

# Explorers explode late and top Carrollton behind Cogan's brilliant pitching

by John Hough, Sports Writer  
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CARROLLTON - Sam Cogan had to keep to his composure.

The Marquette Catholic senior pitcher had just surrendered back-to-back doubles to put two men on base with no outs while protecting a 3-2 lead in the bottom of the fourth inning against the Carrollton Hawks. On the ensuing at-bat, he thought he had struck out Garrett Settles swinging, but the second umpire behind second base ruled that Settles had fouled the ball off by the slightest of margins.

Cogan, head coach Tim Fahnstock, and the rest of the Explorers heard no metal hit the ball and couldn't believe the call.

"After that, it kind of fired me up," Cogan said. "My first baseman helped me cool down a little bit, but I was still fired up, so I knew what I had to do and glad I executed it very well."

Two pitches later, he struck Settles out for good and managed to get the next two batters pop out to end the threat. At the same time, Carrollton felt a big opportunity was squandered.

Two innings later, Marquette exploded for eight runs in the top of the sixth to put away the Hawks on a ten-run rule winning 12-2 in a non-conference game at Carrollton High School on Monday.

“No matter what, if we get in a slugging contest we’re going to slug with anybody,” Fahnestock said. “Carrollton’s a good team, hats off to them. They just had some walks, and we took advantage of it, put the ball in play. We cleaned up the defensive side of the game, and Sam Cogan threw a heck of a game.”

Marquette improves to 19-7 and is winners of 12 out of their last 15 games.

Cogan’s pitch location was nearly flawless as he struck out four batters, walked none and gave up two runs (one earned) on four hits in a complete game. He gave up two runs (0 earned) in the first inning but shut them out the rest of the way.

“a great hitting team. I’m glad I did as well I did today,” Cogan said. “I was keeping it low and outside. Kopsie is really good at keeping it outside, so it really helps out when you got a good catcher behind the plate.”

“Especially this time of year he’s getting ready for the post-season. He did an excellent job,” Fahnestock said. “Everything we asked him to do he came out and did it.”

The Hawks are now 20-7 with still one loss to a Class 1A school, a 4-1 loss to Triopia, but head coach, Jeff Krumwiede looks back on the fourth and fifth innings as his team was close to breaking through, but never could.”

“Baseball is a game of momentum just like all games are. We had second and third with nobody out and didn’t get anything out of that was a big killer. Then the next inning, Ramsey, our nine-man leads off with a base hit. Usually, good things are going to happen when your nine leads off and gets on base. That momentum swing was bad for us.” Krumwiede said. “Don’t take away anything from them. They hit the heck out of the ball and give their pitcher credit. He does a nice job. He’s a good pitcher and got himself out of some jams. He had a terrific pitch count because he had quick at-bats. He was ahead of the hitters.”

Marquette started the first inning hot as they put five men on base with three hits. However, they couldn’t bust things open. Carrollton managed a 4-6-3 double play before Carter Hendricks drove in Kopsie, but despite two straight walks to load the bases, the Hawks starting pitcher, Gabe Jones got Kollin Morrissey to fly out to center field.

In the bottom of the inning, Nathan Walker reached base infield error as the shortstop, Zach Smith lost the ball in the sun and hit off his glove for an error. Jones then laced a high fly ball to deep left-center field that was too tough to handle for another error as Walker scored from first tying the game. The next batter, Ethan Brannan, roped single to

right field, which saw a play at the plate between Jones and Kopsie with the Carrollton pitcher beating out the tag giving the Hawks a 2-1 lead.

Jones was 1-for-1 with three plate appearances reaching base every time.

In the top of the third inning, the Explorers would tie the game with two outs as well.

Hendricks drew a walk and advanced to second on a wild pitch. Matt Lehr then knocked a single up the middle to score Hendricks making it 2-2. Lehr would finish 3-for-3 at the plate with three RBI.

Jones wouldn't make it through the next inning after allowing two men on base and was relieved by Walker. He finished three strikeouts and four walks in three and ? innings while giving up three earned runs, and took the loss.

"He's good enough that he can get himself out of jams and he did that a couple of times, but his pitch count's up because he's behind in the count again. When he struggles, this is the classic example. He has to come after hitters in fastball situations, and Marquette's hitters are good hitters," Krumwiede said. "Hopefully every time Gabe pitches he learns. He's a senior, and he's got a week of the regular season to go before the post-season, and he's got to learn how to make adjustments. We think he'll come back; he's done that before. He's come back with great games after he's not had a great one."

Garrett Weiner lofted a high fly ball into deep right field that forced to sprint and Brannan expertly tracked down for the catch, but Logan Sternickle tagged up from third base and scored to give Marquette the lead for good at 3-2.

After a one-out double by Lehr in the fifth followed by a wild pitch to send him to third, Morrissey singled him home to give the Explorers an insurance run at 4-2.

In the top of the sixth, Marquette loaded the bases with no outs for Cogan, who finally delivered the big hit the Explorers were looking for with a two-run single. That was a two-run double by Lehr, an RBI single by Smith, another RBI double by Riley Siener, and finally a two-run double by Weiner making it 12-2.

Kopsie, Siener, Weiner finished 2-for-4 at the plate along with Smith who was 2-for-3.

"That's the way we do it all year long. We always have opportunities," Fahnestock said. Sometimes we come on top, and sometimes we don't. If you look at all of our losses we were in spots that we had runners on and could've easily drove them in and win those ballgames. That's the way it's been all year, but these guys are in a good spot. We got one week left heading into post-season, and I think we're heading in the right direction."













