City West, came against teams they probably expected to defeat.

So, what exactly is up with this squad?

"It seems as if we're unpredictable, but we're actually very predictable," A.L. coach James Larsen said. "We can sense whether or not we're going to be successful if our players are energetic, upbeat and ready to go.

"Today, we came to the field at 9 this morning and told our kids, 'You need to understand what it takes to be baseball players.' We went over some things, made some adjustments and our kids executed."

That morning practice didn't involve any bats or gloves; rather, it gave the players a chance to look at the fundamental and mental elements of the game.

"We basically just ran some game situations," Larsen said. "Our field was wet and we didn't do any defensive work or hitting. We just ran them."

Whatever was said in that practice worked. A.L. smashed 16 hits Monday, with six going for extra bases. Six players finished with at least two hits each, and the Lynx scored at least one run in every inning.

That offensive production helped build a 7-0 A.L. lead after only three innings, but then Glenwood retaliated.

Bryan Harless and Nick Wells each singled and scored in the fourth to trim the deficit to 7-2.

Keith Grap scored a run for the Lynx in their half of the inning to push the lead to six, but Glenwood fired back with four runs in the fifth. The Rams sent 11 batters to the plate in the inning, which was highlighted by a two-RBI single from Taylor Kaufman. By the end of the frame, Glenwood trailed 8-6.

But the Lynx shut the door on the Rams for good in their half of the fifth. After Nate Place singled and Collin Crowl reached on a fielder's choice, Nolan Webster delivered a three-run homer over the left-field fence that pushed the advantage to five and essentially sealed the win for A.L. Crowl added a two-run homer in the sixth for a pair of insurance runs.

Thursday's success was needed for A.L.'s confidence as much as for its offense.

"It's just a mental thing with these kids, and that's something we've had to overcome," Larsen said. "We play seven innings, and we've got to anticipate and know what we're doing with every play and just get things done."

The Rams, meanwhile, now find themselves in unfamiliar territory coming off a loss. They had allowed only 22 runs combined in their eight wins entering Monday's contest, but coach Brett Elam said he learned plenty about his team in their first loss.

"We're too soft, that's the bottom line," Elam said. "We've been seeing this coming, and I guess today was a good day for a rude awakening.

"When you can't put up a zero at any point in time against the other team, it's going to be a struggle, no matter how you

look at it.”

Glenwood (8-1) 000 240 2 – 8 8 2

Abraham Lincoln (7-6) 142 133 x – 14 16 1

W: Dillon Sass. L: Drake Ruth.

2B: G, Kaufman. AL, Rommel, Reynolds 2, Brownlee. HR: AL, Webster, C. Crowl.

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