

## Pope Finishes 2018 season as State Runner-Up

The 2018 Pope Greyhounds rode a program best 33-6 record to a state runner up finish navigating the loser's bracket in Columbus and having to win 4 games in 24 hours to reach the state championship game! The 33 wins is a program record for the Hounds and the appearance in the title game is the 3<sup>rd</sup> since 2012 for the program. The Greyhounds have been to Columbus 6 times in the past 7 years and finished 4<sup>th</sup> or better 5 of the 6 times!



The road to Columbus was a tough one in 2018 that saw the Hounds survive a heart pounding 1<sup>st</sup> round playoff series vs. Creekview that went 3 games. After dropping game one 5-3, the Greyhounds quickly fell behind 3-0 in game 2 but would eventually bounce back to win game two 5-3 setting up a winner take all game 3. Freshman Katie Ward wasted no time in the deciding game as she blasted a 3 run homerun in the 1<sup>st</sup> inning helping Pope climb to an early 4-0 lead. Creekview would battle back and eventually tie the game 5-5 going into the 7<sup>th</sup>. Hallie Adams was able to pitch around a leadoff double by the Grizzlies in the 7<sup>th</sup> inning stranding the runner and then in the bottom of the 7<sup>th</sup> it was the Hounds' turn. After 2 quick outs, Bailey Chapin (who had already homered twice in the series) was down to her final strike. Chapin lifted the 1-2 offering high over the left field wall for a no doubt homerun which triggered a frenzied celebration and massive dogpile at home plate as the Hounds would go on to round 2 to face Region 8 runner up Dacula. Hallie Adams tossed 20 of the 21 innings in the series and recorded both wins in the series.

The Hounds were able to make short work of Dacula as pitcher Hallie Adams threw a complete game 1 hitter in game 1 winning 6-1 and senior hurler Trinity Pizzuti tossed a complete game shutout in game 2 which the Hounds won 6-0. Zoe Laneaux pounded a massive HR in inning 1 of game 1 to set the tone for the night and Carolyn Deady pounded out a HR in game 2 for the Hounds.

In Columbus, the Hounds would face Greenbrier in game 1. Things were looking good early for the Hounds as the 1<sup>st</sup> three batters reached base with no outs in the bottom of the 1<sup>st</sup> but Greenbrier survived the inning by only allowing 2 runs after inducing a pop up and ground out with the bases loaded. Greenbrier out slugged the Hounds plating three homeruns en route to the 6-4 win. Bailey Chapin would hit her 1<sup>st</sup> of 4 homeruns in Columbus during this game as she was one of the bright spots for the Hounds in game 1.

Some heavy rain saw the schedule adjusted for day 2 as the Hounds would have to win 2 games to stay alive rather than the originally scheduled 3. In the 1<sup>st</sup> game of the day, Hallie Adams was brilliant surrendering just 2 hits against region 3 champion Heritage Conyers and surrendering no runs in the 3-0 complete game victory. In the night cap the Hounds would have to face region 6 champion Dalton. The Greyhounds were able to manage 3 runs and take a 3-0 lead into the 6<sup>th</sup> where Dalton threatened with a run of their own, but Hallie Adams was able to strand 2 runners to end the best

scoring threat for the Catamounts. Chapin blasted her 2<sup>nd</sup> homerun of the tournament and Katie Ward added a big RBI double in the 1<sup>st</sup> inning en route to the 3-1 complete game victory by Adams.

ON Championship Saturday the Hounds would have to win 4 games if they hoped to bring home the state championship. Game 1 would be a re-match against Greenbrier who defeated the Hounds in game 1 of the tourney. Trinity Pizzuti was brilliant in the pitching circle for the Hounds giving up just 2 hits and throwing a complete game shutout. The Hounds were led offensively by Chapin once again who hit a HR in the 2<sup>nd</sup> inning and then with a 2-0 lead and bases loaded in the 5<sup>th</sup>, Chapin hit a grand slam to put the game out of reach. The Greyhounds would cruise to a 8-0 run rule shortened game. Game 2 of the day would be against Allatoona, a squad that defeated the Hounds earlier in the year on a walk off hit during the Buc Bash played back in August. Adams would once again be in the circle for the Hounds and she threw one of her best games all season (4<sup>th</sup> of the tourney) as she surrendered just 2 hits en-route to a 1-0 complete game victory. The Greyhounds plated their only run in the 1<sup>st</sup> innings of the game and then held on as Adams mastered the Buccaneers.

The Greyhounds would face Cobb County rival Harrison for the state championship! Harrison was playing just their 4<sup>th</sup> game on the tournament and Pope was now in their 6<sup>th</sup> (5<sup>th</sup> game in 24 hours) and the Hounds would have to force a 7<sup>th</sup> game if they would bring home the championship. The Hounds would strike 1<sup>st</sup> plating 2 runs in the bottom of the 1<sup>st</sup> inning but the Hoyas would rally back with 3 of their own in the 4<sup>th</sup>. Pope would strike back in the 6<sup>th</sup> as Carolyn Deady would hit a solo HR to tie the game at 3 and both teams would go quietly in the 7<sup>th</sup> sending the state championship to extra innings. In the 8<sup>th</sup> inning the Hounds fatigue would finally show through as the Hoyas would plate 3 runs which would ultimately end the Greyhounds incredible run!

The 33 wins by the Hounds is a school record as is the .846 winning % the Hounds put up during the 2018 season. The 2018 Hounds captured the 3<sup>rd</sup> region championship in the schools history while making the schools 3<sup>rd</sup> trip to the title game.

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