

## **Softball team plays with intensity in openers**

Written by Brenda Johnson Brandt

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HHS softball coaching staff was pleased with the effort of the Dragon team and the intensity they displayed in their season openers Saturday morning in Eaton and Saturday afternoon at Valley.

At Eaton, the Dragons fought hit for hit, but just ran out of innings, as they suffered a 7-8 loss in a full seven-inning game.

Coach Ashley Clayton said the afternoon game against Valley was the story of a much different team, as Valley had one of the best pitchers the Dragons have seen. The Vikings took the 15-1 win in five innings.

### **Holyoke 7, Eaton 8**

Ashley Campbell took the one-point loss on the mound in Holyoke's season opener. She had six strike-outs and gave up six walks.

Offensively, the Dragons were tough, they got timely hits and only left two runners on base, said coach Clayton.

Defense was strong at times and a struggle at times, the coach admitted. However, for their first game, the Dragons made a lot of positive strides in the right direction, according to coach Clayton.

Batting stats showed Campbell, two for four with a double, a single and one RBI; Jordan Zeiler, two for three with a double, a single and one RBI; Makenzie Ault, one for four with a triple; Marci Vasa, one for four with a double and one RBI; Macey Pierce, one for four with a single and one RBI; Karci Lockwood, one for three with a single; Molly Fricke, one for four with a single; and Chandler Gerk, one for one with a single.

### **Holyoke 1, Valley 15**

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Holyoke hitters took Valley's outstanding pitcher deep in the count and battled with several foul balls many times at-bat.

Defense was, once again, Holyoke's struggle, noted coach Clayton.

"However, the girls have worked hard the last three weeks of practice and have grown in huge strides. So the defensive struggles are definitely something they can work to improve on," said Clayton.

On the mound, Zeiler gave up only three walks and did a good job forcing the other team to hit easy ground balls and pop-ups, commended Clayton.

Ault nabbed the only hit for the Dragons with a single, a walk and a stolen base. Campbell reached first on a defensive error in her second at-bat.

### **Upcoming action**

This weekend, Holyoke will travel to Burlington to compete in the Burlington Tournament Friday and Saturday, Sept. 11-12. The first home game of the season is set for Tuesday, Sept. 15 when the Lady Dragons host Akron.

In Friday action of the Burlington tourney, Holyoke will play Akron at 10:45 a.m., Platte Canyon at 4 p.m. and Wray at 7 p.m. Then on Saturday, the Dragons will continue with one game of pool play against Limon at 11:30 a.m., followed by one game of bracket play to determine their placing in the tournament.