

Press Clippings 04/15/2019

---Daily Herald---04/13/2019

17-year-old from Elgin is Boys & Girls Clubs' state youth of the year

By: Elena Ferrarin



Seventeen-year-old Damaryan Benton, a senior at Elgin High School, was named 2019 Illinois Youth of the Year by the Boys & Girls Clubs of America.

Seventeen-year-old Damaryan Benton, a senior at Elgin High School praised for his leadership and commitment to helping younger kids, was named 2019 Illinois Youth of the Year by the Boys & Girls Clubs of America.

Damaryan will serve as ambassador for teens in the state, will get a \$5,000 college scholarship from the organization, and will compete in the Midwest regional youth of the year event July 18 in Chicago. That winner will compete for the national title this fall in Washington, D.C.

"It was amazing," Damaryan said of his state win this week.

The best part of the experience was connecting with youths from across the state, Damaryan said. "The stories may have been different and we all come from different schools and different places, but the thing that made a difference, what really affected us, was that the Boys & Girls club impacted the way we are today."

There are 23 Boys & Girls clubs in Illinois and each has "some level" of youth of the year activity or celebration, said Bryan Soady, director of the [Illinois Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs](#). Damaryan, named youth of the year by the [Elgin club](#) last month, was among 11 finalists selected to vie for the state title in Springfield, Soady said.

The program established in 1947 "recognizes club members who, with the help of their club, have met personal challenges head-on and, despite the odds, have given back to their club and community," the Illinois Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs states on its

website. Winners have demonstrated "service to club, community and family; academic success; strong moral character; life goals; and poise and public speaking ability."

Damaryan grew up with his mother in Elgin. His father was gunned down in Chicago when he was 11. He started working at age 15 to help the family and credits the club with providing him material support -- food, clothes and shoes -- as well as emotional support.

Deborah Ficken, director of program services for the Elgin club, said last month that Damaryan "exemplifies a lot of the character traits that we try to instill into the youth."

Damaryan said he plans to attend Judson University in Elgin on a four-year, full-ride scholarship offered by the university as a partnership with the Boys & Girls Club of Elgin. He wants to study business administration and communications.

---Daily Herald---04/12/2019

Elgin historian Jerry Turnquist to speak at Altrusa Club meeting April 25

By: Pat Szpekowski



Elgin historian Jerry Turnquist will speak at the monthly dinner meeting of Altrusa International Club of Elgin on Thursday, April 25.

On Thursday, April 25, the Altrusa International Club of Elgin will host Elgin historian Jerry Turnquist at its monthly dinner meeting at the Evangelical Covenant Church, Larkin Avenue, Elgin. Networking begins at 5 p.m. with dinner and program immediately following at 6 p.m.

Cost for members and guests is \$7. Reservations must be made in advance by Monday, April 22, by calling Altrusa member Marge Haefliger at (847) 697-7374.

A fourth generation Elginite, Turnquist recently retired from Elgin Area School District U-46 four years ago where he taught science, math, and history for over 40 years. He has had a long-standing interest in Elgin history and is active in the Elgin Area Historical Society. During this time, he began the Historic Elgin Cemetery Walk, now in its 29th year.

For the past 21 years, Turnquist has written an Elgin area history column for the Daily Herald newspaper. He also served on the Elgin Heritage Commission and spent two years as chairman. Turnquist regularly gives bus and walking tours related to Elgin history. For the past 21 years he has also researched and coproduced "Elgin 100 years ago" on WRMN 1410AM Radio. The program features local news from a century ago taken from the Elgin area newspapers.

He is an active community volunteer and leader with the Gail Borden Public Library and its Foundation and the Elgin Patriotic Memorial Association. He began a program to recognize U.S. citizens from the Elgin area through an annual event held at the Elgin City Council meeting closest to the Fourth of July. Turnquist has two grown children, Dennis and Eric, and resides on the city's west side.

Altrusa International Club of Elgin, Inc. is an international service organization comprised of executive and professional women. The Altrusa Club of Elgin sponsors a number of projects in the community through volunteerism and monetary support.

