

MACCRAY CLASS A STATE BASEBALL TOURNAMENT SPECIAL



The MACCRAY baseball team was all smiles after earning their fifth place trophy at the Class A State Baseball Tournament last week. From left, head coach Nate Hebrink, Caiden Harms, Joe Heidecker, Talen Neimeyer, Bryson Kimpling, Angel Mendoza, Xavier Noble, Wyatt Swenson, Dreyer Homan, Isaac Strommer, Brooks Asche, Ethan Strommer, Gavin Husman, Garrett Struxness, Tobyn Dalle, Emery Aker, Keegan Rand, Jace Dirksen, Grayson Ahrenholz and assistant coach Tyler Wrede.

MACCRAY baseball finishes fifth in Class A State Tournament

By Sam Peterson

After winning the Section 3A Tournament, the MACCRAY baseball team qualified to play in the 2022 Class A State Tournament in St. Cloud on June 14 and 15. The Wolverines played three games in two days. On June 14, they played the eventual state champion Randolph and lost 10-0 in five innings. They answered with a 5-2 win against Bertha-Hewitt/Verndale on June 14 and later that day they beat New Ulm Cathedral 8-7. With the win against New Ulm Cathedral, MACCRAY secured fifth place in Class A. This is the second State appearance for the MACCRAY baseball program. The only other time MACCRAY was in the state tournament, in 2009 which they took home the State Championship trophy.

MACCRAY 0 Randolph 10

In the first round, MACCRAY was unseeded and drew the No. 2 seed in the tournament, the Randolph Rockets. Randolph won the Gopher Conference with an overall record of 22-1 after sections. The Rockets were able to breeze through the Section 4A playoffs without a loss on their way to State.

As the away team, MACCRAY was up to bat first. Gavin Husman led off the game by hustling down the line for an infield single. A pop out, strikeout and ground out in the next three at bats left Husman stranded at first base.

The Rockets' bats were hot to start the game. They went single, single, single, double in the first four at bats and led 3-0. The first out came in the sixth at bat, but Randolph still added a run on a sacrifice fly to make it 4-0. A double scored two more before MACCRAY got the second out of

the inning. With two outs, Randolph added two more runs to make it 8-0 off eight hits after one inning of play.

The Wolverines didn't have an answer to the Rocket pitching in the top of the second. MACCRAY was sent down in order with all three batters striking out. In the bottom of the inning, Randolph had runners at the corners with one out and scored a run off a single. Later in the inning, they made it 10-0 off a single.

MACCRAY was finally able to mount a scoring threat against Randolph in the top of the third. After a lead off strike out, Ethan Strommer hit a single to center field. Two batters later, his older brother, Isaac Strommer, drew a walk to put runners at first and second with two outs, but Dreyer Homan flew out to left field and the threat was over.

From the third inning on, Brooks Asche was able to get comfortable on the mound for MACCRAY. He only faced four batters in the third, and the only batter who wasn't out, reached on an error.

In the top of the fourth, MACCRAY had their best chance to score in the whole game. Asche led the inning off with a single to right field. In the next at bat, Xavier Noble reached on an error and there were runners at first and second with no one out. The Rockets shut down the threat with strikeouts in the next three at bats to end the inning. Asche didn't allow a hit in the bottom of the fourth and retired Randolph with two strikeouts and a fly out.

In the top of the fifth, MACCRAY needed to score at least one run to keep the game going. With one out, Husman drew a walk. With a runner at first, Randolph turned a double-play to seal the first round victory 10-0 in five innings.



After securing a win, the MACCRAY team went through the handshake line in the consolation first round game against Bertha-Hewitt/Vandale on June 15 in Sauk Rapids.

The Wolverines were out hit by the Rockets 11-3 in the game. Husman, Asche and Ethan Strommer each went 1 for 2. Husman and Isaac Strommer drew a walk each. In total, MACCRAY had five base runners and struck out in nine of their 18 at bats.

Asche pitched all four innings for MACCRAY. He allowed six earned runs off 11 hits and struck out five Rockets in 89 pitches.

MACCRAY 5 Bertha-Hewitt/Verndale 1

With the loss in the first round, MACCRAY moved into the consolation bracket to play Bertha-Hewitt/Verndale in Sauk Rapids. Like MACCRAY, BHV was unseeded in the state tournament. They started the year 6-4 before losing the final nine games of the regular season. The Raiders got hot at the right time and went 5-1 in the Section 5A Tournament and advance to State with an under .500 record of 11-14. The Raiders lost to New York Mills in the first round 10-1.

The boys must have had a great night's sleep in the hotel the night before, because they came out ready to play right away. Garrett Struxness got the start at catcher for MACCRAY, missing three games after taking a pitch to the face in the Section 3A semifinals against Russell-Tyler-Ruthton. Once again, the Wolverines were the away team and used the opportunity to jump on the

(Continued on page 2)



The MACCRAY varsity baseball team were greeted by fans before they left for the state tournament at the grandstands at city park in Clara City. The bus was led out of town by the Clara City Fire Department, a Raymond Fire Truck met them in Raymond and escorted them through town on their way to St. Cloud.