



# The Gazette

A Publication of  
Minnesota American Legion Baseball

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Vol. 27, No. 5

Burnsville, Minnesota

Monday, Aug. 1, 2022



The St. Michael Post 567 team poses with their 2022 championship trophy. Front row from left are Ryan Fischer, Hunter Palmer, Kaden Amundson, Ben Boebel, Matthew Maulik, Hayden Frank, Owen Neros, Hayden Olson and Immediate Past Minnesota American Legion Commander Tom Fernlund. Back row from left are assistant coach Lance Krupke, Jaxon Price, Trey Sybrant, Dylan Byer, Evan Saunders, Drew Luster, Max Sutter, Zachary Romans, Zack Hlinsky, assistant coach Doug Sander, coach Jesse Hackenmueller and Minnesota American Legion 3rd District Commander Gary Richardson.

## Amundson battles injuries, fatigue to win MVP

### St. Mike defeats Mankato National 13-2 in title game

By John Sherman

Kaden Amundson played the game of his life in the State Division I American Legion title game Sunday at Rich Vanderlaan Field in Burnsville.

Despite limping on an injured ankle, the St. Michael catcher dominated in a 13-2 victory over Mankato National. By the end of the day, he was covered in dirt, but when the dust settled he had hit a home run and picked four Nationals off base.

The home run reminded the field announcer of Kirk Gibson's historic walk-off homer as the Dodgers beat the Oakland A's in the first game of the 1988 World Series. And, of course, the announcer said so, with the fervor of "The Giants win the pennant! The Giants win the pennant!" True, Amundson's trip around the bases was about the same speed as



**St. Michael catcher Kaden Amundson holds the Fred Wannamaker Award, which goes to the outstanding player of the tournament. With him, on the left, is Minnesota American Legion 3rd District Commander Gary Richardson and, on the right, Immediate Past Department Commander Tom Fernlund.**

Gibson's, but there was no worldwide TV audience watching – only about 400 Minnesota baseball fans.

After the celebration with teammates, his

fans and his mom, Amundson talked about his memorable day on the diamond.

"It was a good day at the ball park," he began. "The best thing about our team is just the relationships we have. It's like a brotherhood."

Asked about the home run, Amundson paused, and then said, "I have to give that one to the big man upstairs."

St. Michael is a first-time Division I state Legion baseball champion, and that makes the upcoming regional trip to Rapid City, South Dakota all the more exciting.

"The Mikes" as their fans call them have a fast outfield led by Hunter Palmer and a deep pitching staff built around Max Sutter and Owen Naros. Can they bring home the big one from South Dakota? As long as Amundson can walk, there is a chance.

### Line Score

St. Michael 400 043 2 13 13 4  
Mankato 001 010 0 2 5 1  
Winning Pitcher: Owen Naros

## So what happens next?

The 64-team American Legion baseball regional field has been announced.

The regional tournaments will run Aug. 3-7 and feature all state champions, regional hosts and runners-up from states with the most senior teams.

The winners of each of the eight regionals advance to the 95th American Legion World Series, Aug. 11-16 in Shelby, N.C.

Minnesota falls into Region 6, the Central Plains. The regional tournament is Aug. 3 to Aug. 7 in Rapid City.

Minnesota, because of the number of teams it fields, gets to have two teams go to regionals. Minnesota is the largest Legion Baseball program in the United States.

Here are the game times for Aug. 3:

Game 1: Millard South (Neb.) Post 374 vs. Merville

(Iowa) Post 303, 9:30 a.m.

Game 2: Mankato (Minn.) Post 11 vs. Omaha (Neb.) Post 1, noon

Game 3: West Fargo (N.D.) Post 308 vs. Sioux Falls (S.D.) Post 15, 3:30 p.m.

Game 4: St. Michael (Minn.) Post 567 vs. Rapid City (S.D.) Post 22, 6:15 p.m.

Last year, Dubuque County (Iowa) won the regional tournament to advance to the American Legion World Series. The team even made it to the final four before falling to a team from Honolulu, which then lost to Idaho Falls 6-1 in the title game.

Visit [legion.org/baseball](http://legion.org/baseball) and [americanlegionworldseries.com](http://americanlegionworldseries.com) for details. The website, [americanlegion.sportngin.com/2022](http://americanlegion.sportngin.com/2022) features up-to-date scoring.



Willmar Post 167 placed third in the Minnesota American Legion Baseball Div. I State Tournament. Front row from left are assistant coach Josh Tinklenberg, Chase Birchard, Logan Bass, Cayden Hansen, Minnesota American Legion 3rd District Commander Gary Richardson, Dylan Arndorfer, Alex Schramm, Brandt Sunder, Ian Koosman and Sam Etterman. Back row from left are coach Douglas Ruter, Sam Raitz, Dalton Adolphson, Carter Schow, Jayden Garnhardt, Kadin Brabender, Jason Malmgren, Mattix Swanson, assistant coach Dalton Rambow and Hunter Magnuson.

