

Sports

BASEBALL: SPRING BREAK RECAP

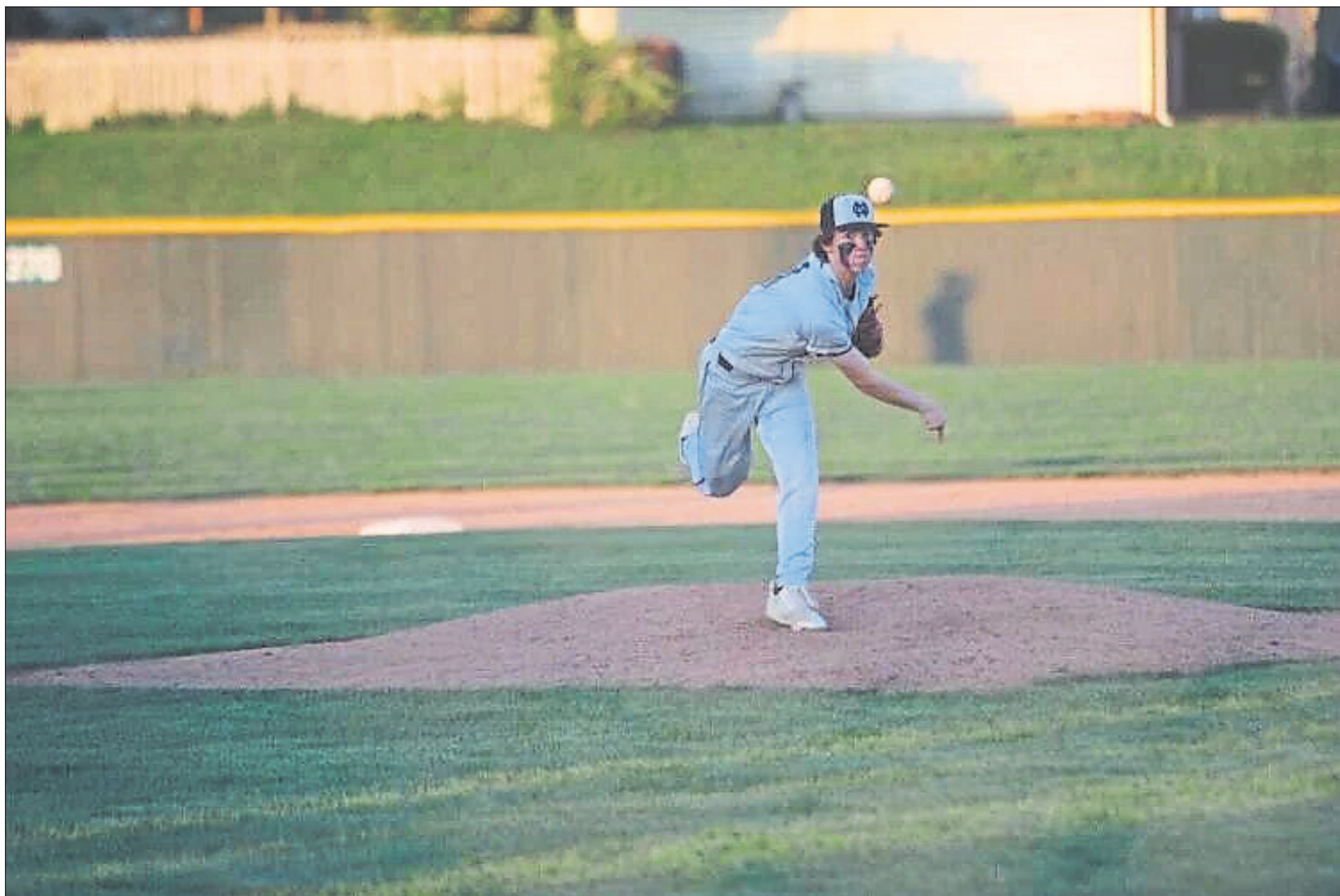


PHOTO BY WYATT SPARKMAN

North Oldham sophomore Gabe Kuerzi throws a pitch in a 2024 game.

