

Bryce Zupan - "It's A Blessing" Playing For His Local River Dragons

by Bradley Piros, Reporter
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ALTON - Bryce Zupan graduated from Civic Memorial High School in 2019 and since then has been attending Lewis and Clark Community College. He plays collegiate baseball for the Trailblazers and in the Prospect League for the Alton River Dragons.

Bryce joined the River Dragons rather late in the season last year, which was the team's inaugural in the Prospect League. Bryce heard from a friend currently on the team, Geoff Withers, that the coach was looking for a catcher. So, Bryce came out and things just went from there.

He joked around about how nice it is to be playing in his hometown.

"I'll just drive the five minutes to my house. It's definitely a perk."

Most players would have to stay with a host family or stay in hotels. However, Bryce is lucky enough to be minutes away from his family and friends in Bethalto.

When Bryce first heard about the River Dragons coming together in 2021, he became super excited. He can't believe he gets to play in the Prospect League.

"Oh, it's awesome," Bryce said. "When I heard we had a team coming right in my backyard for a really good league, what else are you supposed to do? That was a blessing. It was perfect."

Bryce is the older brother of another recent CM graduate, Kelbie Zupan. The three-sport athlete played volleyball, basketball, and softball for the Eagles and was one of the best players on each of those teams.

Bryce laughed when asked if there was a little bit of a rivalry with his little sister.

"I felt like there used to be a while ago, but then she just started passing me up on everything, so there's no real competition there anymore."

Bryce would've been a senior in high school when Kelbie was a freshman.

When at CM Bryce maintained a .268 batting average his senior year. The Eagles finished with a 16-17 record in 2019.

Now he's a key part of the River Dragons being behind the plate on most nights.

In the game against the O'Fallon Hoots on July 1st he took a fastball to the inside of his knee. He came out of the game with some soreness but was adamant that he'd be back in the lineup in their next game.

The River Dragons are in the middle of a four-game homestand right now. They'll take on the O'Fallon Hoots again tonight at 6:35 p.m. On July 3rd and 4th they'll play the Cape Catfish.