## Ruter patiently awaits Willmar's shot at regionals

By John Sherman

No question about it, Douglas Ruter of Willmar is one of the elite Legion Baseball coaches in Minnesota.

The proof is in the quality of his team year in and year out. But he is still looking forward to the day he can take his club to the Central Plains Regional and possibly the Legion World Series.

When he thinks about the last two years – with third-place finishes at the State Tournament – Ruter sees a glass that is half-full. After all, most teams would give almost anything to finish in the final four at state even once.

"It's pretty hard just to get here," he said after his team defeated Edina in the third-place game

Sunday afternoon. "I wanted to take them a step farther this year. We had seven starters coming back from last year's team."

Ruter will not have his star player, Ian Koosman, next year, but there is always good talent in Willmar's pipeline.

"Did you see the play Ian made today," Ruter asked. "That was really something."

Koosman is not only a great shortstop, but also a great pitcher. In fact, he won the 2021 Rob Wassenaar Award as the most outstanding pitcher in the State Tournament.

"We have been a very good defensive team all season," Ruter said.

It's not just Koosman starring for Willmar. During the week of the state tourney, Cayden Hansen, Jason Malmgren, Alex Schramm,

Hunter Magnuson, Sam Etterman and Dylan Arndorfer had their shining moments.

And how about Jaydon Garnhardt, winning pitcher in the Edina game Sunday?

"He pitched a little bit for us as someone who had played on the JV team in high school," Ruter said. "Today, he went out there and just threw strikes."

Ruter enjoyed playing at a venue like Burnsville. "It has been a nice experience here," he said. "I was impressed with all of the volunteers. It was pretty special."

### Line Score

Willmar 002 301 0 6 10 1


Edina 300 000 0 3 6 3

Winning Pitcher: Jaydon Garnhardt



Mankato National placed second in the Minnesota American Legion Baseball Div. I State Tournament. Front row from left are batgirl Kinleigh Mulvihill, Braeden Smook, Zachary Kammerer, Alexander Dittbenner, Ryan Ploog, Maxwell Goertzen, Luke Johnson, Blake Murphy, Carter Michel, Immediate Past Minnesota American Legion Commander Tom Fernlund and Minnesota American Legion 3rd District Commander Gary Richardson. Back row from left are assistant coach Michael Mulvihill, Kaleb Corcoran, Tanner Shumski, Riley Bersaw, Zachary Benson, Avery Stock, Louis Magers, Jace Liebl, Wilson Magers, Alexander Luepke, coach Jamie Mulvihill and assistant coach Jeremy Westphal.

## Division I State Tournament Bracketmania

2022 MINNESOTA DIVISION ONE AMERICAN LEGION BASEBALL STATE TOURNAMENT			
BURNSVILLE, MINNESOTA			
ALIMAGNET FIELDS			
#1 Rich Vanderlaan Field * #2 Bob Bunnell Field			
#3 Prior Lake (Memorial) * #4 Shakopee (Tahpah)			
July 28, 2022 - July 31, 2022			
 <small>OFFICIAL SPONSOR OF MINNESOTA AMERICAN LEGION BASEBALL</small>			
Note field and game time changes			
<b>MAPLE GROVE (H) 1</b> Sat 10:30 Fid 2, G25	<b>EDINA (H) 1</b>	<b>ST. MICHAEL CHAMPIONS</b>	<b>MANKATO NATIONAL (H) 10</b> 5 innings Sat 1:30 Fid 1, G28
<b>EDINA 4</b>	<b>ST. MICHAEL (H) 7</b> Sat 4:30 Fid 1, G29 <i>Loser to 3rd Place</i>	<b>ST. MICHAEL 11</b>	<b>MANKATO NATIONAL 8</b> Sat 7:00 Fid 1, G30 <i>Loser to 3rd Place</i>
<b>ST. MICHAEL (H) 7</b> Sat 11:00 Fid 1, G26	<b>ST. MICHAEL 6</b>	<b>WILLMAR</b> <b>3rd Place</b>	<b>ROSEMOUNT 0</b>
<b>MOORHEAD 3</b>	<b>EDINA (H) 3</b>	<b>WILLMAR 6</b>	<b>PRINCETON (H) 2</b> Sat 1:00 Fid 2, G27
<b>H = Home Team</b> <b>Home Team to occupy 3B</b>	<b>WILLMAR 5</b>	<b>CHAMPIONSHIP BRACKET IS SINGLE ELIMINATION</b>	

## Legion Baseball and Softball around the state

In the first Minnesota American Legion Fast-pitch Softball Tournament, Hayfield Post 330 defeated Browerville 9-6 on Sunday to win the title. Fairmont defeated Howard Lake 12-5 to take third. Outstanding Player of the Tournament was Jo Tempel of Hayfield, and Outstanding Pitcher was Anna Bamlet of Hayfield.

