

Rodgers Again Makes Contributions To Griffins' Success On Mound, At Plate

by Nathan Tucker
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GLEN CARBON - Father McGivney's baseball team has been making headlines, a star-studded team currently marching their way through postseason play with aspirations of a state championship. A big part of the Griffins' success this season has been the work of Jackson Rodgers.

Rodgers, a senior and a Western Illinois commit, has gained the attention of scouts beyond just the collegiate level. But despite just graduating, he's focused on the job his McGivney team is trying to achieve: winning state.

"It's great to keep playing (as a senior)," said Jackson Rodgers following his win on the mound in Wednesday's 2A sectional semifinal. "But we have to shift our focus to Saturday, to have this chance to keep going, it's a huge game."

Rodgers pitched five innings, striking out four en route to the win. In his most challenging innings, the second and third, Jackson stranded the bases loaded to keep his Griffins team ahead on the day.

"I wasn't making some pitches," admitted Rodgers. "But at the end of the day, I'm just up there to compete for my team whenever they put the pressure on. Our defense was good behind me, and I was able to make pitches to get out of it."

Rodgers hasn't just shone on the mound, he's been a leader at the top of the order for Chris Erwin's Father McGivney team. Rodgers has a very impressive .370 average on the season, hitting a few (3) homers and knocking in 28 runs in the process.

Jackson Rodgers isn't just a name synonymous with the baseball program out in Glen Carbon. Rodgers was a leader for the basketball team as well, averaging over 12 points per game for the Griffins on the hardwood in the 22-23 season.

One could argue Jackson was an even bigger contributor to the basketball team than the baseball team, though his efforts in both are commendable. But as is the story at Father McGivney, especially this season with their "state or bust" mindset, baseball remains the focus.

As Rodgers and the Griffins await their sectional final opponent, he preached preparation and being ready for the challenge on Saturday.

"It's just going to be two good days of preparation," said Jackson Rodgers. "Whether we see Vovo (Dominic Voegle, Columbia's star pitcher) or Newton's best guy, it's another day where we're going to come in and be more prepared than the other team."