



Game 36, May 2, 2024
Pope Greyhounds 4, East Paulding Raiders 1
Weather: 83 degrees, 5 mph winds
Played at Jeff Rowland Field at Pope High School
Overall Record 23-13
GHSA Playoffs SWEET 16, Game Three, Best 2-of-3 Series



POPE WINS GAME THREE AGAINST ALLATOONA HOUNDS ADVANCE TO ELITE EIGHT FOR THIRTEENTH TIME IN PAST 15 SEASONS



Nick Bobrowski pitched 6.1 innings to earn his team leading eighth win. He threw 70% strikes, struck out seven batters, allowed just one walk, and six hits.



Pope found itself in a familiar pressure packed position. For the second consecutive series, the Hounds faced an elimination game three, this time in the Sweet 16 of the GHSA State Baseball Playoffs. It was Pope's fourth elimination game overall.

Once again, pitching, defense, and this time opportunistic base running carried the Hounds to victory over the scrappy East Paulding Raiders, 4-1, Thursday night at Jeff Rowland Field. The win sends Pope into the Elite Eight round of the playoffs for the 13th time in the past 15 seasons, an amazing accomplishment by the program. The Hounds were the two seed out of region seven and the Raiders were the four seed out of region six. Pope's overall record is 23-13 and East Paulding finishes at 20-15.

Sophomore lefthander **Nick Bobrowski** (8-1) was stellar once again. He pitched 6.1 innings and won his second straight elimination game and team leading eighth win of the season. Pope and East Paulding pitchers both threw 70% strikes, walked one batter each, and struck out seven batters each.

Pope's offense could not get untracked and managed only four hits with no RBI. The Hounds scored all four runs with two outs following the first two batters of the inning being retired. Three runs were scored on two throwing errors and one run on a wild pitch. The Hounds defense made just one error and turned a double play. East Paulding made three costly errors.

Bobrowski (8-1) struck out six, allowed just one run, scattered six hits, and was razor sharp with 70% strikes (61-86). Four of the six innings he pitched he retired the side in order.

In the top of the first inning, Bobrowski threw five pitches and five strikes to record three outs. The first pitch of the game was a ground out to **John Stuetzer** at shortstop. The second pitch of the game was a sinking line drive to right field and **Brady Otero** made a nice diving catch to record the second out. The next batter got behind 0-2 before a 3-1 ground out (**Andrew Nelms** to Bobrowski).



Matt Levinson earned his fifth save of the season and is tied for the fourth most at Pope in a single season.

Junior righthander **Matt Levinson** pitched 0.2 innings to close the game and earn his fifth save of the season. Levinson's five saves tie him for the fourth most all time at Pope in a single season with **Andrew Herlitz** from the 2018 team. Levinson struck out one, allowed no hits, no runs and threw 70% strikes (7-10).

Pope's offense managed four hits, with half coming from **Tanner Morneau**. Morneau had two singles, scored one run, and stole one base. **Drew Abney** slugged a double and walked one time. Nelms had a single and scored one run. Stuetzer walked one time and scored one run. **Luke Winbush**

reached base on a fielder's choice and stole one base. Otero reached base by an error. **Ben Hill** was hit by a pitch. **Regan Cochran** scored one run and stole one base.

