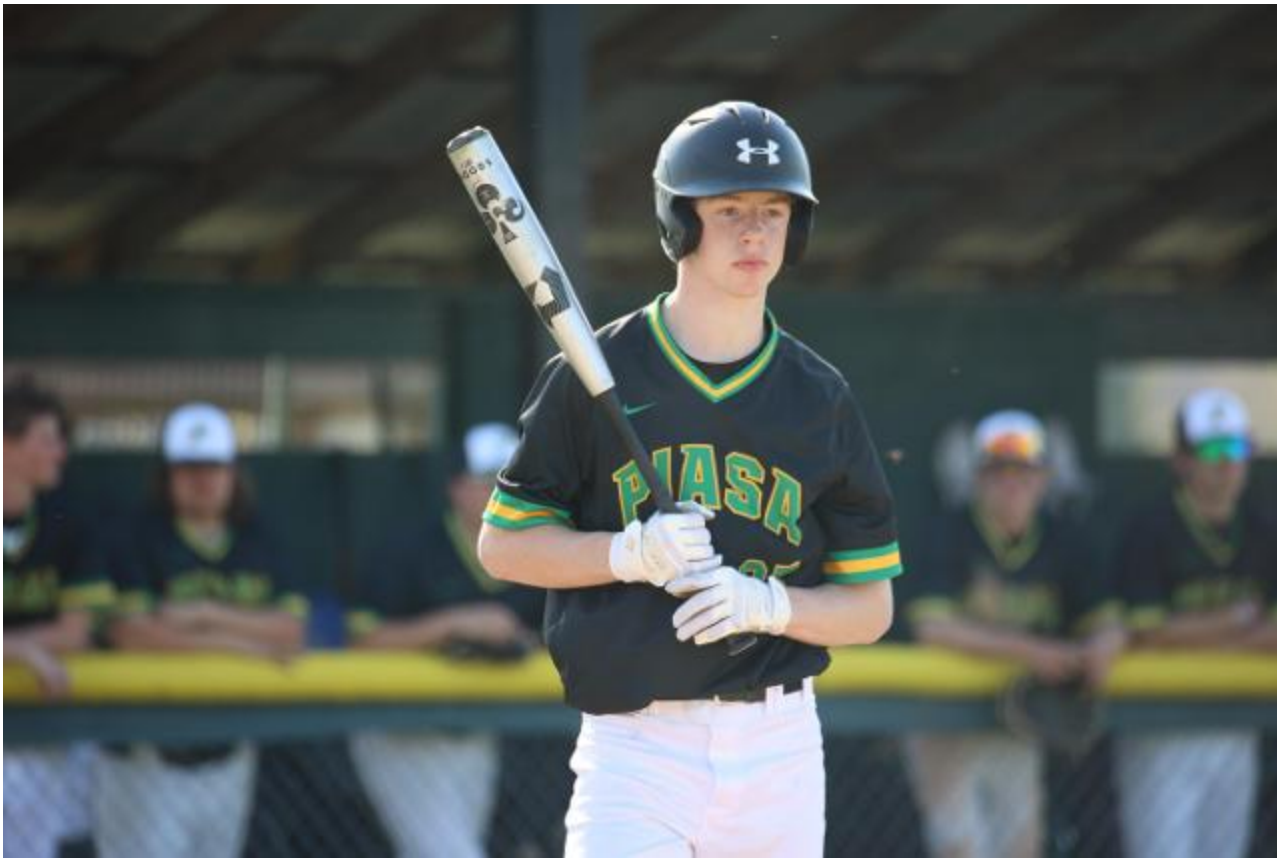


Brantley Makes First-Ever Start On Mound, Throws Well - Is An Altonized Federal Credit Union Athlete Of The Month For Southwestern

by Bradley Piros, Reporter
April 13 2023 9:34 AM





PIASA - After an exciting, back-and-forth game against the Marquette Explorers Wednesday afternoon, the Piasa Birds came out with an 11-8 win. Lots of good things happened offensively for the team, but it was sophomore pitcher Ian Brantley who left with the game ball.

Brantley made his first career start on the mound and threw the first four frames. While he wasn't awarded the win, that would go to Quinten Strohbeck who came in to relieve him, Brantley still had an impressive outing against a "very good hitting" Marquette team according to Southwestern head coach Brian Hanslow.

For the achievement, Ian Brantley is an Altonized Federal Credit Union Athlete of the Month for Piasa Southwestern.

Brantley wouldn't have typically made the start, but because of a busy schedule this week, six games in six days, he got the nod.

"We got six games this week, so we started a sophomore, his first varsity start in his career, and he pitched pretty well," coach Hanslow said about Brantley.

"Four innings, pretty solid; second inning he got roughed up a little bit for four runs but settled down in the third and fourth."

The Explorers led 4-1 after two innings, but Brantley's team had his back offensively. The Birds took the outright lead in the fifth inning when they went ahead 10-8.

"Neither team played great defensively," Brantley said postgame. "Our bats definitely kept us in this one."

After a 12-2 loss to the Explorers earlier in the season, he mentioned that he and the team really wanted this one.

"A team we lost to earlier this season, by a lot. I just wanted to get a win out of it and we got it," Brantley said.

"It's a big rivalry game for us," he added.

With the Piasa Birds now at 10-4 on the season, Brantley says the team's goals are simple: keep winning games, win conference, and prepare for the postseason.

Southwestern will be back in South Central Conference action on Friday when they host Vandalia at 4:30 p.m.

Besides baseball, Brantley stays busy year-round with football and basketball.

When put on the spot, he said that he leans toward basketball being his favorite.

Brantley, listed at six-foot-five, was one of Piasa's leading scorers on the court. He scored 123 points last season (9.5 PPG) and had 50 rebounds.

Southwestern finished the season an even 16-16.

On the football team, he's listed as a wide receiver, but also played defensively and was a punter. The football team finished their season at 4-5.

Brantley, the three-sport athlete, has a bright future ahead of him at Southwestern.

