

# Father McGivney's 31-Win Season Ends In Regional Finals Against Mater Dei

by Bradley Piros, Reporter  
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BREESE – A 31-5 record season came to a close for the Father McGivney Catholic High School baseball team Monday afternoon. They took on the Mater Dei Knights (12-18) in the regional championship game and came up short losing 2-0 to a team they had just beat two weeks prior.

McGivney was the home team for a game that was played in the Knights' backyard at Breese Central. It was essentially a home game for Mater Dei with plenty of fans cheering them on from the stands.

After three scoreless innings, things finally got started in the top of the fourth. Will Harris doubled with one out. Not only did it fire up the Mater Dei faithful, but more importantly it put him in scoring position. Ryan Voss put the ball in play scoring Harris to make it 1-0.

The Griffins should have at least tied it or even taken the lead in the back half of the fourth.

Nicholas Franklin was leadoff walked then AJ Sutberry singled. Franklin stole third so suddenly Father McGivney had runners at the corners with no outs.

At this point in the game Mater Dei's starting pitcher Jacob Hustedde was up in his pitch count and getting tired. But, after a couple of flyouts and a strikeout, his seventh K of the game, he got out of the jam. His team still led 1-0 after four and brought in a new arm for the bottom of the fifth.

That was the best opportunity McGivney had as they only had four hits on the day and struck out 12 times, an uncharacteristically high amount by their standards.

"I really thought that was our opportunity to kind of scratch them across and put some pressure on them," McGivney head coach Chris Erwin said postgame.

That new arm for the Knights was Tyler Robertson who went 1-2-3 with a couple of strikeouts against the top of McGivney's batting order. That really took the wind out of McGivney's sails.

If the stellar pitching wasn't already enough, the Knights doubled their lead for good measure.

Landon Albers doubled and then reached third after a baulk from Griffin starting pitcher Gabe Smith. Harris picked up an RBI single as Albers touched home plate easily to make it 2-0 after six innings.

Albers closed the game out on the mound for the Knights picking up the final six outs. The final out of the game was him striking out Smith as Mater Dei stormed the field to accept their regional plaque.

Erwin had nothing but good things to say about Mater Dei's pitching staff.

"Those guys, they throw the ball so well," Erwin said after his team lost.

Mater Dei will move on to the sectional semifinal against Flora on Thursday, May 26. That game is at 4 p.m. at Teutopolis.

As for the Griffins, it's a rather early exit considering the phenomenal regular season they had including a 28-game win streak dating from March 25 to May 13. Only picking up five losses in a 36-game season is quite the feat and the Griffins should still be holding their heads high.

McGivney loses only four seniors: Cameron Krause, Clayton Hopfinger, Thomas Hyten, and Darren Luchetti. So, they'll have the majority of their team returning next season hungry to get back to state like they did a year ago.

For now, their exciting season ends as they regroup for next year.

“We have a very competitive team; we didn’t have a senior on the field,” Erwin said. “So, it bodes well for next year, but I know it hurts right now for these guys. They put a lot of hard work in and expected a lot more than just a regional loss, that’s for sure.”





