

Triad Baseball Starts Slow But Comes Alive After Five-Run Third Inning To Beat Mater Dei

by Bradley Piros, Reporter
March 28 2023 8:50 AM



TROY - It was a battle of the Knights Monday afternoon at Triad High School.

The Triad Knights (4-2) hosted the Mater Dei Knights (2-2) in a non-conference baseball showdown. It was the home team Triad with a 9-5 win.

Junior Brady Coon started on the mound for Triad and got off to a bit of a shaky start. He gave up a run in the top of the first before figuring some things out.

Senior pitcher Cole Peppenhorst made the start for Mater Dei and went three up-three down in the bottom of the first frame.

Triad tied the game after stringing some hits together during their next at-bat.

Junior Nic Funk got things started with a single, followed by a hit from Wyatt Bugger. Hayden Bugger stepped up and put one in play to score Funk from second and tie the game.

In the top of the third Coon walked his first two batters. After senior Brendan Streiker hit into a fielder's choice, Mater Dei had runners on the corners with two outs.

Junior Will Harris, who reached via Coon's first walk, stole home after a wild pitch to regain the lead for his side.

Triad head coach Jesse Bugger said that it was like pulling teeth in the early goings Monday afternoon.

"We lost the strike zone a little bit and then you start feeling a little pressure and things start going fast and the game becomes more difficult than it actually is," Bugger said.

"We needed to calm down a little bit," he added.

Thanks to a five-run bottom of the third, Triad could finally breathe a little easier.

After Mater Dei's starter, Peppernhorst walked his first batter, he was pulled just after two innings of work and replaced by junior Garrick Winkeler.

Unfortunately for him, Triad's bat's were awake.

Coon and junior Carter Vandever each had a hit to get on first and second with one out. Senior TJ Suter doubled to score Coon and tie it back up at two a piece.

After a wild pitch, sophomore Isaac Ackerman, who was pinch running for Vandever, stole home to regain the lead. Wyatt Bugger and junior Donny Becker each hit RBI singles to boost the score to 6-2 after three innings.

Up by four runs now, Coon was freed out on the mound. He struck out two in the top of the fourth and finished the day with six Ks through five innings.

The fourth and fifth innings were scoreless.

Sophomore Sawyer Brunson came in to pitch relief in the final two innings for Triad and was on fire to start, striking out two in his first appearance on the bump this season.

After Coon got hit by a pitch in the bottom of the sixth, Triad had the bases loaded with two outs. TJ Suter was at the plate again and hit a bases-clearing double to make it 9-2.

Mater Dei tried to make things interesting with some runs in the top of the sixth, but the comeback attempt fell short.

Coach Jesse Bugger was happy with the result but still knows that his team has to try and calm some things down right now.

"It's going to be a process," he said.

"We've got some guys in new places and we're trying to figure things out a little bit. Right now the game's a little bit fast for us. We have a lot of want to and a lot of care and it's just kind of getting in the way of just relaxing and attacking the game."

He was still happy about his team's effort on both sides of the ball.

"I thought we had pretty good bats all day long," he said.

TJ Suter ended the day with three hits, two doubles, two RBIs, and a run. Becker had two hits and an RBI.

Pitching-wise, Bugger said, "I thought t we did enough. We expect a lot out of Brady, he can be really really good, it was a struggle a little bit tonight. He'll get better, he'll keep working."

His pitchers combined for 10 strikeouts, while Coon was awarded the win, his second of the young season.

Up next for Triad, they'll be back at home again when they host Murphysboro tomorrow, March 29, at 4:30 p.m.