

Avery Smith Pitches No-hitter

3.9.2021

In his first varsity start and the second game of the season, freshman Avery Smith pitched a no-hitter against Gospel Light Christian School for their first home game victory. Smith threw 14 strike-outs and walked two in the five-inning game.

Smith had relief-pitched in the first game against Union Grove Christian School where he allowed zero runs and only one hit. When Head Coach Jon Link told him he'd be starting against GLCS, Smith said he was a little nervous. Owen Smith, his brother and Vikings starting catcher, encouraged him to just throw strikes and hit his spot just like he did against UGCS.



Though Smith has a few pitches at his disposal, he leaned heavily on his fastball. "In the first inning," Smith said, "Owen kept on calling straight fastballs and I struck out the first three batters of the game." Smith said he gained more confidence each inning, "I guess Owen thought I was doing good with the fastballs so why not just keeping throwing that, you know?" There was a lot of excitement, but Smith didn't realize the possibility until the end of the game when teammate Cory Tong told him to keep the no-hitter going. "After that," Smith said, "I thought about it and had a little pressure on me that last inning, but got three-up and three-down."

According to pitching coach Matt Wood, that makes Smith the first freshman in Vikings' history to throw a no-hitter and ranks him second in a single-game performance. The last no-hitter was pitched by Mac Beaty in 2019 in a 4-0 sweep against Trinity of Durham and Chapel Hill.

Coach Wood, who has been a part of all three no-hitters in program history, said "I could not be more proud of the work that he [Smith] has put in since beginning to coach him as a 7th-grader. I look forward to his continued success and growth as a player."

Smith has played-down his success. "It is a really cool thing to think about," he said, "I just hope I can keep pitching well."