On Thursday, May 16, the club will hold its 70th annual prestigious Altrusa Woman of the Year Award dinner to honor a woman from the greater Elgin area who is committed to community service. This year's recipient is Gwen Gage of Elgin.

Members reside throughout the Northern Fox Valley area, including Elgin, South Elgin, Bartlett, Dundee, Sleepy Hollow, Carpentersville, Algonquin, Bartlett, Hampshire, Huntley and Pingree Grove.

Follow the Altrusa International Club of Elgin at Altrusa-Elgin, IL on [Facebook](#).

---The Courier-News---04/14/2019

Elgin High School celebrates 150 years

Anniversary program features notable alumni

By: Gloria Casas



Melissa Suda Creighton and Susan Fortner, who worked at Elgin High School for 38 years, prepared to unveil a monument donated by the Class of 2018.



Gordy Whiting, who spent 55 years in Elgin District U-46 as a student and teacher, donated an EHS jacket to the school's archives with the names of family members who graduated from the school.

Gordy Whiting spent his freshman year at the old Elgin High School before the new EHS opened on Marron Drive in 1973.

He remembers the Gifford Street school, where his father graduated in 1936, had an open campus to handle the overcrowding since there weren't many other high schools in the area.

"It was fun. You felt a sense of tradition every time you walked through the door," said Whiting, who later became an EHS teacher.

Fred Vollman also attended the old high school and graduated in 1959. He returned to the site Saturday for a celebration of Elgin High School's 150th anniversary.

"This was a basement corridor and my locker happened to be down here," he said as he stood in what is now Elgin District U-46's Educational Services Center.

He has his wife, Karen Bumsted Vollman, Class of 1960, volunteered Saturday to give tours.

"It was a great time to grow up. There was a lot of school spirit and city pride," Fred Vollman said.

There was plenty of school spirit Saturday for an All-Class Reunion commemorating the anniversary. Tours of the former EHS and the current high school at 1200 Maroon Drive, a formal program featuring music, speakers and memories and the unveiling of a new monument were all part of the celebration.

Master of Ceremonies John Devine, an EHS social studies teacher, shared tidbits about the school's history during a Sesquicentennial Program which featured a presentation of colors by alumni representing different branches of the U.S. military, including Elgin Councilman Rose Martinez, Class of 1978.

There also was a presentation by Hal Getzelman, a NASA engineer and member of the Class of 1972, and the world premiere of "Through Struggle to the Stars" composed by EHS band director Robert Sanchez.

EHS is one of the oldest high schools in the state and graduated 12 students in its first class, Principal Krystal Thomas said. There are 817 students in the current senior class, she said.

The school has had four locations in its history and has graduated more than 43,000 students, many who went on to become scientists, artists, factory workers, entrepreneurs, engineers, activists, teachers and writers, said Thomas, Class of 1990.

EHS is a tradition for many Elginites including Whiting. His father, Lloyd, graduated in 1936, and his two brothers and two sisters also were EHS graduates. Whiting wrote all the names on a maroon jacket he donated to the school's archives Saturday.

Whiting said he was inspired to become a teacher by EHS educators like Mike Alft, Jim Wallace and Howard Schulte, he said. EHS is a special place for a lot of people which is why so many people came to celebrate Saturday, he said.

"It's been nice to see everyone," Karen Bumsted Vollman said.

There were people from different classes visiting and touring the building. One of her favorite stories of the day was about a man from the Class of 1945 who wanted to come back and visit the acappella room where he first met his late wife.

"He brought his wife's picture with him," she said. It was symbolic of a day filled with memories and special times people had at the school, she said.

---The Courier-News---04/13/2019

West suburban school districts cry foul over proposed PE mandate, saying it will cost millions and cut academic classes

By: Suzanne Baker



Naperville Central High School students run as part of a physical education class in this file photo, something state Sen. Linda Holmes, D-Aurora, would like to see occur daily around the state.

