



# The Gazette

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## Who's Jake Perry? Fans find out early

By John Sherman

Before the opening game of the State Division I Tournament Thursday at Joe Faber Field in St. Cloud, a fan in the stands looked at the Hopkins dugout and asked, "Which one is Jake Perry?"

A fan sitting close to him said, "He'll know once the game begins."

And that was true. Perry's hitting and defense at third base helped Hopkins open pool play with an 11-2 win over Fridley Gold. Perry was not the only Hopkins player to rack up the hits, but he had the most distance.

In the first inning, Perry, batting from the left side, belted a 365-foot home run over the right field fence. And then in his second at-bat, Perry hit a double that struck



**Jake Perry watches the baseball fly over the right field fence on Thursday at Joe Faber Field in St. Cloud.**

the right field fence.

Those were his two hits for the game. Teammate Brock Zimmer went four-for-four with two doubles and two singles. In all, Hop-

kins had 13 hits.

Fans of the University of Minnesota baseball team will see Perry in action next spring. "I have been a Gopher baseball fan

for a long time," he said earlier this summer. "There was no place else I wanted to go to school."

Perry came into the State Tournament with a .495 batting average, 15 doubles, seven triples and six home runs. He is projected as a corner infielder at either first or third with the Gophers.

Teammate Zimmer, also a corner infielder, will return to the Hopkins High School and American Legion teams next year. Like Perry, he punishes the ball. Entering state play, Zimmer had a .400 batting average with 14 doubles and a pair of home runs.

Pitching played a role in Hopkins' success in the state opener. Starter Jackson View allowed only two hits in four innings. Reliever Will Tomanek was sharp in relief to finish the game.

## Grand Rapids' Kodi Miller lives for leadership

By John Sherman

Kodi Miller, the catcher for the Grand Rapids American Legion team, has made leadership a way of life on the baseball field.

In Grand Rapids' 11-0 win over Rosemount, Miller went two-for-three with a walk, but his biggest contribution was his intensity — both on the field and in the dugout.

The clean-up hitter constantly encouraged his teammates and helped them believe they would win.

"I try to keep everyone in the game," Miller said. "We can't afford to take even one pitch off. Rosemount's starting pitcher [Connor Hartley] held us scoreless the first three innings, and we knew we had to quicken up [on the swing]. I knew our bats would come around."

Grand Rapids head coach Bill Kinnunen called for double steals twice during the game, and twice the lead runner scored and the runner going from first to second was also safe. Grand Rapids' winning pitcher Myles Gunderson was around the plate the whole game.

"I did some extra stretching before the game," Gunderson said. "When I do my bullpen before a start, I always want to end with a couple strikes."

Once he reached the mound, the strikes continued.

"It's great catching for Myles," Miller said. "He has confidence in his pitching and hits his spots consistently."

Gunderson helped his own cause against Rosemount, going two-for-three at the plate. He is primarily a pitcher, but did hit .250 in 38 at-bats coming into the State



**Teammates give Kodi Miller knuckles after he crosses home plate on Thursday at Dick Putz Field in St. Cloud.**

Tournament. Miller's batting stats are very impressive. He came to state with a .410 average, 24 RBIs, seven doubles and five home runs.

Another key hitter for Grand Rapids, Ren Morque, had 25 RBIs, three home runs and a .365 batting average prior to state play.

# Missed Thursday? Here are complete summaries

## POOL 1

In the opening round Thursday, Grand Rapids broke a 0-0 tie with four runs in the top of the fourth on the way to an 11-1 victory over Rosemount at St. Cloud's Dick Putz Field. Grand Rapids added two runs in the fifth inning and scored five in the sixth to win on the 10-run rule. Myles Gunderson pitched four innings to record the win before handing the ball to reliever Gideon Beck. Gunderson, Kodi Miller, Ben Keske and Ren Morque had two hits apiece for the winners. Quintin Gonzalez and Zach Sweitzer had the only two hits for Rosemount.

The host St. Cloud Chutes were impressive in a 4-0 victory over Tri-City Red. Winning pitcher Andrew Rott limited Tri-City Red to three hits and struck out five. Chutes had eight hits and scored two runs in the first and fourth innings. Chutes offensive leaders with two hits each were Ryan Janzen, Caleb Leintz and Austin Lenzmeier. Leo Fleischhacker, Cole Hinkel and Cooper Kleppe had the hits for Tri-City Red.

Tri-City bounced back from its opening loss to defeat Grand Rapids 14-3. Andrew Boeser was Tri-City Red's winning pitcher, throwing a complete game with a five-hitter. Ben Rosin went two-for-three with a home run. Ike Mezzenga hit a pair of home runs.

In the final game at Dick Putz Field, Rosemount defeated St. Cloud Chutes 7-4 with left-hander Luke Ostien throwing a four-hitter. Connor Hartley and Will Harder had three hits each for Rosemount, while Jacob Back added two hits and two RBIs. John Hawkins led Chutes with two hits and two RBIs.

