



Rodgers Pitches Complete Game, McKee and Sutberry Strong At Plate, Griffins Eliminate EAWR 13-2 In Regional Opener

by Colin Feeney, Contributing Sports Writer
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ROXANA - Jacob McKee had three hits and two RBIs, while A.J. Sutberry came up with two hits and three RBIs and Jackson Rodgers struck out five in a five-inning complete game on the mound as Father McGivney Catholic opened its IHSA baseball playoff campaign with a 13-2 win over East Alton-Wood River in the semifinals of the Class 2A Roxana regional at Roxana City Park.

The Griffins improved their record to 35-1 on the year in advancing to Saturday's final against the winner of Thursday's second semifinal between Breese Mater Dei Catholic and the host Shells.

McGivney continues to roll right along, even after their first loss to Farina South Central on May 5 and on Wednesday, the Griffins got off to an almost perfect start to the postseason.

"It's a good start to the postseason," said McGivney head coach Chris Erwin. "You still have big goals and it starts with the regional. I think the first one's the most difficult, just because the regular season's over and everyone starts 0-0. So, it's tough to get going again."

The Griffins did give up the opening run to the Oilers in the home half of the first inning, but from there on, McGivney tied it in the second inning, scored three times in

the third to go up 4-1, then went off on their nine-run fourth to put the game away. EAWR scored a single run in the bottom of the fourth, but the Griffins were able to take the 10-run rule win to advance to Saturday's final.

"It's good to kind of explode in that inning," Erwin said. "It just kind of sets the tone for the rest of the games. Everyone now has their first hit of the postseason, so now, we can settle in."

In addition to both McKee and Sutberry's performances, Gabe Smith had two hits, both Nick Franklin and Drew Kleinheider had a hit and two RBIs, Rodgers and Kannon Kamp both had a hit and RBI each and Daniel Gierer had a hit.

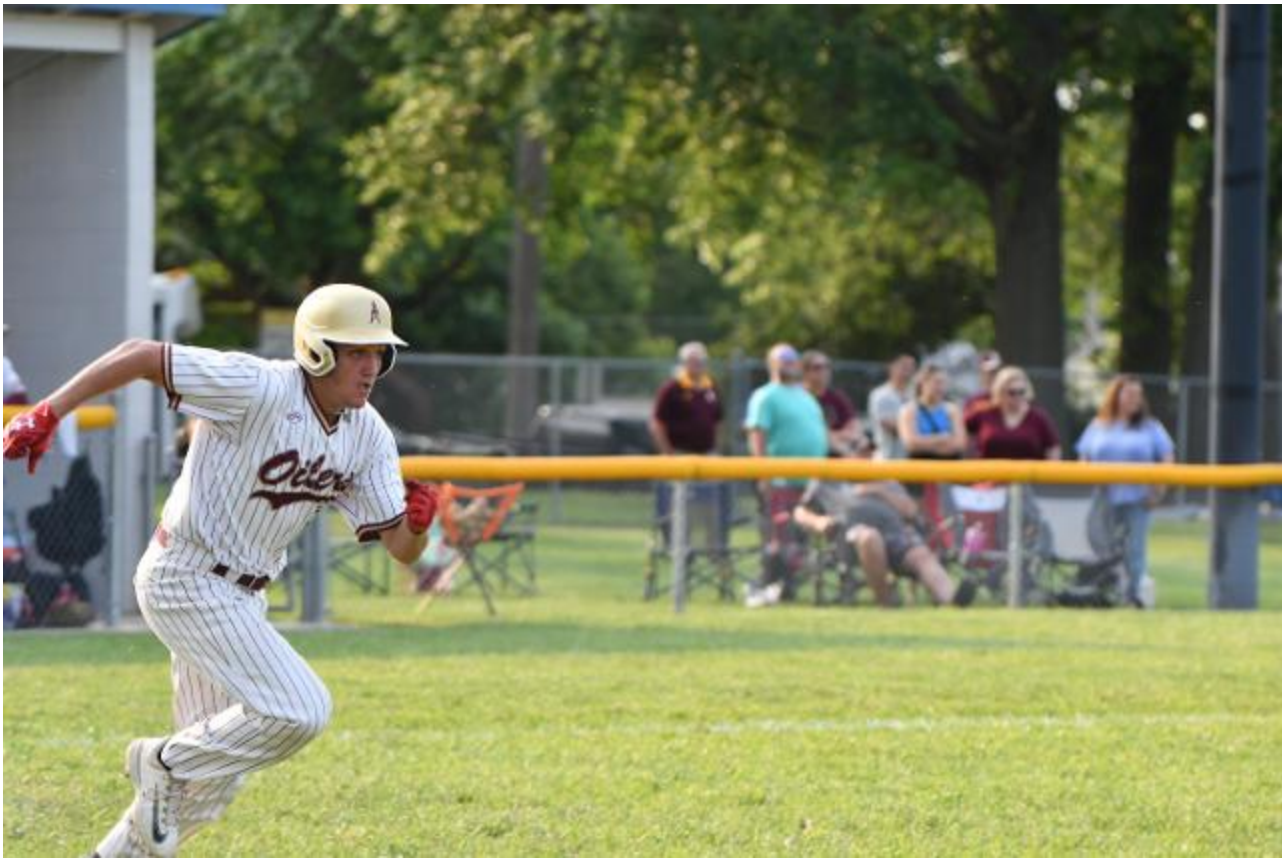
The Oilers were led by Dillon Gerner, who had a hit and RBI, while Lucas Moore, Caleb Handler, Hayden Copeland, Tyler Robinson and Seth Slayden all had hits and Drake Champlin had the only other RBI. Champlin also had the only strikeout on the mound for EAWR.

The Oilers end their season 7-22, while the Griffins move on to Saturday's final between the Shells-Knights winner Saturday morning at 11 a.m, with the winner advancing to the Breese Central sectional against the winner of the Greenville regional, Teutopolis, who won their semifinal over Flora 3-0, Salem or the host Comets next Wednesday at 4:30 p. m.

Erwin knows that the road ahead will be challenging, but the Griffins will be ready to go for anything that comes their way.

"That's the funny part of the postseason," Erwin said. "Every team you play is going to be a quality opponent, with a quality pitcher. We're absolutely looking forward to each and every game."





[Dan Brannan also contributed to this story.](#)