A legislative proposal to mandate the number of minutes of physical education students would have to take every week has met with strong push back from local school district officials worried about the cost of such a requirement.

In a joint letter to the bill's sponsor, state Sen. [Linda Holmes](#), D-Aurora, superintendents and board presidents from West Aurora District 129, Indian Prairie District 204 and Oswego District 308, school officials questioned why the state would mandate at least 150 minutes per week of physical education for elementary students and 225 minutes for middle/junior high and high school students. Similar legislation is sponsored in the House by state Rep. Sonya Harper, D-Chicago.

“With all of the concentration on student achievement, STEM, the art and the social-emotional well-being of our students, this is one more scenario where we have to make a choice of what not to do for our kids in lieu of providing two more days of PE at the elementary level,” the school district officials wrote in their letter to Holmes.

Holmes said she'll hold off on proceeding with her legislation until she and the other bill drafters can find ways to provide more flexibility for schools. The goal of the proposal, she said, is to improve student success in class and on tests as well as stem the growing child obesity trend, she said.

When drafting the legislation, Holmes said the idea was to push for minutes rather than days to give schools more flexibility and to implement a recommendation from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC studies show students who partake in physical education have improved grades and better standardized test scores and it helps them stay on-task in the classroom.

“The real problem is nobody wants a mandate,” she said of her legislation. “It is a work in progress.”

If the PE requirement were implemented, Indian Prairie officials estimate the district would need to hire 21 additional full-time physical education teachers at a cost of roughly \$1.7 million. The district has 21 elementary schools.

Board President Michael Raczak, writing in a letter to the Indian Prairie community, said that while well-meaning, Holmes' bill has “significant negative implications for the education students.”

Besides the need to hire more gym teachers, nine of District 204's elementary buildings do not have the appropriate amount of gym space, Raczak said in his letter.

And at the middle school level, where PE is provided daily, the district would fall short on the required weekly 225 minutes, he said.

To accommodate the extra PE time, the district would have to add time to the school day, decrease time in academic subjects or eliminate elective courses in such subjects as music, art, foreign language or technology, Raczak said.

High school students also would no longer be able to count health or driver's education toward their PE time and therefore would have to give up an elective course to accommodate the change, he said.

“We are currently planning to spend a portion of next year's state funding to lower class sizes at our Title I buildings, provide additional support for reading in those buildings to improve academic achievement and increase mental health providers across the district. If this bill becomes law, we will not be able to do these things,” wrote Raczak, urging District 204 residents to reach out to their legislators with their concerns.

Tony Sanders, CEO of the Elgin-based **U46 School District**, estimated the PE mandate would cost his district \$7.6 million annually in added staff costs.

“We would also have to determine capital needs for the larger elementary buildings for accommodating PE in winter months,” Sanders relayed this week in social media posts.

Local districts aren’t the only ones coming out against the PE plan.

The Legislative Education Network of DuPage County representing 39 DuPage school districts with 170,000 students opposes the measure. So does the Large Unit District Association, or LUDA, which serves the interests of Illinois’ 52 K-12 school districts, including the state’s five largest – Chicago Public Schools, U46, Rockford 205, Indian Prairie and Plainfield 202. Other area school district in the association are East Aurora 131, West Aurora 129, Batavia 101, Carpentersville 300, Geneva 304, Kaneland 302, Naperville 203, Oswego 308, St. Charles 303 and Yorkville 115.

LUDA Executive Director John Burkey said the reason schools are so vehement is because they’re feeling betrayed.

To get school support for the evidence-based funding formula approved two years ago, legislators agreed to provide relief on state mandates, like daily physical education.

Holmes said she was surprised by the recent uproar from school districts because before the new funding plan was approved, PE was required five days a week.

“What were they doing before this? Were they all not in compliance?” Holmes said.

While daily PE was required, many school districts requested waivers from the Illinois State Board of Education for reasons such as the lack of gymnasium space, accommodations for driver education or student participation in band or chorus. The law was revised in 2012 to limit the number of waivers.