## POOL 2

Brock Zimmer went four-for-four with two doubles to lead Hopkins in an 11-2 win over Fridley Gold in the first game of the day at Joe Faber Field in St. Cloud. Hopkins third baseman added a double and a home run. Jackson View was the winning pitcher, allowing two hits in four innings.

Ian Koosman pitched a complete game, allowing only two hits and striking out 13, to lead Willmar past Minneapolis Gopher Post 5-2 in the second game at Joe Faber Field. Koosman hit a double, while teammates Cayden Hansen and Sam Etterman each had two hits.

In an offensive battle at St. Cloud



**Jackson View of Hopkins releases a pitch Thursday morning at Joe Faber Field. The tournament action is taking place at five fields across the St. Cloud area.**

Tech, Fridley Gold evened its record at 1-1 with a 12-0 victory over Minneapolis Gopher Post.

Hopkins held a 6-1 lead late in the game against Willmar Thursday night at St. Cloud Tech, but had to make a stand at the end behind relief pitcher Aaron Aune to win 6-5.

Going into Friday's pool play finale, Hopkins is in the driver's seat with a 2-0 record. Willmar and Fridley Gold are 1-1 and Minneapolis Gopher Post is 0-2.

## POOL 3

Mankato American edged Austin 5-3 in the first game of the day at St. Cloud Orthopedics Field in Sartell. Pitchers Calin Jacobs and Ben Snaza were sharp for Mankato American, combining on a four-hitter. Jake Schreiber and Grant Hermer each had three hits for the winners and Isaac Turner added two. Mankato American scored three runs on five hits in the sixth inning. Sam Nelsen,



**American Legion Department of Minnesota Commander Tom Fernlund tosses the first pitch of the Div. I Tournament on Thursday morning at Joe Faber Field. Fernlund also happens to be from St. Cloud. He will be back to present trophies after the championship game, which takes place at 1:30 p.m. Sunday at Dick Putz Field.**

## Find results and game times online

1. Enter "Minnesota American Legion Baseball" into any search field.
2. Go to the website, hover over "Playoffs and State Tournament"
3. Click on "Division I Sr."
4. Click on "See Tournament Bracket Schedule."

Dustin Copley, Tanner Murphy and Teyghan Hovland had the hits for Austin.

Osseo's 5-2 win over Eden Prairie was keyed by the pitching of Wyatt Doubler, who allowed six hits and struck out eight in six innings. Doubler had two hits, including a triple, for a significant hitting contribution. Matthew Kitzman had two hits for Osseo.

Aiden Pfeifer led Eden Prairie

with two hits. Brock Anderson gave up six hits in six innings to take the mound loss.

Eden Prairie improved to 1-1 in pool play by beating Austin 7-4 with Joey Connelly pitching 6 and 2/3 innings of five-hit ball. Ethan Miller recorded the final out. Ryan Koering went two-for-three to lead the Eagles' offense. Sam Nelsen scored two runs for Austin.

Osseo scored a 6-5 victory over Mankato American with Wyatt Doubler hitting a home run to break a tie in the top of the seventh inning. John Klein also homered for Osseo. Jared Grams hit a two run homer in the bottom of the sixth for Mankato American.

## POOL 4

Eastview opened the day with 15 hits in a 14-4 win over Blaine-Ham Lake at Bob Cross Park in Sauk Rapids. Austin Field, Isaiah Heimer and Benjy VandeBerg each had three hits for Eastview, while Brady Steenson and Aaron Lagios each had two hits. Adam Puder had two hits for Blaine/Ham Lake. Braden Marks, Bryan Lugo and Jayden Burr shared pitching duties for Eastview.

Foley outscored the Moorhead Blues 4-2 in a well-played game at Bob Cross Park. Ryan Chmielewski pitched a complete game for the win, allowing five hits and fanning nine. Gavin Gast of Moorhead also pitched a complete game, scattering six hits. Josiah Petersen was the offensive standout for Foley, going two-for-four with two runs scored. Wyatt Tweet, Hayden Netland, Carson Zimmer, Jackson Young and Zach Taft had hits for Moorhead.

Both games the latter half of the day were one-run affairs. Foley defeated Blaine-Ham Lake 2-1 and the Moorhead Blues got the nod over Eastview in a 3-2, nine-inning contest.

Elliott Busch had Foley's only RBI in the win over Blaine-Ham Lake and teammate Mike Moulzolf pitched a four-hitter with six strikeouts. Ethan Pettis threw a two-hitter for Blaine-Ham Lake.

Moorhead scored the winning run in the last of the ninth against Eastview with Quentin Hegg hitting a gap double to right-center field. Ryan Luthi was the winning pitcher in relief for the Blues. Hegg went three-for-five with two doubles and two RBIs. Benjy VandeBerg was two-for-three to lead Eastview.