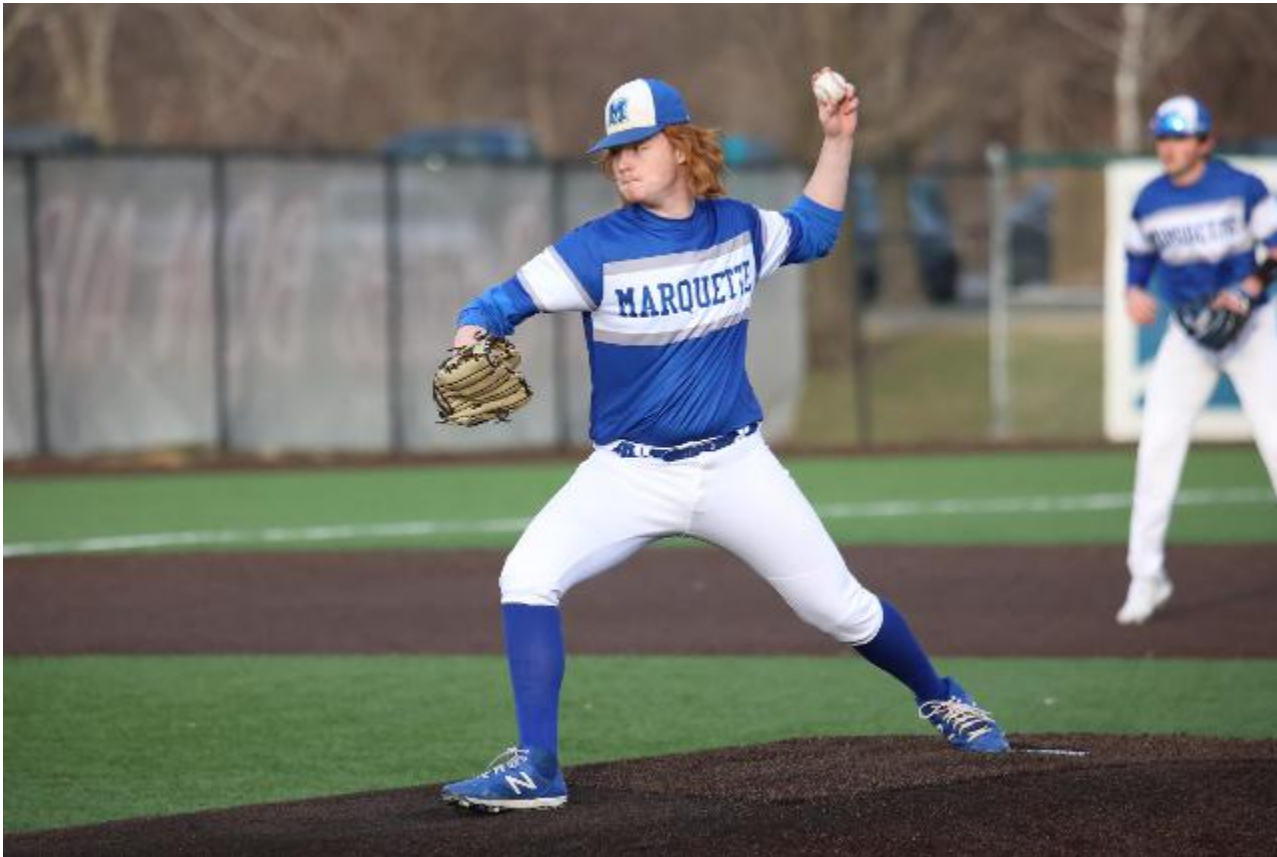


# Explorers Strike Late, Score Seven Unanswered Runs In Final Two Innings To Beat Alton

by Bradley Piros, Reporter  
March 15 2023 9:49 PM



ALTON – Lloyd Hopkins Field inside Gordon Moore Park was the site for the now annual Jack Warren Memorial Game between the Alton Redbirds and the Marquette Catholic Explorers Wednesday evening.

A large crowd gathered to watch the game and support a good cause. The game itself was well worth the price of admission.

The Redbirds edged the Explorers in last year's contest 5-4. This time around it was Marquette coming out on top by a score of 8-3.

"It was a good, clean game," Marquette head coach Tim Fahnestock said. "Last year it was a close game, and we got the short stick but this year we got the W, so it was great."

This win comes off the back of a 10-4 setback at home against Gillespie the day before in Marquette's season opener.

The Redbirds wore white and were the home team Wednesday night.

Junior Alex Siatos started on the mound for the Redbirds and threw the first two innings. He struck out four.

For the Explorers, senior Skyler Schuster went five innings, picking up six K's.

The first couple of innings went scoreless. Marquette broke the tie in the top of the third. Things started when sophomore Will Fahnestock doubled. Junior Mykai Taylor pinch-ran for him. Senior Myles Paniagua laid down a bunt that was misplayed by the Redbirds. Paniagua ended up at second and Taylor scored to make it 1-0.

Alton responded in the bottom of the fourth. Junior Austin Rathgeb was walked by Schuster and then after Schuster balked, Rathgeb ended up on second. Junior Roman Cross singled to score Rathgeb and tie the game up. Cross ended up at second after a poor throw.

Junior Logan Bogard singled scoring Cross to take a 2-1 lead. Bogard moved to second after a groundout and advanced to third after a dropped strike three. He finally scored after a wild pitch to make it 3-1.

Unfortunately for the Redbirds, that's all the scoring they would do.

The Explorers answered right back with three runs in the sixth and four more in the seventh.

Paniagua hit a leadoff double to open the sixth. Seniors Charlie Fahnestock and Hayden Garner were walked back-to-back by Alton's junior pitcher Will Frasier. Marquette had the bases loaded with nobody out.

Bogard stepped onto the mound for Alton to try and get out of the jam. After hitting his first batter sending a runner across home plate, Bogard picked up the first out via strikes.

Marquette senior Shaun Ferguson bunted down the first base line forcing Alton to make a difficult play. The Redbirds couldn't get the play off in time and Fahnstock scored to tie the game up at 3-3. Senior Andrew Bober came up next and hit a sacrifice fly to score Garner and regain the lead.

Some confusion caused a long delay in the bottom of the sixth as Alton seemingly batted out of order. In a strange instance, sophomore Deon Harrington batted twice in a row. He hit a ball hard but was caught in the outfield. Then he was struck out to end the inning.

The Explorers added some insurance runs in the top of the seventh after a two-RBI double from senior Hayden Sherman. Ferguson and Bober both put a ball in play to put runs across and boost the score to the eventual final of 8-3.

The Redbirds lose their season opener for the first time since 2019. They will try to bounce back when they take on Jerseyville at home on March 20 at 4:30 p.m.

As for the Explorers, their busy week continues tomorrow when they host Gibault Catholic at 4:30 p.m. It will be their third game in as many days.