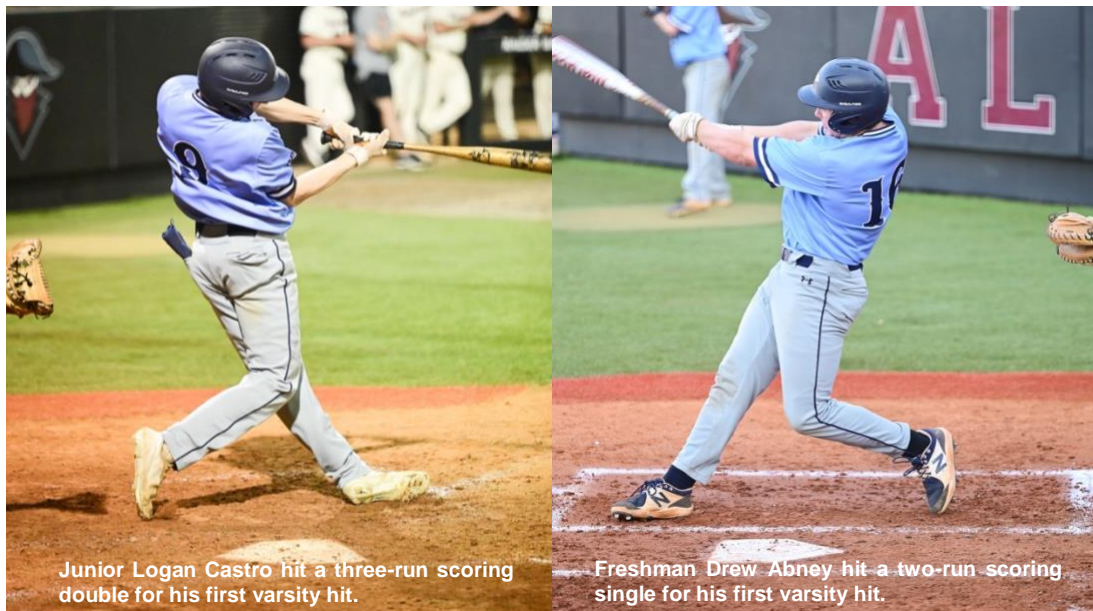




POPE POUNDS ALPHARETTA



What started out as a pitcher's duel for three innings, ended up being a runaway victory for Pope in their 12-0 shellacking of Alpharetta Thursday night at Alpharetta High School in game two of the three-game region series. Pope won game one, 6-3. Pope's overall record is 15-3 and region record is 6-2. The Hounds have won eight straight games.

Combined with the last five innings of game one and the first 3.2 innings of game two, Pope was held scoreless for 8.2 innings. That all changed in a hurry and in the next four innings, the Hounds batted around in the order three times and erupted for 12 runs on 13 hits from 10 different players. Pope also benefitted from 10 walks and two HBP. All totaled, 17 players made a game appearance against the Raiders. Pope pitchers walked just one batter, allowed seven hits and no runs. Pope made one error and Alpharetta made none.

The Hounds offense was led by sophomore **John Stuetzer**, who reached base 4-of-4 times. Stuetzer had two hits, including a double, a bunt single, two walks, two runs scored, one RBI, and stole one base. **Logan Rapp** went 2-for-3 with a single, double, one run scored, and one stolen base. **Jesse Walter** reached base 3-of-4 times with two singles and one walk. **Eli Overstreet** reached base 4-of-5 times with a single, two walks, one HBP, scored two runs, had one RBI, and stole one base. **Cooper Orr** reached base 3-of-4 times with one single, one walk, one HBP, had one RBI and scored one run. **Logan Castro** slugged a pinch-hit double that knocked in three runs and he later scored in the inning. **Jack Myers** had a single, a walk, one RBI, and scored one run. **Drew Abney** had a single that scored two runs. **Carson Kerce** had a single that scored one run. **Tanner Morneau** had a pinch-hit single and scored one run. **Jake Gastley** had a pinch-hit single. **Kent Schmidt** walked one time and scored one run. **Andrew**

Walters had a pinch-hit walk and scored one run. **Brady Otero** had a pinch-hit walk and scored one run. **Carter Joachim** had a pinch-hit walk.

Senior lefthander **Blythe Keisler** (6-0) continued his winning ways on the mound for the Hounds and pitched six shutout innings to earn the win. Keisler kept the Raiders off balance all game long with a variety of breaking balls and off-speed pitches. He scattered seven hits, struck out three, walked just one, and threw 65% strikes (50-77). Junior righthander **Bryce Chapin** pitched the final inning and closed the game in style. Chapin retired three-of-four batters he faced and struck out the final two to end the game. Chapin threw 64% strikes (9-14).



