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Minford's Elijah Vogelsong selected as SOSA's Baseball Player of the Year

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MINFORD — Elijah Vogelsong admits he doesn't believe in superstitions.

He doesn't have a pre-game routine, he doesn't have to eat the same meal before a game and he doesn't have to avoid stepping on the foul lines when sprinting to his position.

But what Vogelsong does believe in is earning success by way of hard work. He's shown that time and time again throughout his brief two-year baseball career at Minford.



Minford's Elijah Vogelsong delivers a pitch during the Falcons' 10-0 win over Adena in a Division III district championship. CREDIT: Brock Netter/SOSA

Vogelsong, a sophomore pitcher and outfielder, has been selected as Southern Ohio Sports Authority's Baseball Player of the Year . . . and for good reason.

He was a central piece to a team that went 29-2 and won a second consecutive Division III district title before falling in a regional championship bout with West Lafayette Ridgewood.

Even though his Falcons fell short of a state championship trophy, Vogelsong understands he and his teammates have nothing to hang their heads about.

"We grew stronger as a team and we played for each other. That's what makes the game so fun," Vogelsong said. "As a team, I think we felt as if we fell short of what we were ultimately wanting, but we're still proud of what we accomplished."

Through 31 games, Vogelsong hit .426 alongside three homers, 38 RBIs and 36 runs scored. He also tossed 54 $\frac{1}{3}$ innings, going 8-1 with a 1.41 ERA on the hill.

Those numbers represent a steady improvement from his freshman season.

"From freshman year to sophomore year, I really have gotten a lot stronger," Vogelsong said. "Also, I picked up a lot of knowledge under my belt from being a freshman playing varsity. It kind of gave me a head start coming into sophomore year."

But put aside the numbers, the clutch hits and the big-time pitches and pressure situations. That's not why Vogelsong strives for success. He does so because of the bond he has with his brothers in the dugout.

"I'd do anything for anyone on this baseball team. We're all here for each other," Vogelsong said. "We've cried with each other and we've celebrated with each other. There is a bond between everyone on the team . . . and I know they'd do the same for me."

Those friendships have help show Vogelsong what baseball is really about ... life in general.

"My favorite part about baseball is that you are going to fail most of the time. You aren't going to get a hit every at-bat or you're not going to throw a strike every pitch," Vogelsong said. "But it's from the failure of the game that you learn to have good character and a good attitude. That will make you a better person growing up in life. The game is a life lesson."

Heading into his junior year, Vogelsong has now been a part of two teams that have compiled an overall record of 53-5. He has no plans of that type of success ending in the near future.

“Our goal for next year is to pick up right where we finished this year and win it all,” Vogelsong said. “Keep winning and focus on one game at a time.”