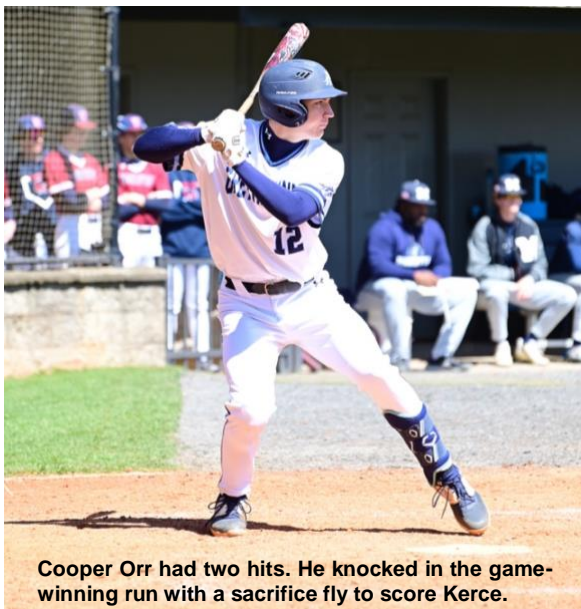


POPE SCORES LATE TO BEAT MARIETTA



Cooper Orr had two hits. He knocked in the game-winning run with a sacrifice fly to score Kerce.



Carson Kerce had two hits and scored the winning run. He closed the game and earned the save.

Any win is a good win, even if the path to victory is a little ugly. Pope prevailed over Marietta, 9-8, Saturday afternoon at Jeff Rowland Field in a non-region game. Pope overcame three defensive errors and five unearned runs to claim the victory. Pope's overall record improves to 13-3 and region record remains 4-2. Marietta contributed to the ugly with four errors.

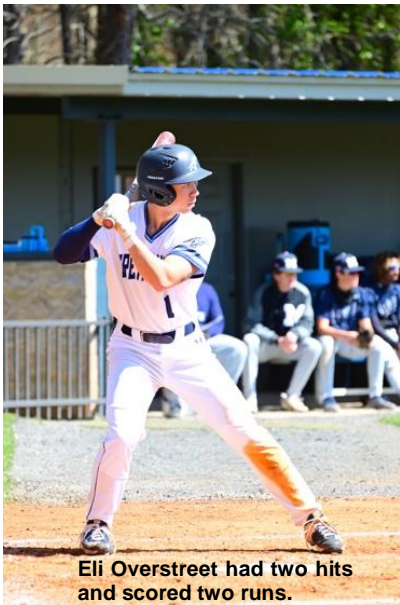
In the bottom of the sixth inning, after Marietta tied the score in the top of the sixth, 8-8, Pope scored one run on one hit to gain a 9-8 lead that they would not relinquish. Senior **Carson Kerce** led off with a deep 355-foot blast to the left center field fence for a double. On the next pitch, Kerce stole third base. Senior **Kent Schmidt** was intentionally walked and then stole second base. With one out, senior **Cooper Orr** hit a first-pitch sacrifice fly to center field that scored Kerce with what proved to be the game winning run. Kerce then pitched the final inning, struck out one, threw 71% strikes (10-14), and retired the side in order to earn his third save of the season.

Pope out hit Marietta, 12-6. The Hounds had four players with two hits each. Kerce had two hits, including a double, two RBI, one stolen base, and scored two runs. Orr had two hits, including a double, scored one run, and had an RBI sacrifice fly. **Eli Overstreet** had two singles, scored two runs, and stole one base. **Tanner Morneau** had two hits, scored one run, and stole one base. **John Stuetzer** hit a double and had a sacrifice bunt that scored one run. **Jesse Walter** had a single and scored one run. **Jack Myers** had a single and was intentionally walked one time. **Drew Abney** had an RBI.

Schmidt continued his power surge and hit a three-run home run in the first inning, scored two runs, had one stolen base, walked three times, two intentionally, and the other on four pitches.

In Schmidt's last three games, he has reached base in 11-of-12 at bats, hit five home runs, one double, been walked five times, and knocked in 10 RBI.

Four Pope pitchers scattered six hits, allowed three earned runs, and struck out seven. **Ethan Garrett** started for the Hounds, pitched three innings, struck out four, and threw 66% strikes (41-62). **Andrew Nelms** pitched two innings and struck out one. **David Lovell** (3-1) pitched one inning, allowed no earned runs, struck out one, and was credited with the win.



Eli Overstreet had two hits and scored two runs.

In the bottom of the first inning Pope trailed 1-0, but the Hounds scored three runs on three hits to take the lead. Overstreet led off and reached base by an infield error. Stuetzer hit a line drive double to left field. Overstreet advanced to third. Kerce hit into a fielder's choice that scored Overstreet. Stuetzer was out trying to advance to third. Schmidt got the green light on a 3-0 pitch and pulled a fast ball 350-feet into the wind and over the right center field fence for a two-run home run that scored Kerce.

In the bottom of the second inning, Pope scored two runs on two hits to take a 5-1 lead. Abney led off and reached base by an error. Morneau hit into a fielder's choice and Abney was forced out at second. Morneau stole second base. Overstreet hit a full count line drive single to left field. Morneau advanced to third. Stuetzer executed a first pitch sacrifice squeeze bunt to score Morneau. With two outs, Kerce hit a full count line drive single to left field and scored Overstreet from second.

In the bottom of the third inning, after Marietta tied the score, 5-5, Pope scored two runs on four hits to reclaim the lead, 7-5. Walter led off with a first pitch single to center field. Orr hit a line drive double to right center field that moved Walter to third. Abney hit into a fielder's choice that knocked home Walter with his first varsity RBI. With one out, Morneau hit a soft grounder to third base for an infield single that did not draw a throw. The Marietta pitcher next attempted a pickoff at first base, but the ball ended up in the Pope dugout. Orr scored from third on the play. Overstreet hit an infield single to third base and beat the throw to first. Morneau moved to third. Pope was not able to score any additional runs in the inning.

In the bottom of the fourth inning, Pope scored one run on one hit to take a 8-5 lead. Schmidt led off with a four-pitch walk and advanced to third on two straight ground outs. With two outs, Orr hit a 3-2 pitch between the shortstop and third baseman for a clutch single that scored Schmidt from third.

Pope resumes region play this week with a three-game series vs. Alpharetta. On Tuesday, the Hounds will host the Raiders at 6:30. Pre-game, Pope will celebrate Sponsorship Appreciation Night. On Thursday and Friday, Pope travels to Alpharetta to play the final two games of the series. Both games are slated to start at 6:30.



Tanner Morneau had two hits and scored one run.