



Game 27, April 12, 2024
Pope Greyhounds 3, Johns Creek Gladiators 2
Weather: 66 degrees, 21-36 mph winds
Played at Johns Creek High School
Varsity Record: Overall 17-10, Region 11-4
Game 3 of Best 2-of-3 Region Series



HOUNDS WIN THRILLER IN CRUCIAL GAME THREE BATTLE MORNEAU IS AMAZING AT THE PLATE; BOBROWSKI DOMINATES ON THE MOUND HOUNDS CLINCH COVETED PLAYOFF SPOT FOR FIFTEENTH STRAIGHT SEASON



Tanner Morneau lifted Pope to victory with four hits, including the game winning double, and knocked in all three RBI.



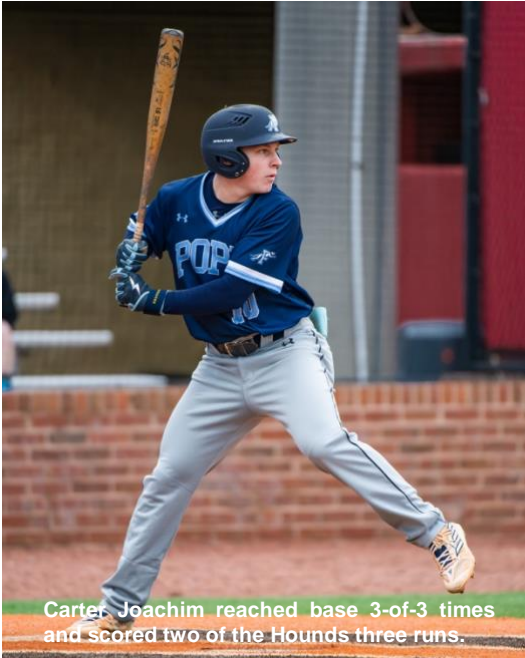
Nick Bobrowski continued his stellar work on the mound and earned his sixth win. He struck out nine batters.

Junior center fielder **Tanner Morneau's** shoulders must have been sore after the Hounds thrilling 3-2 victory against Johns Creek Friday night in a crucial region game played at windy Johns Creek High School. Morneau, hitting out of the three spot in the batting order, carried the Hounds and had over half the Hounds seven team hits. He went 4-for-4, drove in all three of Pope's runs, had the game winning double, added three singles, and stole one base. He also made three put outs in center field while navigating difficult 21-36 mph winds. If you checked Pope's travel itinerary, Morneau probably drove the team bus to the game.

The win clinched Pope's GHSA State Playoff berth for an impressive fifteenth consecutive season beginning in 2009. The Hounds region record improves to 11-4 and overall record to 17-10.

Sophomore left hander **Nick Bobrowski** (6-1) was equally impressive on the mound and continued to come up big for the Hounds. Bobrowski pitched 6.1 innings to earn his team leading sixth win of the season. He struck out nine batters, scattered five hits, walked just one, and threw 72% strikes (63-87). In the fifth inning, Bobrowski struck out the side, all swinging. All totaled, seven of Bobrowski's strike outs were swinging.

After Johns Creek scored two runs in the fourth inning, Bobrowski responded and retired the next eight batters he faced, including five strike outs, with three coming in the fifth inning. Bobrowski retired the side in order in an impressive 5-of-6.1 innings, with junior right hander **Matt Levinson** retiring the final two batters in relief to end the game. Levinson made quick work of the Gladiators with a fly out and strike out looking. Levinson threw 63% strikes (5-8) and earned his team leading third save of the season. Over the three game series with Johns Creek, Pope pitching **Coach Matt Leidberg** saw his staff hold the Gladiators scoreless in 16-of-20 innings and strike out 27 batters.



Carter Joachim reached base 3-of-3 times and scored two of the Hounds three runs.

In addition to Morneau's four hits, senior **Carter Joachim** was clutch and reached base 3-of-3 times with a single, two walks, stole two bases, and scored two of the Hounds three runs. Senior **Andrew Nelms** had a key single, a walk, and scored one run. Sophomore **Ben Hill** hit a single, walked one time, stole one base, and had a sacrifice bunt that advanced a runner. Junior **Matt Strydom** walked on a full count and stole one base. Senior **Griffin Tamucci** walked one time on a full count.

In the top of the seventh inning, Pope trailed 2-1. The Hounds dug deep and scored two runs on two hits to take a 3-2 lead they would not relinquish. Joachim, also known as **Joe A Kim** as proclaimed by the Johns Creek announcer, led off the inning with an important walk on a 3-1 count.

With one out, Nelms stepped to the plate. He had been slugging line drives all series long directly at Johns Creek defensive players, with nothing to show in the scorebook for his efforts. With a 1-0 count, Nelms kept on hitting the ball, this time with a soft drive just over the shortstop that fell into left field for a single. Joachim ran to second base on the hit.

With one out, Morneau, who was already 3-for-3 for the game, dug in at the plate. He worked the count to 3-1. With significant playoff implications on the line, Morneau blasted the next pitch 360-feet deep to center field. The ball fell safely to the ground past the Johns Creek center fielder. Joachim scored the tying run from second base standing up. Nelms raced all the way from first base and dove headfirst to touch the plate with the go ahead run. Morneau sprinted to second base with the impactful double and sent the Pope dugout and stands into a frenzy.

In the top of the third inning, Pope scored one run on one hit to take a 1-0 lead. It was the Hounds first lead of the three-game series and broke a 12 inning scoring drought over those three games. Joachim led off with a walk on a 3-1 pitch. One batter later, Joachim stole second base when he slid around the tag. With two outs, Morneau hit a hard two strike single just past the third baseman's glove into left field for a single that scored Joachim from second base.

Pope's defense made no errors. In the bottom of the second inning, the Hounds defense erased two Gladiator base runners on a pick off and a throw out. Bobrowski picked off a base runner on a 1-3-6-3 play (Bobrowski to Nelms to Stuetzer back to Nelms) for the second out of the inning. After a Johns Creek single, the base runner tried to steal second base, but was thrown out by at least four steps by **Drew Abney** at catcher. Stuetzer waited on the runner to arrive at

the base and made the tag to end the inning. Abney also made three key defensive blocks to hold runners at third base and keep the Gladiators off the scoreboard.

Pope completes their regular season schedule with a three-game region series vs. Blessed Trinity. On Tuesday, the Hounds host the Titans in a 6:00 game. On Thursday and Friday, Pope travels to Blessed Trinity to play single games, both starting at 6:00.

