

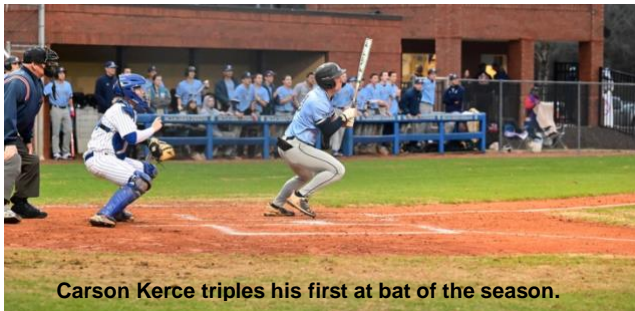


Game 1, February 10, 2023
Pope Greyhounds Varsity 11, McEachern Indians 0
Five-Inning Run Rule Game
Weather: 53 degrees, 9 mph winds, right to left
Played at McEachern High School
Record: Overall 1-0, Region 0-0



POPE ROMPS PAST MCEACHERN IN OPENER OFFENSE HITS FOR CYCLE, PITCHING COMBINES FOR ONE HITTER

After an offseason of workouts, preparation, and limited pre-season time on the field due to rain, the Pope Greyhounds opened their 2023 baseball season with a resounding **11-0 run-rule victory** over the McEachern Indians at McEachern High School on Friday night. A big Pope crowd filled the stands and watched the Hounds' hitters combine to hit for the cycle with three singles, three doubles, one triple, and one home run. Pope had runners on base every inning. Pope pitchers dominated and combined to throw a one-hitter, struck out 11, and retired the side in order the final three innings.



Carson Kerce triples his first at bat of the season.

Senior shortstop **Carson Kerce** led the Hounds eight-hit attack with a triple, double, two RBI, two runs scored, and reached base three times. Senior catcher **Jesse Walter** wasted no time in the first inning when he slugged a first-pitch fastball 355-feet over the left field fence for a two-run home run. The Hounds raced to a 6-0 lead in the top of the first inning and never looked back.

Senior lefthander **Blythe Keisler** (1-0) pitched four shutout innings and allowed just one hit to earn the win. Keisler faced 15 batters and struck out over half with eight strike outs. He retired the side in order his final two innings. Senior lefthander **David Lovell** pitched a perfect final inning in his varsity debut and struck out all three batters he faced in dominant fashion.



Blythe Keisler strikes out eight to earn the win.

Cooper Orr reached base three-of-four times with a double, walk, hit by pitch, had one RBI, and scored one run. **Jack Myers** hit a double, scored two runs, and was hit by a pitch. **Jake Gastley** had an RBI single and scored one run. **Kent Schmidt** had two RBI and walked one time. **Andrew Walters** reached base four-of-four times on walks and scored three runs. **Eli Overstreet** walked twice, stole two bases, and scored one run. Sophomore **Tanner Morneau** collected his first varsity hit in his first at bat. Junior **Brady Otero** had his first varsity hit with a two-strike pinch-hit double to score two runs.

In the top of the first inning, Pope sent 10 hitters to the plate and scored six runs on five hits, including four hits in a row. With one out, Walters walked on four straight balls. Kerce slugged a two-bounce triple to the right center fence to score Walters from first. Schmidt hit a hard ground ball out to second base to score Kerce. Overstreet walked on a 3-1 count and promptly stole second and third base. Orr slugged a 359-foot double to the base of the centerfield fence

to score Overstreet. Gastley singled to right center to score Orr. Walter hit a first-pitch, 355-foot home run over the left field fence that scored Gastley. Morneau sliced a single to right field.

In the top of the second inning, Pope scored two more runs on one hit and two walks to take an 8-0 lead. Walters led off with another walk on four straight balls. He advanced two bases to third on a wild pitch deep in the cavernous McEachern back stop. Kerce followed with a two-strike blast over the right fielder for a stand-up double and scored Walters. Schmidt hit another two-strike hard ground ball to second base for an out, but knocked in his second RBI and scored Kerce from second. With two outs, Orr walked on a full count, but could not score.

In the top of the third inning, Pope scored one run on one hit and one walk. With two outs, Myers hit a full-count hustle double that was sliced to right field. Myers moved to third base on a wild pitch. Walters walked for a third straight time, this time on a 3-1 count. Kerce hit a high fly ball to right field that was misplayed and scored Myers.

In the top of the fifth inning, and what proved to be the final inning, Pope sent eight batters to the plate and scored two runs on one hit to take a final run-rule lead of 11-0. With one out, Myers was hit by a pitch. Walters walked for a fourth time, this time on a full count. With two outs, Otero hit a two strike double to left field and scored Myers and Walters.

Pope plays their home opener, weather permitting, on Tuesday vs. Forsyth Central.



Jesse Walter hit the first pitch he saw this season for a two-run home run in the top of the first inning.



David Lovell struck out all three batters he faced in the final inning in his varsity debut.