

NHSBCA

2011 Player of the Year



**Dylan Bundy – Rhp
Owasso HS, Owasso, OK**

By Nathan Rode – Baseball America (June 27, 2011)

When Dylan Bundy takes the mound, people stop to watch. The physical righthander from Oklahoma's Owasso High used an elite arsenal to dominate the competition this season, striking out 158 batters in 71 innings while allowing just five walks and two earned runs. He won all 11 of his starts and also earned a save.

His numbers and draft status made him the overwhelming favorite and selection for Baseball America's 2011 High School Player of the Year.

The Orioles were elated to see him available when they had to make the fourth overall selection in the 2011 draft. His stats certainly jump off the page, but his scouting report probably had the organization drooling. Bundy works with an explosive fastball that sits 94-97 mph and has touched triple digits. He also works with a high-70s curveball, high-80s cutter and mid-80s changeup. The breaking ball and cutter are both plus pitches and his changeup is already average. He is fitness freak and gets the most out of his 6-foot-1, 205-pound frame. Despite not having the prototypical pitcher's frame, Bundy has minimal effort and excellent body control, allowing him to exhibit good command.

Baseball America ran a feature on Bundy earlier in the spring so this time we let others do all the talking. We caught up with Bundy, his head coach, Larry Turner, as well as his catcher, Drew Stiner and rotation partner Phillip Wilson. David Saliba, the head coach at Winter Haven (Fla.) High and Karl King, the head coach at North High in Edmond, Okla. gave their two cents after watching Bundy go up against their teams.

TURNER: "He's the most incredible player that I've ever coached as far as his work ethic. It is unmatched. It made us a better team, better program by rubbing off on other players. In one game in particular, we're playing in a tournament in Bartlesville and he pitches against an out of state team at 7:30 at night. It runs late and we don't get back until about 11 to Owasso. We're playing the next morning at 9 a.m. so we have to leave at 7 to get up there to get ready. He's in the weight room at 5:30 in the morning, running on the treadmill, getting his workout in before we have to go play. He has that kind of commitment and knows what it takes to be successful. He has been a true pleasure to coach. He never thought he was bigger than the program. He was just a team guy."

"He was a great player when he came to us already. One of his goals was, tongue in cheek, when he graduated high school, he wanted to throw harder than his brother. His brother was at 97. I knew that would happen. He's reached that goal. He's reached the goal of being drafted high. I don't think it could have

turned out any better for Dylan to be able to be drafted by the same organization his brother is in. He considers his brother his best friend.

"It's just sick the number of strikeouts he had per inning. It was amazing to step back and watch him go out and absolutely dominate the competition. We've had some good players. You new you had a great chance of winning. You knew he was going to strike out 12, 14, 15 every outing and just deal.

"The thing that puts him on the fast track is he can duplicate the same motion over and over. There doesn't appear to be any flaws. And he hits his spots so well. He truly is one of those guys that's going to be there in a hurry. It was amazing to watch him through the cutter and stuff. It's just not fair. They don't have a chance. He's best I've ever seen.

"The game he threw in Bartlesville. He strikes out 18. That night we knew he was incredible. One of those gifted guys. In 33 years, I've never seen anybody like him. It's incredible. The thing that makes him so good is when he throws the cutter that's 90-93. It's unhittable. He runs up there 96-97 on the fastball. And his curveball is a plus pitch. It's just not fair. I wouldn't want to hit off of him. I'm too old. I wouldn't be able to get out of the way if he ran one up in there on me. I'd be bailing for sure. I never did get in there."

STINER: "He's like a machine. He does that every day and doesn't expect anything to come to him. Everything he's worked for, he's earned it. He's a very humble kid in his ways, how he speaks and how he approaches people. It was great playing with Dylan this whole year. He pushed everybody and made us all better.

"We've played together since we were about 7 years old. Whenever he takes the mound I feel real comfortable. He's right there every time. He's very consistent. He's made me better too. He was a big part of our success at Owasso. He led us. I've hit off of him since we've been little. He's a lot easier to catch than hit."

