

Alton High's pitching is engine that drives Redbirds' success

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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The Alton High School pitching staff is opening eyes nearly every game with its ability to limit runs, throw strikeouts and in the end help win games.

Ace Bryan Hudson has been the leader of the pitching staff, accumulating stats deserving of his consideration as one of the top choices in the upcoming Major League Draft. Hudson, presently signed to attend the University of Missouri on a baseball scholarship, as of today had a 7-1 record and a .44 ERA. Teammate Ben Cusac follows

with a 5-1 mark and 1.56 ERA. Sam Ballard is 4-0 with a 1.58 ERA; Nick Cauley is 3-1; Jacob St. Peters is 2-0; and Drake Hampton is 1-0, with two saves and a 1.20 ERA.

As of today, Alton pitchers had 261 strikeouts, only 47 earned runs total for the season in 26 games, for an ERA of 1.94. The pitchers have walked only 80 batters.

Hudson said the sky is the limit for this year's Redbirds pitching staff.

"Our goal is to get to state and win state," Hudson said. "We can do it if we play to our potential."

Alton High School baseball head coach Todd Haug said the pitching is the key to his team's overall success.

"Our pitching staff is the engine that drives our success - they are a family within the team," he said. "Pitching Coach Pete Kleeman has done an outstanding job with the staff. We go as they go!"

Cusac says when he can he is just happy to take the stress off Bryan's arm and do his part.

Carter Hayden agrees that he has a lot of faith in the Alton High School pitching staff.

"I have confidence in all our pitchers," he said.

Matt Hopkins is a slugger with the bat, but he also occasionally pitches and said he is glad to have such strong support in the pitching ranks. "Having a pitching staff like we do makes it easier on us," he said.

Nick Cauley said the pitching staff and the rest of the team "just want to win."

"Our goal is to get to state," Cauley adds.

Cauley has been clocked at 92 mph with his fastball and Hayden has been clocked at 89 mph.

Jacob St. Peters is another who has helped the pitching rotation in relief. Sam Ballard also has had success on the mound. Cauley and the other pitchers are reaping benefits from the attention Bryan Hudson is getting, Alton manager Todd Haug said.

Haug said he is extremely proud of his pitching staff.

“When the ballgame starts, this group becomes involved with the task at hand,” he said. “Pitching is the name of the game in high school. Bryan is a Major League and Division I prospect and we have a couple others who also may have a shot at college ball or the draft.”