BY WYATT SPARKMAN

The 2025 high school baseball season in Oldham County headed into its third week during spring break. The teams played from Sunday, March 30 to Friday, April 4.

NORTH OLDHAM

The Mustangs began its season 3-4 but rallied off four wins over the spring break to bring their record to 7-4. North began its win streak with a 10-0 run-rule win in five innings over Padua Franciscan (OH) on Monday, March 31.

Senior Ryan Sanders pitched a shut-out, striking out 10 batters. Senior Gray Schmittel and sophomore Gabe Kuerzi picked up two hits each. Kuerzi knocked in two runs while senior Cohen Bronke knocked in three.

On Tuesday, April 1, North went into extra innings against Knott County Central, pulling out a 2-1 win. Kuerzi threw six innings, striking out 14 batters while senior Brooks Cargould

closed out the game with two innings of work. Sanders went 2-for-3 at the plate in the game while senior Carson White scored both of the team's runs.

The Mustangs came away with a 5-3 win over Rowan County on Thursday. Sophomore Kaden Dickhaut struck out six batters in six innings. Senior Elliott Roberts went 2-for-2 with three RBIs.

North Oldham finished up its week with a dominant 13-5 win over Ashland Blazer on Friday. Kuerzi went 3-for-3 while Sanders went 2-for-3 at the plate. Both batted in three runs each while hitting a home run. Eight different players picked up a hit in the win.

The Mustangs will host Oldham County on Wednesday, April 9 at 6 p.m. Game one of the rivalry, that was scheduled to be on Monday night, was postponed due to flooding from storms and will be rescheduled at a later date.

OLDHAM COUNTY

The Colonels went 2-2 throughout the spring break. They lost 13-0 in their

first game of the week on Monday to Reavis (IL) before bouncing back the next day with an 8-3 win over Wayne County.

On Tuesday, senior Clay Cartledge pitched 6.1 innings, striking out seven batters. Senior Hayden Kiesewetter closed out the game on the mound. Cartledge, seniors Josiah McCall and Jackson Martin and junior Daniel Stewart picked up two hits each and combined for four RBIs in the win.

After a loss on Wednesday, Oldham County rebounded again with a high-scoring 11-9 win over George Rogers Clark on Thursday. Kiesewetter started the game while Martin and junior Colton Davis came in relief in the win.

Along with pitching, Martin knocked in four runs on two hits with one hit being a home run. Senior Grady Gipson also hit one over the fence for a home run on Thursday. Junior Logan Edsell came away with three hits and two RBIs in the win.

Oldham County will enter district play on Wednesday night with a 6-5 record against North Oldham.

SOUTH OLDHAM

The Dragons split their two games at the Jackie Robinson Training Complex on Sunday, March 30 and Monday, March 31. They won in dominant fashion 8-2 against Greenup County on Sunday.

Senior Davis Larsen started the game, throwing four innings while striking out five batters. Senior Cooper Robertson closed out the game with two innings of work. Sophomore Payton Layne went 3-for-4 at the plate, knocking in three runs in the win, and senior Caleb Jones picked up two hits with one RBI.

South fell to Great Crossing 3-0 on Monday. The Dragons will come out of the spring break with a 4-5 record. South Oldham hosted Christian Educational Consortium at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 8.

BOYS LACROSSE

Young Mustangs look to hit their stride after spring break

BY WYATT SPARKMAN

North Oldham entered the spring break with a 2-6 record to begin its 2025 campaign. The Mustangs lost 18 seniors last year and came into this year with only one.

John Catlett enters his third season as the head coach. He believes this year is about flexibility in how coaching styles can change from a veteran-led group to a younger team. His messaging has stayed the same, and he expects the same out of his younger players as he did his seniors from last year.

"You have to have the understanding as a coach that you have a different set of players, and each team operates differently," Catlett said. "Each team is at different points. Each team learns differently. We just had such a turnover of roster this year. It is just trying, for me and my staff, to learn about these new kids, get close with them and try and make them the best version of themselves and understand how they tick. I think that's been the biggest thing is just trying to be flexible and figure out what's going to work best for this group."

