

Suburban Life

ATHLETE OF THE WEEK



COLIN DOYLE

Downers Grove North, junior, baseball
Doyle struck out 12 in a complete-game four-hit shutout of Lyons.

He was voted the Athlete of the Week in an online vote. Other nominees were Willowbrook gymnastics' Jae Newman, York track and field's Jilliam Booth and Nazareth baseball's Landon Thome.

Here is his Q&A with Sports Editor Joshua Welge:

That game last week vs Lyons looked like a really good outing for you. What was working for you?

Doyle: Last week I was able to throw three pitches for strikes. The fastball, slider, and splitter were all within the zone consistently and that just helped keep the hitters off balance.

How has the season gone otherwise?

Doyle: So far the season has gone pretty well. The team has been competitive and we have the No. 4 seed in our sectional. We are looking to make a run. Individually I am just trying to get better every outing and it has been a lot of fun.

How are you a better pitcher than you were as a sophomore?

Doyle: I would say my confidence is a lot higher. That helps knowing I am a better pitcher than last year. Also my velo has ticked up and my arsenal has definitely gotten better.

As a multi-sport athlete how do you make the transition from basketball to baseball?

Doyle: During basketball I keep

training for baseball throughout the winter season, so when spring comes around I am still ready to go. Basketball can be time consuming in season but it is a lot of fun.

You're obviously a tall guy but you seem to have a pretty repeatable smooth delivery, how have you managed to develop that?

Doyle: I have worked with BSF up in Bensenville this past year and they have really helped refine my mechanics.

Logan Schmitt is the pitching coach up there and he helps a ton with keep the mechanics where they need to be.

Do you have any baseball superstitions?

Doyle: No I wouldn't say I have any superstitions, I just go out there and play.

Do you have an MLB pitcher you like to watch?

Doyle: I am a Mets fan, so Jacob Degrom has been one of my favorites for a long time. Nolan Mclean is a current Met who is a lot of fun. And then Paul Skenes is so talented.

PREP BASEBALL: WILLOWBROOK 11, MORTON 7

Willowbrook baseball wins school-record 25th straight game, 11-7 over Morton

By CRAIG BRUESKE
Daily Herald Media Group

Winning has become contagious these days for Willowbrook's baseball team.

Following a 1-4 start, the Warriors have engineered a school-record winning streak that reached 25 following Thursday's 11-7 victory over Morton in Villa Park.

"We were never worried when we started 1-4, because we trust all of the guys on this team from top to bottom," said senior shortstop Jory Crocker, who leads the team in several offensive categories, including batting average (.488), RBI (37), and triples (seven), while also collecting four saves as the team's closer.

Warriors (26-4) longtime coach Vic Wisner felt things begin to click during the team's spring break trip to Tennessee.

"We lost to Montini - that's the only one we were behind in the whole way," said Wisner, who is retiring following the season. "In our losses to Glenbard East and Lake Park, we were throwing lots of pitchers early on just like everybody else.

"We lost some seniors from last year, so I think we had to find ourselves. We went to Clarksville [Tennessee], and the boys were amazing. We did a ton of team building stuff. We went to an escape room that they couldn't escape from.

"They took a deep breath - and we haven't lost since."

Winning never gets old. "It's amazing," said senior center fielder Jake Bonino, who drove in a second-inning run against Morton with a triple down the left-field line before belting his fifth home run of the season during the Warriors' fourth-inning.

"Everyone loves winning. We have a great group, and we're good at it. We love winning - that's our main goal. It's not about individual stats. We try to get there as a team and

make sure we win."

That was evident during Thursday's win, as the Warriors received huge contributions from the bottom of their order.

Tommy Roelle, hitting from the 8-hole, went 1 for 3 with a two-run triple during the Warriors' five-run second, while No. 9 hitter Charlie Roelle enjoyed one of his best games, going 3 for 3 with three RBIs, highlighted by his two-run double in the third.

"Everyone talks about Jory [Crocker] and Jake [Bonino], but the bottom of our lineup really hit the ball well tonight," said Wisner. "Both of the Roelle brothers hit the ball well. Alex [No. 6 hitter Dew] is batting almost .400."

That 1-through-9 team approach could come in handy during the state tournament, which begins with regional action from May 26-30.

"In the playoffs, all of a sudden a guy batting eighth or ninth gets two hits and drives in some runs," said Wisner.

"Those are the things that spur you forward.

"I feel like there have been contributions from just about everybody - just like today."

Bonino is hitting .316 with a team-high 42 runs scored from the leadoff spot, while junior Ben Swanson leads the team with 22 stolen bases. Senior Alek Ramey and Bonino share the team lead with five home runs apiece.

On the mound, the Warriors have been led by seniors Noah Edison (7-0), Bobby Biggs (7-1) and hard-throwing junior right-hander Mikey Garner (6-0), who earned the win against Morton on Thursday with a pair of scoreless innings and three strikeouts.

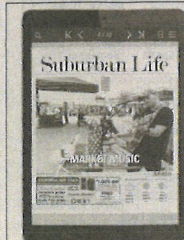
Thursday's win cemented the Warriors' first unbeaten record in WSC Gold play (18-0).

"This team has been very resilient," said Crocker. "We come to practice every single day trying to get better, and that transfers to the field."

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