

## **Dragon baseball splits first series of season at Haxtun**

Written by Kyle Arnoldy

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Dragon baseball players were put to the test early in the season as they split a pair of games at Haxtun in the first competition of the year for Holyoke Tuesday, March 25.

After falling 9-10 in extra innings, HHS responded with a 9-2 victory in the second match.



**Tanner Smith slides under a tag at second in the first game of the season at Haxtun.**

**—Enterprise photo**

**Holyoke 9, Haxtun 10**

With their backs against the wall, Dragon ballplayers fought back from a 2-6 deficit to tie the first game at nine apiece Tuesday. Holyoke fell in heartbreaking fashion, however, as a two-out

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Bulldog flare to shallow right field in the bottom of the eighth inning gave Haxtun the walk-off 10-9 victory.

While showing few signs of rust in the first game at the plate, the Dragons were unable to cleanly field the ball on defense, leading to a number of unearned runs for the Bulldogs.

“We hit the ball well like I was hoping we would, but it’s hard to win games with 10 errors,” coach John Zilla said. “If we cut out half of our errors, we win that game.”

HHS went three-up-three-down offensively in the first inning. While the Dragon batters made solid contact, the balls were hit right to Haxtun defenders for easy outs.

Logan Tharp got the nod as the starting pitcher for the Dragons. Throughout his three innings of work, Tharp had several Haxtun batters guessing as he found success changing speeds and locations. His best attribute in the game, however, was forcing a number of ground balls as he kept his pitches low in the zone.

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