Wadena Post 171 took the title at the Minnesota American Legion Baseball Div. II State Tournament in Luverne, defeating Morris 14-3. Sibley East defeated Tri-Town 13-2 Sunday,

taking third place.

Tri-Town has a base district of Atwater, Cosmos and Grove City School.

The Consolation Champion was DGF, which stands for Dilworth-Glyndon-Felton. DGF defeated Jackson 6-5 on Saturday.

Payton Rondestvedt of Wadena was the recipient of the Tony Sipe Outstanding Player Trophy.

Across the river in Bloomington at Red Haddox Field, New Prague Post 45 took the Div. I Juniors

title. New Prague had to play Delano twice Sunday to win the double-elimination tournament.

That's because Delano beat New Prague 16-8, giving New Prague its first loss. Delano had lost to New Prague in the second round on Friday.

New Prague then defeated Delano 6-1 to take the title. The Div. I Jr. has no third-place game.

The Div. II Jr. State Tournament takes place this coming weekend, Aug. 4-6, in Ely. Teams in it are Morris, Le Sueur-Henderson, Esko, Sleepy Eye, Hayfield, DGF, Montevideo and Ely.

# Bill's Grill is the meeting place at the tournament

By John Sherman

If you have not yet enjoyed a brat, a burger or a hot dog from the Burnsville concessions stand, you have only one day left.

Master chef Bill Streff has a recipe to cure hunger, and a secret ingredient makes his meats delicious.

"I worry about the day when Bill says he can't do this anymore," Baseball Association 191 board member Jim Meyer. "Any time I look over there, he is on his feet grilling."

Robert Weber, who is coordinating this week's State Tournament along with Meyer, said, "I'm a hamburger guy, a hot dog guy second and a bratwurst guy third. Bill makes great hamburgers. He doesn't want anyone else at his grill. The grill comes on at 10 a.m. and shuts down at 8:30 p.m. during the tournament."

In addition to being a top chef in Dakota County, Streff is the senior member of the Baseball Association 191 board. "Bill is one of our most active board members," Weber said.

Board member Jeff Olson has made more than a few trips to Bill's Grill this summer.

"Bill gets his brats from Von Hansen Meats," Olson noted. "He has developed a technique that's hard to beat. And he knows just when to pull them off the grill. Bill also has one secret ingredient that I can't reveal."

Streff first became interested in grilling for family and friends after he got married in 1975. His passion for grilling meat led him to supervise concessions for Columbia Heights High School



**Bill Streff of Burnsville speaks with Minnesota American Legion Baseball Committee members Wes Thompson of Sartell and Vern Kitzberger of New Ulm.**

sports events, including volleyball, basketball and football games plus track meets.

He was a principal and administrator in the Columbia Heights School District from 1987 until his retirement in 2012.

Streff became involved with the Burnsville 191 Baseball in 2004. This was after his son had played three years of Legion ball, and Streff wanted to show his appreciation for the program.

"I was a board member when Burnsville hosted the State Tournament in 2008," he said.

But his duties as head chef at the ballpark didn't begin until the summer of 2011. "We had good people on the board, but no one who was interested in grilling," Streff said. "I have always taken personal pride in providing something good to eat."

He kept an eye on the crowd to see when a rush was coming. At some games, the line in front of his grill just kept growing.

What he heard this week from appreciative fans during the tournament was, "Best I've ever had" or "Back for seconds." He

appreciates people who love good meat that is cooked outdoors.

In recognition of his long service to Burnsville baseball, Streff was selected to throw out the first ball for the Edina-Maple Grove game Saturday morning at Bob Bunnell Field. Weber served as his catcher and called the pitch a strike even though it bounced before reaching the plate. "I don't have the arm I used to have," Streff admitted.

But to fans cheering for him in the stands, it was one more example of Streff hitting the target.

# Mankato Nationals has a batgirl who loves role



**Kinleigh Mulvihill, 10, is the batgirl for the Mankato Nationals.**

By Tim Engstrom

It's the first season on the job for Mankato Nationals batgirl Kinleigh Mulvihill.

The 10-year-old started as batgirl partway through the 2022 season and perform the job during Sub-State 2 in Mankato. Her parents are Michael and Megan Mulvihill. Michael is an assistant coach for the Nationals.

"I like being with the boys. I feel like I am part of the team," she said. "I like being on the field,

the responsibility of having to be aware of when to go and not to go."

The fifth-grader plays hockey and soccer.

Her mom likes to see her active and likes how the team adopts her. She said Kinleigh is learning the job of getting bats and chasing foul balls well.

"They seem to really enjoy having her with them. It really changes the energy," Megan said.

Watch for her when the Nationals are playing Legion ball next year.