



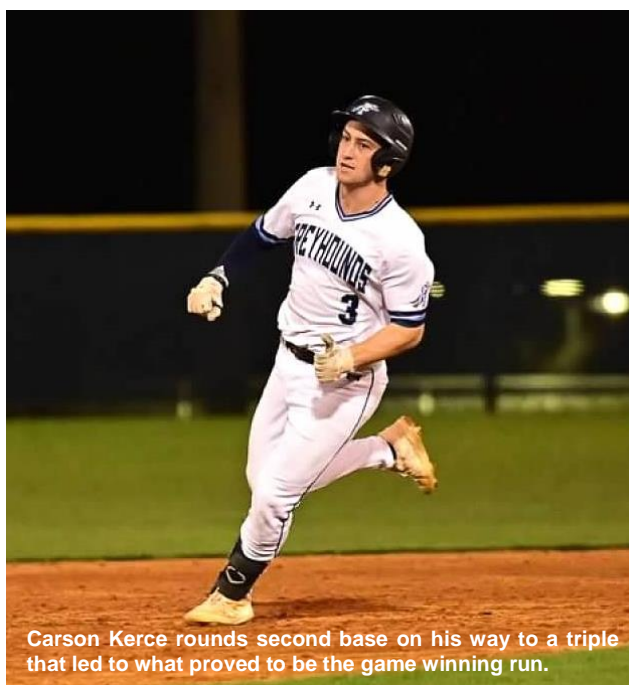
POPE BEATS ROSWELL

KERCE AND MYERS POWER OFFENSE, MORNEAU LEADS DEFENSE

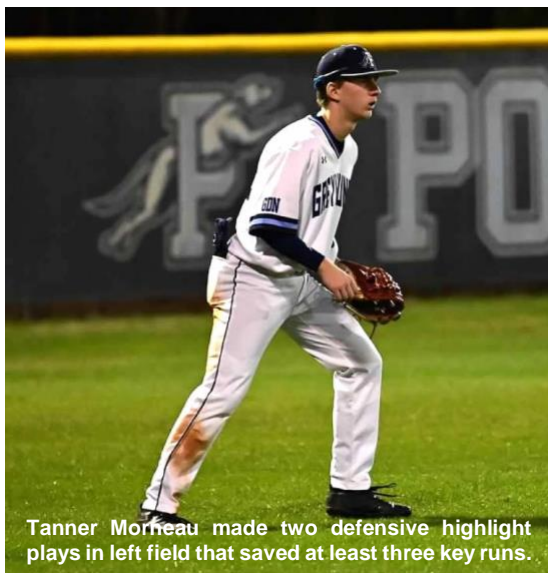
Senior **Carson Kerce** did a little bit of everything in Pope's 6-3 victory against Roswell Monday night at Jeff Rowland Field in game one of the three-game region series. Kerce contributed with his hitting, pitching, base running, and defensive play at shortstop. Pope's overall record is 17-3 and region record improves to 8-2. The Hounds have won 10 straight games.

Kerce's efforts were not alone. Junior **Jack Myers** joined Kerce and the duo led Pope's offense with four of the Hounds six hits. Both players reached base three-of-three times. Kerce went two-for-two with a solo home run, one triple, one walk, and two runs scored. Myers went two-for-two with a two-run home run, one double, one walk, two RBI, three runs scored, and one stolen base.

In the fifth inning, with the scored tied, Kerce tripled. Two pitches later, Kerce scored on a ball that got away from the catcher. Kerce got a good jump from third and scored what proved to be the game winning run. In the seventh inning, Kerce took the mound and closed the game to earn his fifth save of the season. Kerce struck out two and retired three-of-four batters he faced.



Carson Kerce rounds second base on his way to a triple that led to what proved to be the game winning run.



Tanner Morneau made two defensive highlight plays in left field that saved at least three key runs.

Sophomore **Tanner Morneau** shined defensively for Pope. Morneau saved at least three runs with highlight reel plays in left field. In the top of the first inning, Roswell threatened to take an early lead. With two outs and runners on first and second, the Hornets batter hit a high fly ball deep to left field that looked like it had a chance to leave the park. Morneau pivoted left and took off running. Looking directly into a difficult sun, Morneau tracked the ball to the fence. He raised his glove towards the sky, snagged the ball above his head, bounded into the Pope logo on the fence, and saved at least two runs.