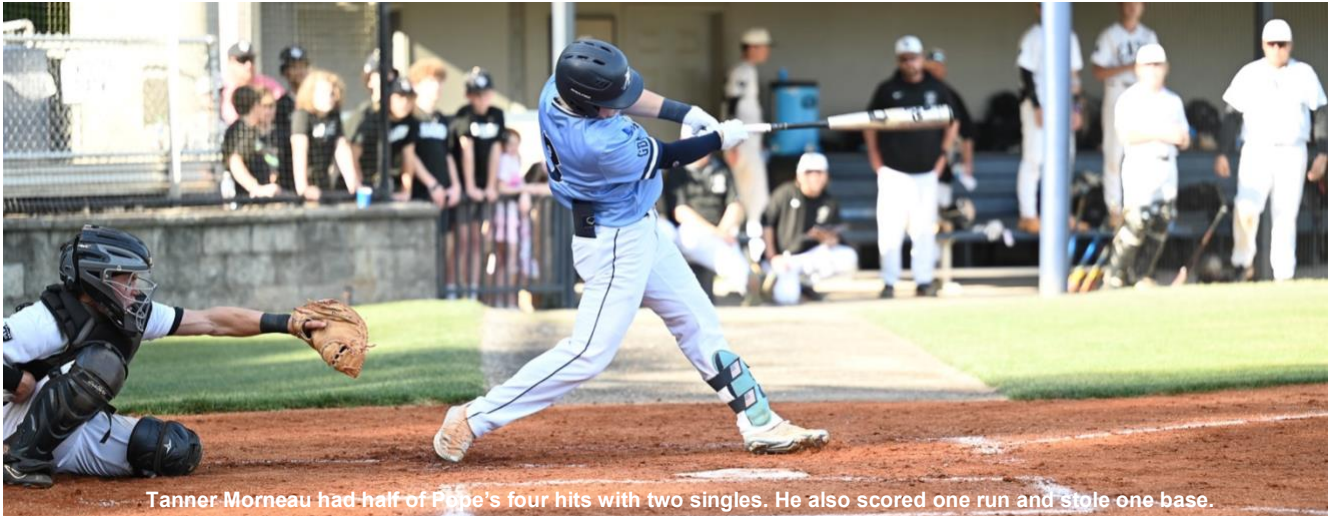
In the bottom of the first inning, Pope scored two runs on two hits to take a 2-0 lead. With two outs, Morneau hit a line drive single past the pitcher into center field. Abney followed and ripped a double down the right field line. Morneau advanced to third base on the hit. Cochran ran for Abney. Otero hit a sharp grounder to the shortstop, who overthrew first base, and allowed Morneau and Cochran to both score on the play.

In the top of the second inning, East Paulding had runners at first and second base with two outs. The next batter hit a sharp line drive toward third base. Winbush backhanded the one hop and touched base for the force out ending the inning with no runs.

In the top of the third inning, Pope turned a 4-6-3 double play (**Carter Joachim** to Stuetzer to Nelms) to end the inning. Nelms made a nice one hop scoop to secure the out at first base.

In the bottom of the fifth inning, Pope added two important insurance runs to take a 4-0 lead. With two outs, Stuetzer fought back from an 0-2 count and walked on a full count. Two pitches later, an errant pickoff throw by the East Paulding pitcher allowed Stuetzer to advance to second base. Two pitches after that, Stuetzer moved to third base on a wild pitch. On the play, the catcher tried to throw behind Stuetzer and pick him off. The ball hit Stuetzer on the elbow and bounced away. Stuetzer sprinted for home, dove headfirst into home plate, and was safe in a cloud of dust with a really sore elbow.

Nelms followed and hit a full count line drive single to left field. Morneau dropped an opposite field single into right field and moved Nelms to third base. Two pitches later, Morneau stole second base. Abney walked on a full count. On ball four, the ball got past the catcher on a wild pitch and Nelms scored from third base.



Tanner Morneau had half of Pope's four hits with two singles. He also scored one run and stole one base.

In the top of the sixth inning, East Paulding scored one run and had runners on first and third with two outs. Bobrowski struck out the next batter on three straight curve balls to end the inning and keep the Raiders in check.

Pope will host the Thomas County Central Yellow Jackets in the Elite Eight on Monday in a doubleheader that starts at 5:00. Game two is 30 minutes following completion of game one. If the teams split on Monday, the if necessary game (three) is on Tuesday at Pope beginning at 4:00.

Thomas County Central is located in Thomasville (South Georgia) four hours and 250 miles away. Thomas Central finished third in region one and has a record of 21-13. The Yellow Jackets swept St. Pius and Woodward Academy in the first two rounds.

Eight teams remain in the Class 6A division. Three teams are from region seven, Pope, Blessed Trinity, and Lassiter. Three teams are from region one, Thomas County Central, Tift County, and Houston County. The other two teams are Etowah and Marist.