

High School Team Of The Year: Parkview Rides Streak To Another No. 1 Finish By Brent Drevalas – *Baseball America*

For the second time in four years, Parkview High (Lilburn, Ga.) is Baseball America's 2015 High School Team of the Year.

The Panthers finished with a 34-2 record, including a season-ending 26-game winning streak that culminated with a two-game sweep of Walton High to secure Parkview's third Georgia 6-A state championship in the last five years, and a spot atop the final Baseball America/National High School Baseball Coaches Association national poll.

Before all those wins, however, came a single loss that head coach Chan Brown credits as the turning point for his team's season. It was also the last game they would lose this season. Brown challenged his players to focus on the details needed to become great players, and just as importantly, a great team

"At that point we talked about a saying I came up with: be special," Brown said. "Our kids believed in having great pitching, great defense and timely hitting. They started believing and doing all the little things right. It's obviously very special for our program to win the last 26 games and go 34-2."

Parkview's season also include a title at the third-annual Perfect Game High School Showdown on March 14 when they beat nationally ranked No. 21 Kennesaw Mountain High, from Marietta, Ga. The Panthers were led on the mound by senior Ryne Inman and junior Will Ethridge.

PREVIOUS WINNERS
2014 Barbe HS, Lake Charles, La.
2013 Harvard-Westlake HS, Studio City, Calif.
2012 Parkview HS, Lilburn, Ga.
2011 Archbishop McCarthy HS, Southwest Ranches, Fla.
2010 Flanagan HS, Pembroke Pines, Fla.
2009 Bishop Gorman HS, Las Vegas
2008 American Heritage HS, Plantation, Fla.
2007 Wilson HS, Long Beach, Calif.
2006 The Woodlands (Texas) HS
2005 Russell County HS, Seale, Ala.
Find all winners at baseballamerica.com/awards

In Game One of the state championship series, Inman threw a complete-game shutout, his third of the year, and the 6-foot-5 Ethridge, a transfer to Parkview before the season, followed with a complete game victory of his own to seal the title, allowing just one run.

"We kind of had two No. 1's going," said Brown of his two aces. "Ryne took it upon his shoulders and said he's going to work his tail off all preseason and offseason and get to the point where he wanted to be of winning a state championship and being drafted. Our kids rallied around those two and they knew when the Inman-Ethridge crew had the ball that we were going to win ballgames."

Inman was selected by the Mariners in the 15th round just a couple of weeks after the season and signed with the club to begin his professional career rather than play for Georgia State. "Our pitching staff was fantastic the whole year," junior catcher and Georgia commit Austin Biggar said. "Catching both Ryne and Will was a tremendous honor for me. Getting to know those guys throughout the year, especially Will having just transferred in, catching them was amazing. (I) just had to command them well, they did most of the job."

Offensively, the team was led by Biggar, who hit .370/.492/.760 with six doubles, 11 homers and 48 RBIs.

His two-run homer in Game Two of the championship series was more than enough for Ethridge, a Mississippi commit.

“From two separate standpoints he dictated a game,” Brown said of Biggar. “He threw out well over half the amount of guys who tried to steal on him and he had only two passed balls all year. He just kind of controlled the tempo behind the plate and offensively, he struggled at the beginning, but then he really clicked in and got focused.

“He’s going to be a huge asset for us to have back next year.”

Biggar credited his success this season to the coaching staff, and going out and executing what they taught him both offensively and defensively.

Winning Despite Losses

Parkview’s success comes after losing several key contributors from their 2014 squad, notably lefthander [Mac Marshall](#) and first baseman Isiah Gilliam—both of whom graduated last year and were drafted before going on to play for Chipola (Fla.) JC this spring.

“Losing those two, we were obviously worried about losing the arm and the huge bat,” Brown said of the two 2014 graduates. “But that all fell on the juniors that were going to be seniors and those guys took it upon themselves.

“I think losing Marshall and Gilliam motivated them even more to say, ‘Look, just because we are losing these guys, we can still do this.’ ”

Led by powerful first baseman [Matt Olson](#), who is now Oakland’s No. 2 prospect, Parkview also took home the honor of High School Team of the Year in 2012.

“Tradition speaks, and the tradition year after year is a big thing for us,” Brown said. “Hanging up signs on our outfield wall. They wanted to leave with two signs, but at the senior dinner they mentioned having a third sign, and winning a national championship. This crew of seniors, they had a vision and they worked towards that.”

Despite the loss of Inman and the rest of the senior class, Parkview appears prepared to make another championship run in 2016. Both Biggar and Ethridge will be back as seniors next season.

“The same goal is going to be the one that we attained this year,” Biggar said. “We’re going to be back at it, working hard, trying to get another 2016 state championship and national title. Me and Will are going to be leaders of this team, and hopefully we can get it done.”