Burkey said as a compromise to get property-wealthy school districts to support the new funding formula, a deal was cut to reduce the number of days for PE to three.

“Districts were OK with it as long as Springfield gave in on mandates,” Burkey said. “Our districts are crying foul because now Springfield wants to back off (the agreement).”

“What going to be next,” Burkey said

Mandating PE minutes could cause many school districts to face tough financial decisions. Many districts worry that in order to accommodate the change they’ll have to extend their school day – adding to staffing costs – or replace PE with something else, Burkey said.

Often at the elementary level, on days when students aren’t in PE, they are involved in art or music classes, he said. Those potentially could be eliminated to make room for more PE.

“Local school districts should decide what’s important,” he said.

Beyond that, hiring more PE teachers across the state is going to exacerbate an already problematic teacher shortage, Burkey said.

One of his districts in Springfield already must use a substitute PE teacher because the district can't find anyone to fill the position on a full-time basis. If the change were approved, that district would have to hire 18 new PE teachers, he added.

"We are talking about adding hundreds of new PE teachers (across Illinois), and they don't exist," he said.

School districts are very aware of the importance of physical activity, Burkey said.

"Bottom line, we all believe in the health and wellness of kids," he said. "We all want healthy kids. We just want to get there in different ways."

Holmes said compromise is possible to make sure all kids have access to daily physical education.

"We have some common goals to work toward to the benefit of everybody," she said.

SPORTS

---Daily Herald---04/14/2019

Baseball: South Elgin slugs its way past Glenbard East

By: Jerry Fitzpatrick

The South Elgin baseball team broke out the bats against Glenbard East Saturday and broke a first-place tie in the Upstate Eight.

The Storm collected 12 hits, drew 2 walks and capitalized on 6 errors to win 9-3 in a battle between teams that entered tied for the UEC lead at the quarter pole.

Austin Doty and Ben Hetelle each had 3 hits for South Elgin (9-2, 7-1) and Garrett Wano delivered a fifth-inning sacrifice fly that snapped a 3-3 tie.

It was the second straight offensive outburst by the Storm. The lineup managed 14 hits against Rams pitching in an 11-3, series-opening win Friday.

"We're really hitting the ball well, really barreling up balls," Hetelle said. "Earlier in the season we were slow out of the gate but now we're starting to get through it."

"One through nine we're battling and we're pulling for each other right now," Doty said.

Glenbard East (10-6, 6-2) kept it close. The Rams were held scoreless for four innings by Storm starting pitcher Robbie Zagorski, but parlayed a fifth-inning leadoff walk into a 3 runs to tie the game 3-3. Jimmy Cotterill doubled down the right-field line to drive in a pair. He later scored the tying run on Jeremy Johnson's sacrifice fly. However, the Rams stranded two runners in scoring position.

"We're hitting the ball but we need to break through with that timely hit. That has kind of been eluding us this series so far," said Glenbard East coach Joel Pelland, whose team has been outhit 24-14 in the first two games of the series.

South Elgin shortstop Patrick Keaty doubled to open the bottom of the fifth, advanced to third on a Hetelle bunt hit and scored on Wano's sacrifice fly. Hetelle scored South Elgin's fifth run on a Glenbard East throwing error.

Storm coach Jim Kating summoned senior Grant Baker to finish on the mound after a South Elgin reliever walked two straight batters with one away in the sixth. Baker struck out the first man he faced and induced a groundball to third base to end the threat. He stranded two more in a scoreless seventh.

"I'm going right at these guys," Baker said. "I know they can hit. As long as I'm not walking people and giving up free bags, I know my defense will make plays."

South Elgin added 4 sixth-inning insurance runs to give Baker a cushion.

Glenbard East slipped into a second-place tie with West Aurora (10-4, 6-2), which won its fifth straight Saturday. The Rams will try to avoid the series sweep against South Elgin in Lombard Monday.

