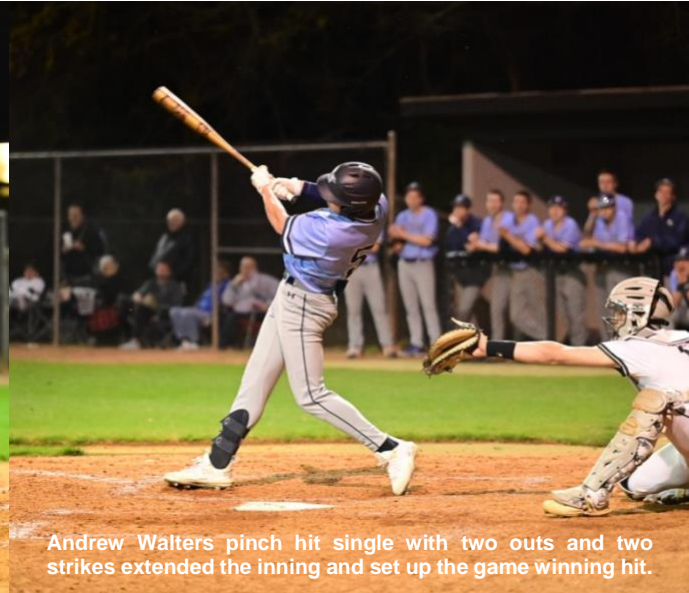




## POPE RALLIES LATE TO BEAT SPRAYBERRY WALTER AND WALTERS PINCH HITS PUSH HOUNDS PAST JACKETS



Jesse Walter's pinch hit double with two outs knocked in Jack Myers and the game winning run.

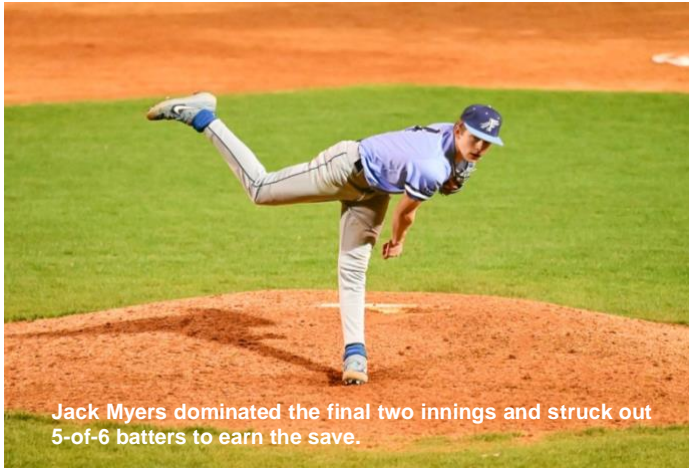


Andrew Walters pinch hit single with two outs and two strikes extended the inning and set up the game winning hit.

In the top of the sixth inning, with Pope and Sprayberry locked in a 2-2 tie, Pope seniors **Andrew Walters** and **Jesse Walter** remained ready. With two outs, in consecutive at bats, Walters and Walter were tapped to pinch hit by **Coach Chris Turco**. Both delivered with game saving hits. Walters singled on a two-strike pitch to extend the inning. Walter hit a sinking line drive that scooted past the left fielder for a double and scored **Jack Myers** with what proved to be the game-winning run. Walters also scored on the play. The Hounds went on to beat Sprayberry, 7-2, Wednesday night at Sprayberry High School in game two of the three game region series. Pope won the first game on Tuesday night. Pope's overall record is now 9-3 and region record is 3-2.

Pope had four hits in the first five innings of the game. The Hounds matched that total in the sixth inning alone, with four hits. Perhaps the slow start was from the Hounds being caught off guard by the walkup music played for each hitter; a smattering of 1980's soft rock classics by Air Supply, George Michael, and Kenny G. Several Pope parents were seen holding hands and reminiscing during the songs.

Pope pitchers combined for 13 strikes outs, three walks, and allowed just two runs. Senior lefthander **Blythe Keisler** (4-0) pitched five innings to earn the win. Keisler struck out eight, walked three, allowed two runs, scattered seven hits, and threw 60% strikes (60-100 pitches). Keisler picked off a baserunner 1-3-6 (Keisler to **Brady Otero** to Kerce) to end the fourth inning. Junior righthander **Jack Myers** pitched the final two innings in dominant fashion to earn his first save of the season. Myers struck out 5-of-6 batters, allowed no hits, no runs, and threw 61% strikes (17-28 pitches).



Jack Myers dominated the final two innings and struck out 5-of-6 batters to earn the save.



Blythe Keisler started, pitched five innings, and struck out eight to earn the win for the Hounds.

The Hounds totaled nine hits. The offense was led by senior **Carson Kerce**, who had three hits, including a triple, one RBI, one run scored, and one stolen base. **Eli Overstreet** had two hits, one RBI, one run scored, and one stolen base. Walter had a double, two RBI, scored one run, and hit a sacrifice fly that scored one run. Myers had one single, one walk, and scored two runs. Walters singled and scored one run. **John Stuetzer** had another bunt single and walked one time. **Kent Schmidt** had a sacrifice fly that scored a run and walked one time. **Cooper Orr** walked one time and stole one base. **Bryce Chapin** was hit by a pitch in his first varsity at bat and forced home **Jake Gastley** with the Hounds sixth run.

In the top of the third inning, Pope scored two runs to take a 2-1 lead. Overstreet led off with a line drive single to center field. On the next pitch, Overstreet stole second base. Kerce crushed a fastball 350-feet that one-bounced the right field fence for a triple and scored Overstreet with the Hounds first run of the game. Schmidt followed and hit a deep sacrifice fly to center field that scored Kerce from third.

In the top of the sixth inning, Pope and Sprayberry were tied, 2-2. With two outs, the Hounds rallied, and scored three runs to take a lead they would not relinquish. The Hounds sent eight batters to the plate in the inning. Schmidt led off and walked. Myers hit a hot smash to the third baseman that ate him up for an infield single. Orr hit a two-strike pitch deep to left center field that was caught, but advanced the runners to second and third. Sprayberry picked off a runner from third base for the second out. With the game still tied, 2-2, Walters pinch hit, fought back from an 0-2 count, fouled off a strike, and laced a clutch line drive single to left field to keep Pope's hopes alive. Myers advanced to third base. Walter pinch hit and slugged a first pitch sinking line drive double that got past the left fielder. Myers scored on the play from third for what proved to be the winning run. Walters also scored all the way from first base. Morneau followed and reached base on an error by the shortstop. Walter advanced to third. Overstreet hit a two-strike single to center field that scored Walter with the Hounds third and final run of the inning.

In the top of the seventh inning, Pope scored one more run to take a 7-2 lead. Kerce led off with a two-strike line drive single to center field. Schmidt hit into a fielder's choice and Kerce was out at second base. Myers walked and Schmidt moved to second. Gastley pinch ran for Schmidt. Myers and Gastley moved to second and third on a passed ball. With one out, Orr walked to load the bases. Chapin was hit in the shoulder by the first pitch he saw and forced home Gastley. Walter hit a sacrifice fly to right field that scored Myers from third.

Pope and Sprayberry play game three in the region series Friday night at 6:00 at Sprayberry High School. The rain out makeup date is Saturday at Sprayberry.