WILSON: "It was nice to have him pitch him in front of you because you knew you were always going to win that game when he pitched. That game was set, so all you had to do was concentrate on your game and that gave you a little more time to prepare.

"It's just complete domination. When he takes the mound every time, you know he's going to do his best and put everything he has in it for the team. He's prepared enough for that start and the next one.

"His fastball is overpowering. He'll come at you with the cutter when you're behind in the count. Then he'll break off a curveball that's still harder than some kids' fastballs. Then he'll throw a changeup on you and you're sitting on that 97-mph fastball and you can't do anything about it.

"I was kind of his little follower. When he came over his junior year I tried to do every single workout he did. At first I fell behind quite a bit. After a month or two I started to do the same weights he was. Every time he did something he'd call me and I'd go up there and we'd workout together. It helped me get a college scholarship. It helped me a ton.

"They're quite ridiculous. Chop trees, carry them around the property, dig holes. Things you wouldn't think of. It's everything. Some days we'll lunge around the warning track. We try to take a workout and push it to the extreme where no one else is doing it."

KING: "We saw him for four innings in a scrimmage in February and then we went to watch him in that Broken Arrow game. When that one got postponed we found out we were going to face him. From an opponent standpoint, you hate seeing him because you know how dominant he is. You're up against a monumental task. But what an opportunity to see such a rare arm. If you can have success against him you may help your own cause a little bit. From a baseball standpoint you have to step back and appreciate what he's doing and how good he is. Other than what his performance is like on the field, his preparation to throw, you realize he knows exactly what he's doing.

"He's making the program, an already successful one, even better because of his work ethic. He's the total package. He's got the ability, work ethic, he's a humble kid. He embodies everything you want that kind of kid to be.

"That Saturday when we played them, they let us use their outdoor cages and we moved the L screen up close to the plate and threw a little bit harder, trying somehow to simulate a shorter reaction time to it. But he has four pitches to contend with, so you can't just sit on the fastball. It's hard to simulate.

"Even playing, I was fortunate to spend some time in pro ball with the Twins organization, the hardest thing I ever saw was low 90s. I caught Brad Radke, some guys with big league time. This kid is throwing 98, a cutter at 90-91. Up until Bundy, I thought (Oakland A's lefthander) Brett Anderson was the best high school pitcher I had seen. Dylan has more power to his game. Brett is obviously a very talented pitcher. Dylan is a notch up.

"In hindsight, seeing where Dylan went, you feel kind of blessed to see a kid like that up close even if you're on the losing end of it. You may never see one like that again."

SALIBA: "I think we may have made him a little money. There were about 40 scouts and all the big bosses were there and he threw a no-hitter. We faced him the year before and he was good. This year, the night we faced him, he was awesome. He had all four pitches. He kept us off balance. We faced (Lance) McCullers from Jesuit (High in Tampa). We faced Mason Hope from Broken Arrow. We put bat on the ball against those guys. He's one of the best pitchers we've seen.

"We knew about him. We play Owasso ever year and we know it's a good program. We knew he was very good, but you look forward to those challenges. He pitched an outstanding game and you just tip your hat to him. He was one of the most polished pitchers we saw at the high school level. We faced (Marlins righthander Chris) Volstad. He was a big, strong kid at that time and projectable. Bundy, by far, had the most stuff we've faced. I've been doing this 28 years, and he's the best I've seen. He had everything going."

BUNDY: "Me, my dad and brother, we've prepared our whole lives for this whole year, everything. It's finally coming to reality that I was picked by the Orioles, the same team my brother is on. It's pretty amazing I get the opportunity to be on the same team as my brother. We'll see what happens here in August.

"We had a very successful season as a team. We came up short last year in the ninth. This year we came up short losing to Broken Arrow. I consider both years I was here a success even though we didn't win. I really didn't think of the draft that much. I was concentrating on being the best teammate I could and doing the most I could to help our team win and having fun while I was doing it.

"I didn't really think of the draft that much beforehand. I didn't know who was going to pick me. The first thing that popped in my head when they said my name was my brother Bobby and I might get the opportunity to play with him. I wouldn't say I cried, but I got a little tear