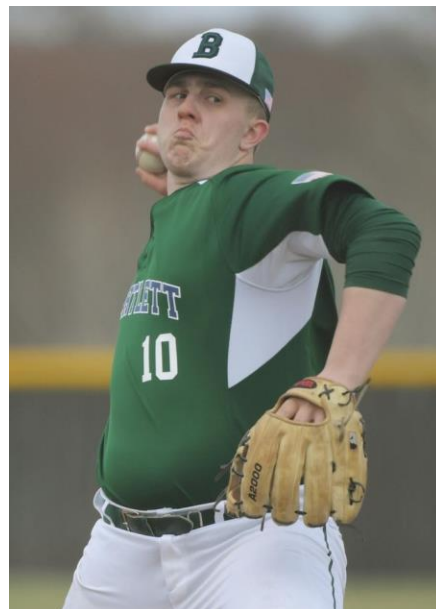
"They're a good team and we're a good team," Pelland said. "They just played better than us. Unfortunately, we made some plays out in the field that cost us some runs."

Catcher Bret Bushka (2-for-3) had the only multihit game for the Rams.

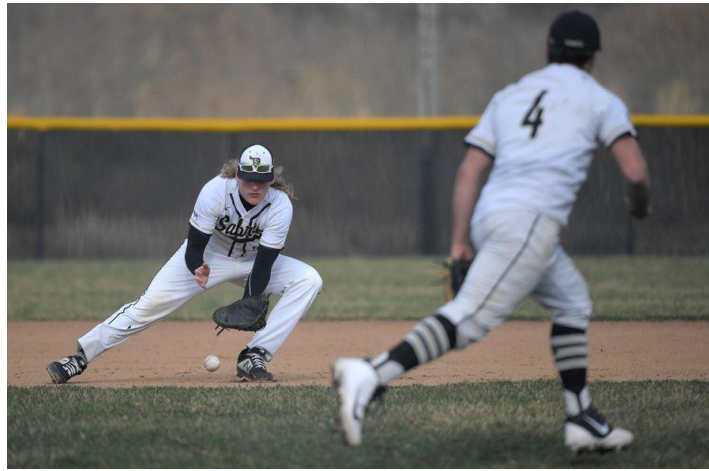
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Baseball: Vaca's return closes out Streamwood

