

2013 NHSBCA Player of the Year

Clint Frazier

Loganville High School, GA



By Nathan Rode (*Baseball America*)

Clint Frazier has never been one to shy away from the spotlight. He stepped right into it on March 12 by delivering a memorable performance in the most-hyped high school game of the year.

Facing a ranked opponent and another highly rated prospect in front of a crowd of 1,300 people—including dozens of scouts, crosscheckers, scouting directors and even a couple general managers—Frazier blasted two home runs that sent the amateur baseball world into a frenzy.

He might as well have clinched it that night, but Frazier’s energetic play and electric performance—he hit .485 with 17 home runs, 45 RBIs and 22 stolen bases before becoming the fifth overall pick in the draft—is what makes him National High School Baseball Coaches Association/Baseball America’s 2013 High School Player of the Year.

Having already profiled Frazier this season, we’re turning the platform over to those who have seen him the most to share their thoughts on Frazier, his character and some of his biggest moments.

Loganville (Ga.) High head coach Jeff Segars has known Frazier since he became the team manager as a seventh-grader; he made the ninth-grade team as an eighth-grader.

“He’s always had good tools as a player, always had that power,” Segars said. “He’s definitely made a lot of strides getting more fundamental and getting his mechanics better hitting wise. He’s really worked hard to improve.”

It would be easy for a kid to get caught up in hype, but Segars quickly learned that any concerns he had about Frazier’s ego were unwarranted.

“Clint has always been a great teammate. People knew him around Gwinnett County, but when he blew up like he did, I was concerned that he would lose focus on the high school season. But he did a really good job this year of enjoying the process of it being his last year, being a senior. He handled all the scouts, the GMs, the media. Everything that came in, he handled it really well coming out to practice and just being one of the guys. He’s not a rah-rah guy anyway. He’s just going to work hard.”

Brad Bouras, the founder and head coach of the Team Elite travel ball club, was a coach at Loganville when Frazier was in middle school and says he immediately knew he was something special. Frazier went on to play for Team Elite as well.

“We saw how strong he was back when he was 12, 13 years old,” Bouras said. “I think he set some pushup record when he was in eighth or ninth grade here—beat a senior in pushups or something like that. There was always some story going around about his freakish strength.

“The question was what type of baseball player he was going to be, but he kept getting better and better through the coaching at Loganville. We all see the tools—great arm strength, the running speed, the bat speed, we all see that—but the best part of his game is he knows how to play the game hard every day. Over a pro season, 150, 162 games, I

think he's a guy who's going to be successful in pro ball because he's going to play hard every day."

Bouras recalls one episode that stood out at a summer tournament that really spoke to Frazier's approach.

"He hit a popup to the shortstop," Bouras said. "A lot of top-level kids don't even run that ball out to first base. He not only ran it out, he ran through first before the ball even touched the shortstop's glove. He ran to second, rounded second and was on his way to third when the ball hit the shortstop's glove, bounced out on the ground. He threw it to third base and got Clint caught in a rundown between second and third and they threw it away and he ended up at third.

"In over 25 years of baseball, I've never seen a guy almost make it to third base on a popup. In our program, those are the things we stress—running balls out, hustling on the field, playing hard everyday. That is the one story I tell everybody. We all know he can hit a ball 500 feet, we all know he can throw 100 mph, we all know he runs a 6.4(-second 60-yard dash). But that story right there, to me, says everything about him as a player, and as a person."

Brad Tyler, the Indians' area scout for South Carolina, Georgia and North Florida, is in his fifth year of scouting after a 13-year professional career and is the signing scout for Frazier. He was in Cleveland with Frazier as he went through some preliminary procedures and general touring before signing. He echoed Bouras while also pointing out Frazier's love for the game.

"We can all gauge the tools and grade them out," Tyler said. "That's the easy part. He plays with such energy. He plays with a confident swagger. He plays with a passion to compete and out-do the next guy. He just separates himself that way. The kid himself, he's a workaholic. It's killing him that he can't get on the field these last two days and just be around that atmosphere. He just wants to be around the game all the time.

"I've seen guys with his talent that can just walk away and be OK with hanging out. Clint is always engaged in every part—whether it's keeping up with stats, watching Twitter or seeing how his friends are doing, going to other games when he's not playing. He's just into the game as much as any player as I've seen."

And the quote that perhaps best sums up Frazier's game, was told to BA's Conor Glassey when he broke down the tools between Frazier and crosstown rival/friend Austin Meadows.

"The bigger the stage, the bigger the game, he's just an animal," an American League area scout said. "You could take the top 40 kids in the country and put them in a steel cage and say, 'Who comes out with the baseball will go first,' and I'd bet you that kid (Frazier) would go first. That's just his mentality."