In the top of the fourth inning, Pope sent 11 batters to the plate. The Hounds scored five runs, all with two outs, on three hits, three walks, and two HBP, to take a 5-0 lead. Stuetzer led off with a 350-foot line drive double that bounced to the 350-sign in left center field. With one out, Schmidt was intentionally walked. Stuetzer advanced to third on a passed ball and Schmidt moved to second. Myers walked on a full count. With two outs, Orr walked on a full count and scored Stuetzer with the first run of the game. Two pitches later, the Alpharetta pitcher threw a curve ball in the dirt. The ball bounced away from the plate. Schmidt took off from third base and rumbled home with a thunderous slide to score the Hounds second run. Abney followed with a clutch opposite field line drive single past the third baseman into left field and scored Myers and Orr. It was Abney's first varsity hit as a freshman and could not have come at a better time to give the Hounds a 4-0 lead. Morneau ran for Abney. Rapp hit a first pitch line drive single to left field and moved Morneau to second.

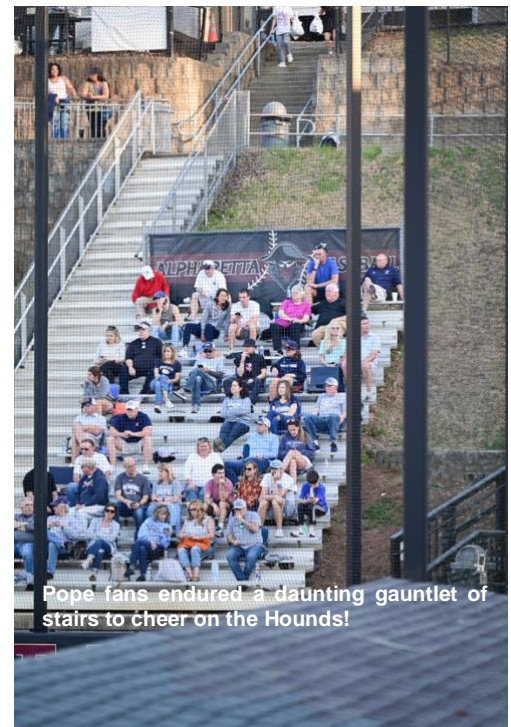
Overstreet was hit by a pitch to load the bases. Stuetzer was hit by a pitch and scored Morneau from third to give Pope a 5-0 lead.

In the bottom of the fifth inning, Alpharetta had a runner on first base with no outs. The next batter hit a ground ball to Keisler on the mound, who fielded the ball and started a 1-6-3 double play (Keisler to Kerce to Schmidt) to clear the bases. The next batter popped up to Kerce at shortstop and the Hounds shut out remained intact.

In the top of the sixth inning, Pope sent nine batters to the plate and scored three runs on five hits to take a 9-0 lead. Rapp led off with a first pitch high fly ball to center field. The Alpharetta fielder lost the ball in the lights. Rapp never stopped running and hustled to second base for a double. Rapp then stole third base. Overstreet hit a two strike opposite field single to right field and scored Rapp. Overstreet stole second base. Stuetzer dropped a back-spin bunt towards third base for a single and moved Overstreet to third. On the next pitch, Stuetzer took off early from first base. The pitcher threw to the first baseman, who threw to the shortstop covering second base. Overstreet took off from third base and raced home. The shortstop pivoted and threw home. Overstreet beat the throw and was safe. Stuetzer was safe at second. Stuetzer then stole third base. Kerce hit a line drive single past the third baseman to score Stuetzer. Gastley pinch hit and hit a line drive single to left field and moved Kerce to second. Orr was hit by a pitch to load the bases. Joachim ran for Orr. The Hounds were unable to score any additional runs.

In the top of the seventh inning, Pope sent nine batters to the plate and scored four runs on three hits to take a final lead of 12-0. With one out, Walters pinch hit and walked on a full count. Morneau pinch hit and singled to right field. Otero pinch hit and walked on four pitches to load the bases. Castro pinch hit and slugged a first pitch line drive double to left center field. The hit bounced to the 360-foot sign and scored Overstreet, Morneau, and Otero to clear the bases. It was Castro's first varsity hit. Myers hit a first pitch single to left field and scored Castro. Myers advanced to third base on two wild pitches. Joachim walked on a full count, but Pope was unable to score any additional runs.

Pope plays Alpharetta in game three on Friday night to conclude the three game region series.



Pope fans endured a daunting gauntlet of stairs to cheer on the Hounds!