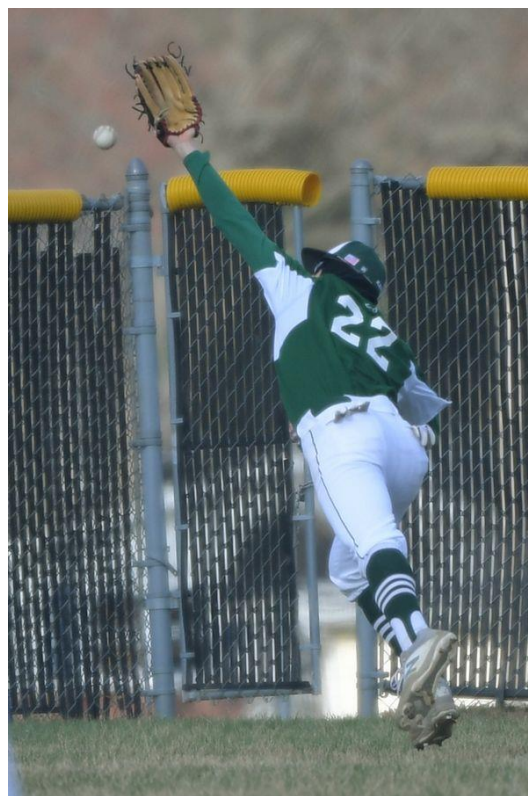
By: Jerry Fitzpatrick



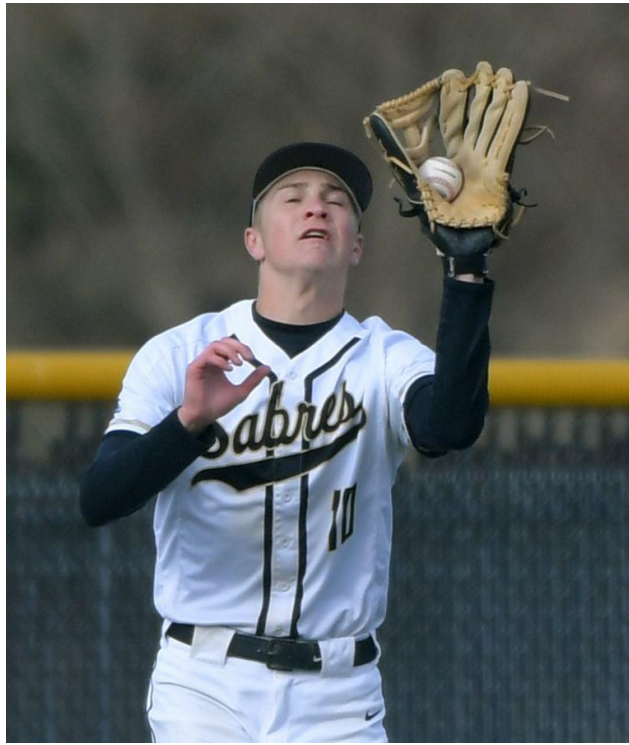
Bartlett's Geno Frieri pitches against Streamwood in a baseball game in Streamwood Friday.



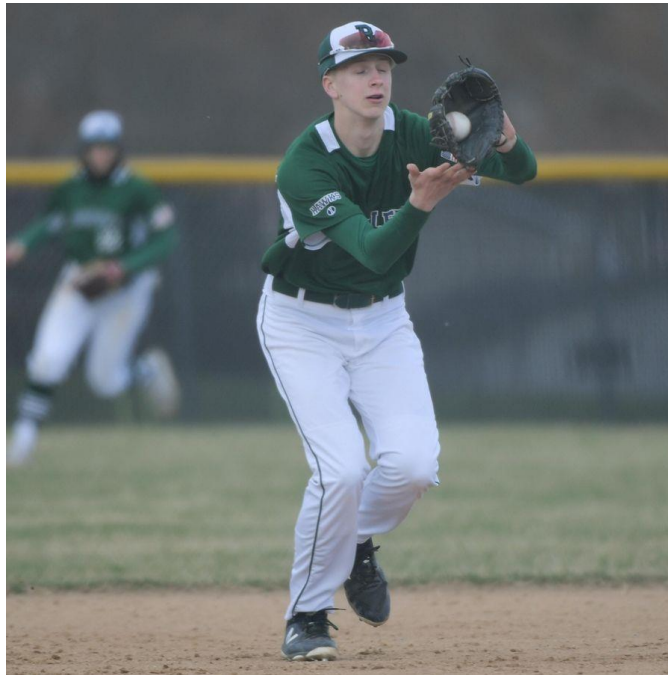
Streamwood first baseman Connor Johnson gets to a ground ball as pitcher AJ Reyna moves toward the base to take the toss and make the out against Bartlett's Geno Frieri to end the second inning in a baseball game in Streamwood Friday.



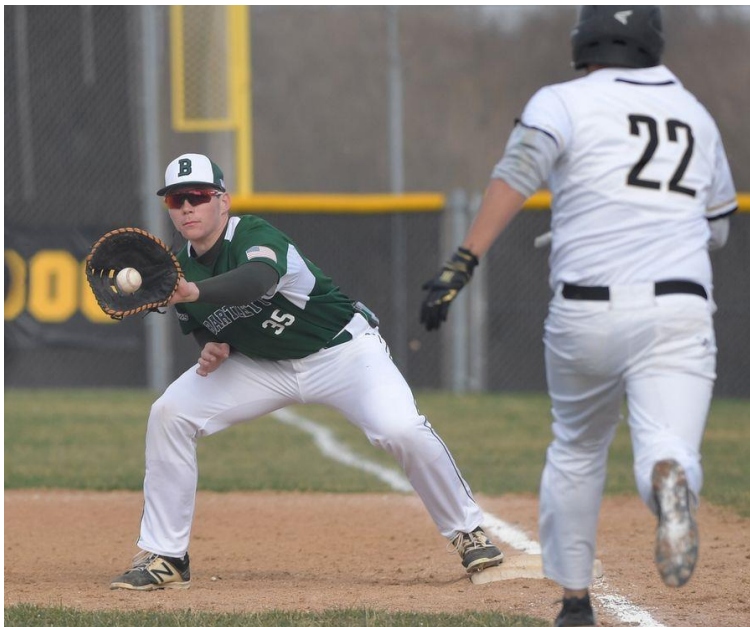
Bartlett's Michael Vaca stretches but can't reach a long double by Streamwood's Anthony Caruso that scored teammate Jared Martinez in the first inning in a baseball game in Streamwood Friday.



