



Griffins Secure Spot In Sectional Baseball Final With 4-1 Win Over T-Town

by Nathan Tucker
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BREESE - It was 2A Sectional semis on the schedule at Allen Warnecke Field at Breese Central High School Wednesday, with the vaunted Father McGivney Griffins taking on the Wooden Shoes from Teutopolis. McGivney's quest to repeat a run to the state championship will continue following a 4-1 semifinal victory.

It was Jackson Rodgers starting on the mound for the Griffins, while Garrett Gaddis toed the rubber for the Shoes. Both pitchers have been more than solid through the year, and both have had some dominant days on the bump for their respective teams.

"I'm here to compete for my team," said the McGivney starter Rodgers. "I felt like I did that today."

The Griffins put three runs on the board in the top half of the second. A string of singles from the bottom of the order pushed across two, and a walk to Jackson Rodgers in the leadoff spot brought the third run in.

Teutopolis threatened to pull the game back in the second and third innings, and scratched across a run as Evan Waldhoff came home on a bases-loaded walk.

Unfortunately for the Shoes' attempt to rally back, they left the bases loaded in both the second and third innings.



Those innings were the only hiccups in what was otherwise another solid outing for Jackson Rodgers. Rodgers had a five-pitch inning in the fourth, which showed his composure following a few longer innings.

“He struggled with his stuff today which is not typical for him, but he battled out of it.” said Father McGivney head coach Chris Erwin. “Some really big clutch outs, I thought he got us through where we wanted to get through.”

This wasn’t a walk in the park like some of McGivney’s games have been this season, and even in postseason play. Garrett Gaddis neutralized a lot of what the Griffins do offensively, and kept some of their biggest names quiet in the box score.

“You get this late in the playoffs and everybody’s going to be good, you know?” said Erwin. “(Garrett Gaddis) threw really well, we knew he was going to throw really well. He kept us off balance, hit the zone, hit the corners, that’s what you get in the playoffs. I thought he did a great job.”

As a lot of the heart of the McGivney offensive attack was held in check by Gattis’s efforts Wednesday. But the bottom of the order came up clutch when Chris Erwin and company needed them most.

“The bottom of the order did a great job today,” Erwin said postgame. “I think that the top half of the order gave them a look while battling with some pitches, and got a chance to see sequences a bit.”

The Griffins added a fourth run for insurance in the fifth, and yet again it was an RBI coming from someone 6-9 in the order. This time it was Nick Franklin, smashing a double to bring home Kannon Kamp.

Up 4-1, Kannon Kamp came on in relief of Jackson Rodgers and shut down any attempts at a Wooden Shoes comeback. After giving up a single to Connor Siemer, Kamp retired six straight T-Town batters to close out the sectional semifinal.

“At this point in the season,” Chris Erwin said following the win. “When you have practice the next day, it’s a good feeling. Today was a battle.”

It’s the end of the road for the Teutopolis Wooden Shoes, who finish the season 17-16, a slight slip from their 23-11 campaign in 2022. They fought all the way on Wednesday, and played a great Father McGivney team better than most in the region have so far this season.

The battle continues for Father McGivney, who will find out tomorrow who they face Saturday morning in the 2A sectional final. The Griffins face the winner of Newton and Columbia, who play Thursday at three in the afternoon in Breese.

“It doesn’t matter who we play Saturday, it’s going to be a big game,” said Chris Erwin. “The stands are going to be filled here and there’ll be two great pitchers going at it.”