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Baseball Coach of the Year: Keane Keeps NCC on Top

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Jimmy Keane, a player on North Cobb Christian's 2006 state title team, can now claim consecutive state championships as the Eagles' coach.

Special - Cecil Copeland

North Cobb Christian joined Pope as the only two baseball programs in Cobb County history to win back-to-back state championships.

The Eagles' 3-0 win over Appling County in Game 3 of the Class AA state championship series in Statesboro capped a season in which they went 36-5, which gave them 70 wins over the past two years.

Coach Jimmy Keane said this season was the hardest schedule the team had in his time at the helm, but it allowed his players to show their identity of not being afraid of hard work and challenges.

“Winning a state championship says a lot about the team’s resolve and character,” Keane said. “This team had a lot of confidence. And, you know, the losses were definitely few and far between, but the losses all came in moments where I think we did a really good job of just kind of reminding ourselves that, you know, we were a very good team.”

For his efforts, Keane was named the Cobb County Baseball Coach of the Year by his peers.

“It’s incredible. I’m thankful and blessed,” he said.

Keane said players like Asher Sabom, Michael Mullinax and Brock Parker were some of the key players for the team’s success. Mullinax and Parker were both four-year starters who won more than 100 games for their careers.

“The whole team was really vital,” Keane said. “We’ve been blessed to have a lot of great players.”

Keane said it was their leadership that put everyone at ease heading into the final game of the state championship series.

“The coaching staff wanted to prepare the team for Game 3, but we also just wanted to make sure that they felt and sensed a lot of that confidence that we had in them, because we only lost five games all year,” Keane said. “And, you know, that’s not an accident.”

Next season, North Cobb Christian will have the opportunity to become the first Cobb County baseball team to win three straight state titles.

“I think that, in high school baseball, as a coach, you have to recognize that each year’s team is going to look different, and you have to accept that, because it’s not like you can win based on the same blueprint,” Keane said. “So I think, for me, I want this next year’s team to have the feeling that it’s their year, and the seniors know that it’s a special year for them.”