Streamwood's Colin Bielinski catches the third out off the third inning hit by Bartlett's Matt Angelone in a baseball game in Streamwood Friday.



Bartlett's Nick Kantzavelos gloves a ground ball by Streamwood's Dylan Caruso for an out in the first inning in a baseball game in Streamwood Friday.



Bartlett first baseman Blake Oliver takes the throw for an out against Streamwood's Justin Gonzalez in the second inning in a baseball game in Streamwood Friday.



Streamwood's AJ Reyna pitches against Bartlett in a baseball game in Streamwood Friday.

Bartlett senior Mike Vaca made a triumphant return to the pitching mound in a 6-4 Upstate Eight win at Streamwood Friday.

The 6-foot-3, 215-pounder dominated the seventh inning in relief of Danny Cahill, who relieved winning pitcher Geno Frieri (2-0) after five strong innings.

It was Vaca's varsity pitching debut and the possibility of it had him "through the roof" with anticipation during the school day, he said. He had not pitched in a spring game in two seasons due to a fractured arm suffered in a travel-league game in summer 2018.

Vaca threw a couple of innings for the Hawks last summer but experienced control problems, he said. A winter's worth of bullpens had hopefully fixed the issue.

Cut to Friday when his first two pitches in a 2-run game on a windy, 47-degree day were called balls. Vaca took a deep breath of cold April air, worked the count full and notched his first varsity strikeout looking.

He then proceeded to strike out the side with cheese that touched a new personal-best 88 mph, according to a radar gun pointed his way.

"I'm pretty stoked about that," Vaca said. "I felt good. I just went out and tried to throw strikes. It's crazy and exciting, really, just being on the mound because I love pitching."

The win halted a 3-game slide for Bartlett (5-3-1, 4-3), which grabbed the lead for good on a Blake Oliver's 2-run, fourth-inning home run to left.

"I think I missed a little bit of it but I still barreled it up," Oliver said of his second home run this season. "It was a good curve. I just saw it. I was able to recognize it."

The Hawks extended the lead to 4-1 in the fifth inning. Nate Euliano tripled to drive in Nick Kantzavelos, who drew a leadoff walk. That theme haunted Streamwood (5-7, 3-4). The Sabres walked six batters, four of which scored.

"The walks killed us," Streamwood coach Ryan Lasota said. "It took us 140-something pitches to get through a seven-inning game. Six walks and we had 6 hits going into the sixth. It's never good to have the same amount of walks as we do hits."

Connor Johnson pulled the Sabres within 4-3 with a two-out, 2-run, fifth-inning single. "I was thinking right side and I took it up the middle, which was perfect," Johnson said.

Bartlett added insurance. Frieri singled to drive in a sixth-inning run. Vaca's one-out, seventh-inning groundball scored Euliano after his second triple.

The offense, bullpen and a Bartlett defense that committed a lone error made a winner of Frieri. He allowed 4 runs (3 earned) on 7 hits and 3 walks and struck out 6 in 5 innings.

"I had a mental mindset of throwing strikes and hitting my spots. I trusted my defense and with the wind, we made all the plays."

Max Alanis, Dylan Caruso and Tyler Jones each had 2 hits for the Sabres.

The 3-game series resumes Saturday with Game 2 in Bartlett at 10 a.m.