In the top of the fourth inning, Morneau was at it again. With two outs and the scored tied, 2-2, Roswell had the go-ahead runner at second base. The Hornets batter

hit a single to left field. The runner from second touched third and was already on his way home. Morneau fielded the ground ball cleanly and threw a one bounce strike towards the plate. Catcher **Jesse Walter** caught the ball, waited a moment for the runner to arrive, applied the tag for the third out, and ended the inning with no runs.

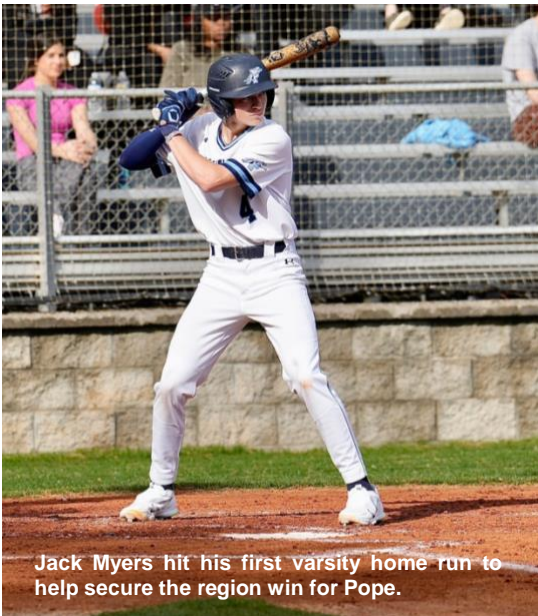
Also contributing to Pope's offensive efforts were **Andrew Nelms**, who had a sacrifice fly that scored one run and a sacrifice bunt that scored another run. **Jake Gastley** had an opposite field hustle double and walked one time. **John Stuetzer** had a single and a stolen base. **Kent Schmidt** walked one time and scored one run.

Four Pope pitchers combined to strike out 10 batters and held Roswell to six hits. **Dawson Jones** started and pitched four innings. He struck out six batters, allowed just two runs, stranded six base runners, and threw 60% strikes (49-82). Jones struck out the side in the second inning. **David Lovell** (4-1) pitched the fourth inning to gain the win. Lovell struck out two and allowed one hit. Nelms pitched a perfect sixth inning and retired the side in order.

In the bottom of the first inning, Kerce hit one of the longest home runs of the season. With two outs, Kerce launched a 3-2 pitch to straight center field over the fence and midway up through the trees to give Pope a 1-0 lead.

In the bottom of the second inning, Pope scored one run on one hit to take a 2-0 lead. Myers led off with a full count, opposite field 335-foot line drive double that two bounced the 2017 State Championship banner. Walter followed with a successful sacrifice bunt to the pitcher and moved Myers to third base. Nelms hit a sacrifice fly ball to left field that scored Myers.

In the bottom of the fourth inning, Pope scored one run on one hit to take a 3-2 lead. Myers led off with a walk and stole second base. Walter hit a deep fly ball to center field that was caught, but advanced Myers third. Nelms put down a nice sacrifice bunt to score Myers.



Jack Myers hit his first varsity home run to help secure the region win for Pope.

In the top of the fifth, Roswell scored one run and tied the score, 3-3. In the bottom of the fifth, Pope scored three runs on two hits, all with two outs, to reclaim the lead, 6-3. Kerce stayed hot and took matters into his own hands. Kerce laced an opposite field line drive triple down the right field line that hit the bottom of the fence. Two pitches later, Kerce scored on a ball that was pitched over Schmidt's head and got away from the catcher. Schmidt walked on four pitches and was balked to second base. Myers followed and hit a laser line drive home run 340-feet to left field that got out of the park in a hurry. It was Myers first varsity home run and there was no doubt it was going out of the park. Schmidt scored on the hit.

Pope travels to Roswell on Wednesday night at 6:00 in game two of the region series.