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Baseball Player of the Year: Abernathy has Speed to Burn

By Liam Dreesen MDJ Sports Writer
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Special - Cecil Copeland

North Cobb's Jay Abernathy slides safely into third with a stolen base during a game at Walton — one of 45 successful steals Abernathy made this past season.

North Cobb coach Tom Callahan said Jay Abernathy was the engine that made the Warriors go.

Callahan said Abernathy would set the tone both offensively and defensively, and the rest of the team would follow him.

As the Warriors' engine, Abernathy nearly broke North Cobb's single-season stolen base record, finishing just three shy of the record with 45, only getting caught three times. He hit .326, reached base safely in over half of his plate appearances, had an OPS of 1.055 and scored 48 runs.

Abernathy, who more than doubled his stolen base numbers as a senior, said the jump was because he worked on his baserunning IQ and mechanics during the offseason.

In addition, Abernathy was just as good with his glove, anchoring the defense at shortstop. He helped lead North Cobb to a 20-13 record, a second-place finish in Region 5AAAAAAA and a spot in the Class AAAAAAA state playoffs.

For his efforts, Abernathy was named the Cobb County Baseball Player of the Year by the county coaches.

"It means a lot," Abernathy said. "All the hard work I put in, it shows that it paid off. And being recognized by all these different coaches is definitely awesome."

Abernathy has committed to play at the Tennessee, but he may have the option to enter the major leagues following the draft in July. He is ranked 122nd on the MLB.com draft prospect list.

Abernathy said the decision between the majors and college has been a big focus of his recently. He said he is leaning towards playing in college right now.

Abernathy was a four-year starter for the Warriors, and Callahan said he grew from a kid with raw speed and athleticism to a 5-foot-10, 174-pound complete five-tool player.

"If you're only able to do one thing in this sport, you're only going to be valuable for so long, so being a well-rounded player is important." Abernathy said. "I really worked on strengthening my range, my arm and just being able to make different plays at different angles."

Abernathy and Callahan agreed the strength Abernathy put on during his high school career was one of the keys to his as a hitter and fielder.

Abernathy said his hitting improvements made opponents start respecting his bat more leading to more walks. He was walked a total of 34 times, including 10 intentional walks.

“It was funny, because, as a leadoff hitter, I just wouldn’t expect that because I just get on and steal the next base,” he said.

2024 Cobb County All-County Baseball Team

Player of the Year

Jay Abernathy, North Cobb

Pitcher of the Year

Dane Moehler, Walton

Coach of the Year

Jimmy Keane, North Cobb Christian

All-County Team

First Team

1B Cooper May, Hillgrove

1B Jackson Williams, Walker

2B Isander Poventud, Kennesaw Mountain

2B Chase Landmesser, Mount Paran Christian

SS Jay Abernathy, North Cobb

SS Bryce Clavon, Kell

3B Braydon Kersey, Allatoona

3B Tyler Bradford, Kell

C Levi Clark, Walton

C Kyle Crisp, Mount Paran Christian

ATH Miller Alston, Walton

ATH Braden Gabel, Mount Paran Christian

OF Tanner Mourneau, Pope

OF Michael Mullinax, North Cobb Christian

OF Walker Killimet, Walton

OF Carson Snipes, Marietta

OF Foster Currie, Sprayberry

P Dane Moehler, Walton

P Logan Grass, Allatoona

P Asher Sabom, North Cobb Christian

P Pete Jezerinac, Kennesaw Mountain

P Ethan Garrett, Pope

P Boomer Dunn, Campbell

Second Team

1B Todd Haley, Walton

2B Carter Joachim, Pope

2B Tyler Fallman, Walker

SS Craig Kalkbrenner, Harrison

SS Jackson Uggla, North Cobb Christian

3B Jacob Bohacek, Marietta

3B Caden Marcos, Kell

C Josh Tattershall, Osborne

C Lucas Grantham, Campbell

ATH Karsten Leibel, Marietta

ATH Jason Cox, Wheeler

OF Rhett Bonner, Mount Paran Christian

OF Mason Gazaway, Marietta

OF Avery Wilson, Hillgrove

OF Trey Butler, Kell

P Michael Fredette, Mount Paran Christian

P Nolan O'Connor, Mount Paran Christian

P Nick Bobrowski, Pope

P Cooper Underwood, Allatoona

P Matthew Chrzanowski, North Cobb

P Dawson Jones, Pope

Honorable Mention

Harrison: Nick Yarborough, Colin White. **Hillgrove:** Sawyer Kale, Zac Miller, Carson Vick, Davis Wright. **Kell:** Evan Brand, Ryan Knight. David McKechnie, Ricky Solorzano, Jacob Young. **Kennesaw Mountain:** Tyson Harmon, Landon Meng. **Lassiter:** Logan Brock, Ian Fullerton, Michael O'Brien. **McEachern:** J.J. Chapman. **North Cobb:** Mitchell Addison, Ben Barr, Kennan Mobley. **North Cobb Christian:** Rilee Hutchinson, Ryan Kelley, Spears Martin, Brock Parker, Ross Rea, Tobias Rupp. **Pope:** Matt Levinson, Andrew Nelms. **Sprayberry:** Aiden Sarden. **Walton:** Kaeden Gilstrap, Eli Hardage, Jackson Taylor, Davis Wright. **Whitefield Academy:** Wesley Calloway, Taylor Craig, Nate Jones, Wyman Shaheen.