

# Home Runs Give Frazier Advantage In Georgia High School Showdown

by **Nathan Rode** (*Baseball America*)

When two highly rated prospects match up, everyone shows up. General managers, scouting directors, crosscheckers, fans and even opponents that don't have their own game. Often times the hype gets to be too much and the results disappoint, but with one swing of the bat Clint Frazier sent Loganville (Ga.) High's Red Devil Field into a frenzy and the game lived up to expectations.

One well-respected person in the baseball industry put it succinctly: "I've never seen anything like that. And I've seen a lot of (stuff)."

Not only did tonight's matchup between Loganville High and neighboring Grayson High—also of Loganville—pit the top two high school position players against each other, but it also was a contest between the No. 13 and No. 15 teams in the country. Austin Meadows, an outfielder for No. 13 Grayson High, is rated as the top prep prospect for the 2013 draft and at a not-so-distant No. 2 is No. 15 Loganville's Frazier, also an outfielder.

It's tough to say Meadows was disappointing because he didn't see much to hit tonight, finishing 0-for-1 with a walk, hit by pitch and strikeout, but Frazier stole the show in front of around 70 scouts—mostly crosscheckers and above—and hundreds of boisterous fans as the atmosphere rivaled a college basketball game.

Grayson took an early 2-0 lead in the third inning on a sacrifice fly from second baseman Jeril Dawson and solo home run by outfielder Taylor Allum. The Rams then added a run in the fourth when Korey Anderson launched a home run over the road beyond the left field fence.

In the bottom of the fourth, Loganville began clawing back. First baseman Daniel Milligan drew a walk, advanced on a bunt single by infielder David Chatbut and scored on a single by outfielder Logan Mattix. After moving up on a ground out, Chatbut scored on a passed ball and Mattix went to third. Catcher Royce Harrison walked and infielder Andrew Clay followed with a single to plate Mattix and tie the game. With two on, two out and the game tied, Frazier walked to the plate with the Loganville faithful roaring in the stands. He didn't waste any time, attacking the first pitch and [crushing a three-run home run](#) to left field, an absolute no-doubt bomb.

"I like to hit aggressive," Frazier said. "I like to go early in the count, I don't like to hit on a pitcher's count. So, I felt like I had to redeem myself a little more. It was a little hyped up because the score got tied and I felt like I had to pull within and get a little more out and definitely produce in the moment like I did right there."

Lefthander Chris Erwin, the Rams' ace, went unscathed through the first three innings despite allowing a few baserunners and getting into deep counts, but it caught up to him in the fourth. He finished the fourth with a strikeout after Frazier's home run, but was replaced by Anderson in the fifth.

"He's a very dynamic kid with a live arm," Grayson head coach Jed Hixson said. "He was up a lot tonight, got behind and allowed them to get into a lot of hitter's counts, which made his pitch count get up a lot quicker than we would have liked, to where he couldn't go deeper. So that hurt, the fact that he went so deep in so many counts. But he's a great pitcher who did wiggle off the hook a few times, which shows again what he can do himself, without the defense sometimes."

Grayson got one run back in the top of the fifth when catcher Colton Harrellson singled and his courtesy runner, Casey Collins, came around to score on a passed ball. With the score 6-4, the Red Devils tacked on two more runs in the bottom of fifth when shortstop David Mayo singled to open the inning and Milligan hit a line drive home run to right.

That seemed to crush the Rams as they went down in order in the top of the sixth. The score was 8-4 when Clay was hit by Anderson and Frazier came to the plate for a second straight inning. Anderson was relieved by Allum, a lefty and Frazier knew he wasn't likely to see a fastball, but still couldn't stay back, swinging well over a first-pitch

curveball. He took a called strike before sending the crowd into another frenzy. It looked like a high, routine fly off the bat, but Frazier's super quick bat speed generated enough power to send a second home run well over the fence in left.

“That guy, I was on deck saying how slow his curveball was and I knew it was coming because he warmed up about five of eight of the pitches,” Frazier said. “I tried to wait back on the first one and it was so slow. I tried to wait a little longer the second time and I just muscled that one out . . . it was a good pitch, it was low, but I think my bat speed helped it get out.”

Allum was able to get one out within a walk and two singles, but Mattix hit his own no-doubter, a grand slam to make it 14-4 and end the game in the sixth by the mercy rule.

Frazier finished the game 2-for-4 with five RBIs on the two home runs. He lined out to Meadows in his first at-bat, just missing smoking one as it went off the end of his bat. He struck out in his second at-bat. Loganville's batting practice session saw players take more rounds than what's typical for a high school pregame routine, which partly explains Frazier hitting 23 balls out of the yard, to all fields.

“I thought it was a great team-effort, offensively,” Loganville head coach Jeff Segars said. “One through nine, guys just battled off good pitches and we got some big hits from the bottom of the order to set up the top of the order and Clint came through with two big home runs and Mattix at the end. So it was a big night, offensively, as a team, I thought.”

“I didn't expect a mercy rule, but I do feel like, offensively, we've got a very good team,” Segars said. “We've got some guys who can hit, we've got some power, we've got some guys who just battle and put the ball in play. We run the bases well. So, offensively we're pretty good and defensively we're pretty good. But I didn't expect that. Grayson's got a good team. I mean, their ranking is legit and I think they're going to have a great year.”

Loganville starter Avery Fagan, a righthander, was sitting 88-91 mph in the first couple innings with his fastball and mixed in some offspeed stuff that was just OK. He looked like he was trying to challenge Meadows early, but couldn't find the zone. He walked Meadows in his first at-bat and then hit him his next. Mayo was able to strike him out in his third and final at-bat.

In the game of baseball, judging a team on one game is foolish and it's obvious tonight simply wasn't Grayson's night. The Rams start region play this week and will see an electric atmosphere again when they play Parkview High (Lilburn, Ga.), currently the No. 2 team in the country, on Friday.

“I guess we needed this with all the hype and all that stuff, to kind of get embarrassed like that,” Meadows said. “I guess we kind of needed it to bounce back Friday and come away with a win.”

Frazier is now hitting .600 (15-for-25) with six home runs and 18 RBIs in seven games. Meadows was only 0-for-1 tonight and is now hitting .471 (8-for-17) with one home run and six RBIs. Both were Preseason All-Americans, selected by Major League scouting directors, but Frazier was a first-team All-American after last season when he hit .424 with 24 home runs.

Erwin, a Kennesaw State recruit, ranged from 85-89 mph with his fastball and mixed in an inconsistent curveball in the mid 70s that looked like a potential average or better pitch with sharp break when it was around 76. He also flashed a changeup that is a work-in-progress. He has a string-bean frame at 6-foot-1, 170 pounds.

In the grand scheme of the 2013 draft, Meadows and Frazier are Nos. 1 and 1a. There is little separation between those two and the argument on who is the top guy is going to last beyond the draft. One game won't dramatically shift the landscape, but tonight was unquestionably The Clint Frazier Show.