The expectation for Catlett's team remains the same in competing for a regional championship and a state championship. He believes, no matter the average age of the team, you can still compete at a high level and work together as a team.

"It doesn't mean we're not

capable of competing at a high level, and I think we've shown flashes of that so far," Catlett said. "I think the messaging has to stay the same, compete to be the best and work your tail off, because if you have a good work ethic, that's going to take you far. All that stuff doesn't change just because we're younger. If anything, it's probably more of an emphasis now, because we're younger. It's just more of having to reiterate the message a little bit more often, whereas when you have a little bit of an older group, they kind of already have that understanding."

The lone senior on the team is goalie Rylan Lowery. Lowery has already played in seven games this year and has made 58 saves so far this season. Catlett has seen Lowery be a steady figure for the team, and Catlett believes when you're leading in a positive manner that it becomes infectious with the whole team.

"I think that's just what Rylan does," Catlett said. "He's a lead by example type guy, and he just kind of, day in and day out, is really consistent. With a younger group, sometimes seeing that con-

sistency out of someone can be powerful. I think it's just something that they look up to. I know he's bringing that value, because he's got such a level head, and he's such a good kid."

Lowery is mentoring sophomore goalie Payton Smith. Smith has played in six games this season, making 32 saves. Lowery and Smith complement each other well on and off the field. Both have brought the best out of each other.

"I know Rylan has been a really good example to Payton, as far as being a communicator and working hard and having a good attitude and hat on his shoulders," Catlett said. "I think a lot of the jumps that Payton had made this year is based on the work he put in in the offseason but also by being around Rylan."

The Mustangs' strength this year has been their defense. They have not allowed more than seven goals this year in all but one game against a Kentucky opponent. Along with Lowery and Smith, junior Price Duke has helped lead the defense in 2025.

"Our defense, as a whole, has been really working together

as one, but we're still trying to clean up some little things here and there," Catlett said. "Sometimes the game of lacrosse happens and goals are going to happen. Teams are going to get theirs. The defense's job is to limit them as best they can. We've done a pretty, pretty solid job of that so far."

On the offensive side, juniors Evan Smith and Dillon Halfacre lead the team with 19 combined goals scored. Throughout the last three years, Smith and Halfacre have grown in their confidence from Catlett's point of view, leading to their breakout scoring season.

"It's kind of tough sometimes when you may be talented and skilled enough to play, but you're between some older guys," Catlett said. "I think that was kind of maybe the case for them last year, and this year, they've really got their opportunity and taken it and ran with it. I definitely look forward to their continued growth throughout the season, because they've started out strong for us so far."

A player that has made a big jump this season has been junior Jack Bearance. Catlett views him as a gritty player and someone who has stepped into a leadership role on the team.

"[Bearance] has been super susceptible to coaching and listening and trying to understand what he needs to get better," Catlett said. "I think

that having that attitude helps other people see that everyone can improve, and everyone can get better. Everyone can find that way to better themselves. I definitely think he's taken it to heart. He's come a long way, probably in all three of his years and not just over this past summer."

The spring break came at a great time for North Oldham, allowing its players to get healthy and prepare for the last half of the season. Catlett sees this group as special because of their level of commitment to the sport and wanting to play lacrosse.

"That's fun as a coach, but it's fun to be a part of as well," Catlett said. "I don't really worry too much about them coming back and taking time to get fired up, but I'm fairly confident that they'll come back rested, rejuvenated. Hopefully, we'll be a little bit more healthy and will be ready to go. There's a couple that didn't go our way, but we were doing some positive things, and things were starting to click. I think everyone's excited to keep building off of that. Our ultimate goal is to just be playing our best ball in May."

North Oldham will go to the Kentucky Country Day Bearcats (5-3) in its first game out of spring break on Wednesday night at 6:30 p.m. The Mustang will then host the Oldham County Colonels (0-3) at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday night.

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