

## Pope Fastpitch 2018 Season prospectus

2018 will mark the 3<sup>rd</sup> season of a 4 season cycle that Pope will compete at the 6-A classification in region 7-AAAAAA. Region 7-AAAAAA has proven to be a softball power sending multiple teams to the 8 team state championship tournament field during the 1<sup>st</sup> two years of the classification cycle with both Pope and Cambridge representing region 7-AAAAAA in the tournament during the 2016 and 2017 seasons. The 2017 trip to Columbus was Pope's 5<sup>th</sup> overall trip to Columbus and 5<sup>th</sup> trip in the past 6 seasons.



Gracie Kittrell

Pope will enter the 2018 season as the reigning region champion after outlasting Cambridge in an exciting and closely contested best of 3 region championship series in 2017. The 2017 region championship was the 2<sup>nd</sup> in school history with the 1<sup>st</sup> championship coming in Pope's state runner up campaign of 2012. The 2017 Pope squad also eclipsed the mythical mark of 30 wins for the 3<sup>rd</sup> time in program history, finishing the season with a 30-6 record and the best winning percentage in school history with an .833 percentage.

Another challenging schedule awaits the Hounds in 2018 with 12 of the Greyhounds 18 opponents qualifying for the playoffs and 4 of those 12 opponents making it to the state championship tournament in Columbus during the 2017 season (Cambridge, Sonoraville, Allatoona, , Archer)



Zoe Laneaux

If Pope hopes to duplicate the 2017 season success and capture a 3<sup>rd</sup> region championship in 2018 not only will the Hounds have to tackle their challenging schedule, but the Greyhounds will also have to replace a large and talented senior class of 7 seniors who won 104 games over their career, won a state championship and made 3 trips to Columbus! 4 year starting RF and 1<sup>st</sup> Team All State performer **Hannah Rogers** (1<sup>st</sup> all time in 10 record categories), 4 year varsity letter winners and perennial All region performers **Lea McFadden** (one of programs all time leading hitters CF/3b) and **Leah Higginbotham** (program HR leader / 1b/C), starting catcher **Taylor Henson** (1<sup>st</sup> HBP), dangerous slap hitter **Sydney Sheahan** (.330 avg), the speedy **Kyla Smith** (5<sup>th</sup> all time SB), and emotional leader **Mary Deady** (Greyhound of the year award winner) have all graduated and left holes that must be filled.

Fortunately for the Greyhounds, the cupboard has not been left bare, as 5 starting position players return from the 2017 team as well as the top 2 starting pitchers from the 2017 squad and multiple players who received significant playing time throughout the course of the 2017 season. In total, the Greyhounds return 10 players from the 2017 team. In all, the 2018 Greyhounds squad will be comprised of 5 seniors, 4 juniors, 4 sophomores, and 2 freshman.



Hallie Adams

Headlining the 2018 returning players for the Hounds are 4 all region performers: junior **Zoe Laneaux** (3b), sophomore **Hallie Adams** (P), senior **Gracie Kittrell** (SS) and senior **Trinity Pizzuti** (P). **Laneaux** and **Adams** were both named 1<sup>st</sup> team All State in 2017 by the GACA with **Adams** also being named Region and Cobb county pitcher of the year and **Laneaux** being named to the All Southeast Region team by the National Fastpitch Coaches Association in 2017. **Pizzuti** was 1<sup>st</sup> team all region in 2016 and **Kittrell** was all region in 2017.



Trinity Pizzuti

### PITCHERS AND CATCHERS

The Greyhounds pitching and catching will serve as a major strength for the Hounds in 2018 with the top 2 pitchers returning from the 2017 team in senior **Trinity Pizzuti** and sophomore **Hallie Adams**. The pair of pitchers logged 85% of the innings for the Hounds in 2017 with **Adams** notching 17 wins and **Pizzuti** notching 8. **Pizzuti** was named 1<sup>st</sup> team all region in 2016 and **Adams** 1<sup>st</sup> team in 2017. Rounding out the 2018 pitching staff and giving some depth will be junior **Cobyanne Ellington** who has shown great development during the offseason. The battery mates for the pitchers will be

junior **Carolyn Deady** and freshman **Katie Ward**. **Deady** caught over ½ of the Greyhounds games in 2017 and threw out over 50% of attempted stolen bases while batting .357 with a pair of homeruns and an on base % of .440. **Ward** is a very athletic and versatile player who should contribute meaningful innings to the Greyhounds in 2018.



Bailey Chapin



Carolyn Deady

### INFIELD

The infield will also be a strength for the Greyhounds as the team returns starting 3b junior **Zoe Laneaux**, SS senior **Gracie Kittrell**, 2b senior **Jodie Smith** as well as senior 2b **Hannah Dodd** who played significant innings in 2017. **Laneaux** is an offensive and defensive force hitting .471 with 14 2bs and 8 HR, **Kittrell** is a smooth fielding SS who contributed a .396 average, **Smith** is a versatile athlete who batted .330 while stealing 13 bases, and **Dodd** had a breakout year hitting a tick below .300 while chipping in 11 RBIs. Adding quality infield depth in the MINF will be

speedy sophomore **Abby Rocco** (who will also serve in a starting designated runner role) and **Katie Ward**. Depth at 3b will be provided by **Smith**, **Ward**, and senior **Caitlin Burrows**. The 1<sup>st</sup> base position will see a variety of names as sophomore **Bailey Chapin**, senior **Trinity Pizzuti**, junior **Carolyn Deady**, and speedy freshman **Kate East** (will also see some time at designated runner) may all log innings and compete for the starting position at 1<sup>st</sup> base. **Chapin** had an outstanding freshman season in 2017 starting in LF for the Hounds while batting .329 and **Pizzuti** logged 123 AB's over the past 2 seasons posting a combined .301 average over that span.

### OUTFIELD

The outfield is wide open for the Greyhounds as only **Chapin** returns from the 2017 starting lineup. Talented sophomore **Kaitlyn Wells** is penciled in to start for the Greyhounds, likely in CF, but also has the arm strength and range to play the corner OF positions as well. **Wells** showed flashes of brilliance on both defense and offense in limited playing time during her freshman campaign in 2017. **Alyssa Eman** also returns from the 2017 squad and will be in the mix for playing time in the OF with senior **Trinity Pizzuti**, seniors **Jodie Smith** and **Hannah Dodd**, sophomore **Abby Rocco**, and freshman **Kate East** and **Katie Ward**.



Alyssa Eman



Kaitlyn Wells

The Hounds open up in a home scrimmage game vs. 7A state runner up Etowah on August 6<sup>th</sup> and on August 8<sup>th</sup>, the Hounds kick off their season vs. Harrison in the 1<sup>st</sup> regular season game. Cambridge will travel to Pope on August 14<sup>th</sup> to open up region play.



Jodie Smith



Hannah Dodd