



Catcher Nick Franklin Signs To Play Baseball For Longwood, Is A Byron, Carlson, Petri and Kalb Male Athlete of Month

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
November 17 2023 5:00 PM



GLEN CARBON - Nick Franklin, a hard-hitting catcher who has contributed much to the success of the Father McGivney Catholic baseball team in spring 2023, signed a letter of intent to attend Longwood University in Farmville, Va., for the 2025 season.

Franklin, the starting catcher for the Griffins the last two years, last season hit .361 with two home runs and 28 RBIs, also having an on-base percentage of .531 and stealing seven bases. He's also the regular catcher for the Griffins' pitching staff and has developed a great rapport with them.

Franklin is a Byron, Carlson, Petri and Kalb Male Athlete of the Month for Father McGivney Catholic.

The decision to sign with Longwood and play for the Lancers was an easy one for Franklin.

"When I first went out there, for the catching camp, the coaches were really good," Franklin said during a post-ceremony interview, "they talked a lot about how they push us, not only academically, but on the field too. And (head coach Chad Oxendine) gotten a lot of players to the next level and that's where I want to end up in the future."

Franklin is hoping to play in the Major Leagues one day and is confident about his future.

"Yes, I do," Franklin said. "Hopefully, I'll make a run and play a couple of years in the major leagues."

Franklin also considered Missouri-St. Louis, Olney Central College and St. Leo University in St. Leo, Fla. He plans on majoring in business management and minor in sports management. He's very happy with the academics at Longwood.

"I do. I really do," Franklin said. "They push us a lot, but it's going to be really good. I'll get set up for the future."

Franklin feels he'll bring a lot to the Lancers, who play in the Big South conference.

"My hitting, for sure," Franklin said. "I'm really good offensively and I can come right on and be a good hitter for them in a DH spot."

Franklin has also contributed much to the success of the Griffins and will do the same for the Lancers.

"He has," said McGivney head coach Chris Erwin. "You know, Nick came in after Luke Deakos, which was kind of a leader to our team during that state finals run (in 2021). With Nick coming to the table, a big, heavy-hitting catcher and being able to really kind of step into those shoes, with some big shoes to fill, with (Deakos) being a leader. Nick really brings a different kind of game to the table that I thought was extremely well for us. He commands excellence from our pitchers. being able to get back there and handle.

"We've had a lot of different types of pitchers over the years. We've had some heavy throwers in Gabe (Smith) and Jack (Rodgers), crafty guys in Ryker (Keller), and Daniel (Gierer) was kind of floated between the two. He threw with power, he had the split-fingered (fastball). Those are really difficult things to catch. And for Nick to be able to

come in, with that kind of staff and be able to develop a relationship with those guys was really important for us the last two years. And what he does with the stick, as big as he is, he's done a really good job. He'll do very well in college."

Franklin will be bringing the same skills and experience to Longwood as well.

"Going to Longwood, a Division-I university, he's going to find that lots of guys are big and strong," Erwin said. "His work ethic is very, very good, he hits the weight room all the time, we're doing extra work all the time. So, from that perspective, I think that he fits into the mold at Longwood. I know coach (Oxendine) very very well, talking back and forth. As that process was going on, I really think they're going to get a good one and like him."

It was definitely a red-letter day for the Griffins' baseball program, and there's much more to come for them in 2024 and beyond.

"Yeah, I'm really excited," Erwin said. "This is three years in a row, now, where we've had multiple going on to play college, we'll have multiple guys next year go on to play in college. I think that leadership they provide to the younger guys and that vision that they can watch these guys sign and then play in college, especially the big schools, Division-I schools. I look for big things this year. We've got a really good group coming back, a lot of young guys, a lot of experienced guys that have played a lot of time last year in varsity baseball. So, I really look to have another good year. It's a really great day for McGivney to see these guys go."

For Franklin's part, he's hoping to be a big part of the Griffins' chances to make a big run and possibly win the school's first-ever IHSA state championship.

"Absolutely," Franklin said. "I think we really can this year. Our team chemistry's amazing, and these first couple of months of practicing - it's open practices and stuff like that - we really do have a good chance of breaking through. And we're going to get a trophy. Super excited about the season."

Again, congrats to Franklin for his recognition as a Byron, Carlson, Petri and Kalb Male Athlete of the Month for the Griffins.