



POPE BEATS LASSITER, 5-1 **KEISLER HURLS COMPLETE GAME VICTORY**



Senior lefthander Blythe Keisler pitched a complete game, struck out seven, allowed only four singles, and walked just one to help Pope beat Lassiter.

You talk about settling down in a hurry! After facing five batters in the first inning and giving up one run, Pope senior starting pitcher **Blythe Keisler** dominated the next six innings and led the Hounds to a **5-1 victory** over the Lassiter Trojans Wednesday night at Pope High School's Jeff Rowland Field. This was game two of the three-game region series and evens the slate at one game each. It was another well-played game between the neighborhood rivals and was completed in just 1 hour 45 minutes. Pope's overall record improves to 7-2 and region record is 1-1.

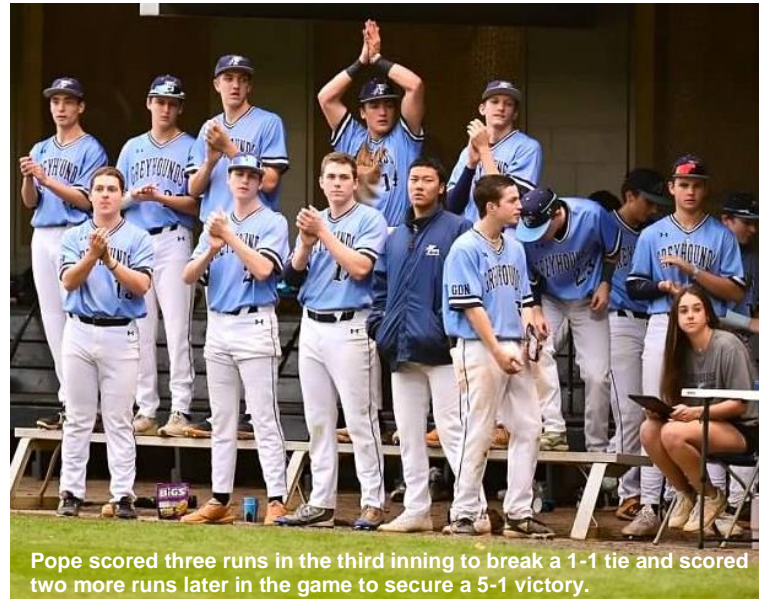
Keisler (3-0) pitched a complete game, allowed just four singles, and walked one. In the final six innings, Keisler retired 15-of-18 batters, including a stretch of 10 in a row. He faced the minimum of three batters in three innings and just four batters in the other three innings. Keisler changed speeds and used a combination of four pitches to strike out seven, including four batters looking at strike three. Keisler threw 62% strikes (61-98). Freshman **Drew Abney** caught and allowed no stolen bases.

Pope's offense totaled seven hits from seven different players and benefitted from four walks. **Jack Myers** hit a double, walked, and scored two runs. **Carson Kerce** hit a single, walked one time, scored one run, and stole one base. **Kent Schmidt** hit a single, had two RBI, and scored one run. **Cooper Orr** hit a single, walked one time, and had one RBI. **John Stuetzer** hit a single and scored one run. **Eli Overstreet** hit a single, had a sacrifice bunt that scored a run, and stole one base. **Andrew Nelms** had a pinch hit single. Abney walked one time.

In the bottom of the first inning, trailing 1-0, Pope scored one run on three hits to tie the score. Myers led off with a full-count, opposite field line drive double down the right field line. With two outs, Schmidt hit a sharp line drive up the middle just past the second baseman to score Myers from second. Overstreet followed with a first pitch line drive single to right center, but could not score.

In the top of the third inning, the Lassiter leadoff hitter singled to left field. Before the next pitch was thrown, Keisler threw to first base on a pickoff attempt. The runner broke for second base on the play. Schmidt caught the ball at first base and threw to Kerce, who was covering second base. Kerce applied the tag for the out. Keisler struck out the next two batters, both looking, to end the inning.

In the bottom of the third inning, Pope sent eight hitters to the plate and scored three runs on one hit to take a 4-1 lead. Myers led off with a walk on a 3-1 count. On the first pitch he saw, Stuetzer



Pope scored three runs in the third inning to break a 1-1 tie and scored two more runs later in the game to secure a 5-1 victory.

squared to bunt, pulled back, and laced a line drive single to left field. Kerce walked on four pitches to load the bases with no outs. Schmidt hit into a fielder's choice that scored Myers from third with what proved to be the game winning run. Overstreet followed with a sacrifice squeeze bunt back to the pitcher, who fielded the ball, and overthrew the catcher. Stuetzer scored from third with a head-first slide and increased the Hounds lead to 3-1. Schmidt hustled all the way from first base to third base on the play. Orr walked on a full count to load the bases with one out. With two outs, Schmidt scored from third base on a wild pitch.

In the top of the fourth inning, with two outs, the Lassiter batter hit a deep flyball to **Jake Gastley** in right field. The ball got away, but Gastley hustled, tracked it down, and threw to Kerce, who was set up as the cutoff man. The Lassiter batter tried to stretch the hit into a triple. Kerce relayed an absolute laser 160-feet to Myers at third base. Myers caught the ball, waited on the runner to arrive, and applied the tag for the out to end the inning.

In the bottom of the fifth inning, Pope scored one final run on three hits. Kerce led off with a two-strike single to center field. With one out, Kerce stole second base. With two outs, Orr hit a two-strike single up the middle, just past the second baseman's glove, and into to center field. Kerce scored from second on the hit. Nelms pinch hit and slugged a hard line-drive single off the pitcher's wrist and chest that bounced toward the first base line. Abney walked on a full count to load the bases, but could not score.

Pope and Lassiter play the deciding game three on Friday night at Jeff Rowland Field at 6:00. If the game is rained out, it will be made up on Saturday at a time TBD, weather permitting.