



PANTHER BASEBALL

O'FALLON TOWNSHIP HIGH SCHOOL

HEAD COACH:
Jason Portz

ASSISTANT COACHES:
Scott Seipp
Joe Bauer
Nick Seibert
Kit Zimmerman
Brad Bone
Shane Flaar
Tyler Mattmiller
Cole Schrage
Brian Gibson
Jamie Vanderheyden

IHSA STATE TOURNAMENT
1974—Semi Finalists
1976—Semi Finalists
1994—Quarter Finalists
2006—3rd Place
2009—3rd Place

IHSA SUPER SECTIONAL
2006, 2009

IHSA SECTIONAL CHAMPS
1974, 1976, 1994, 2006,
2009, 2010

IHSA REGIONAL CHAMPS
1960, 1970, 1974, 1975,
1976, 1983, 1994, 2005,
2006, 2007, 2008, 2009,
2010

CONFERENCE CHAMPIOSHIPS

* **Cahokia**
1933, 1935, 1937, 1946,
1951, 1952, 1954, 1962,
1963, 1969

* **Mississippi Valley**
1972, 1975, 1976, 1981,
1983, 1984, 1987, 1991,
1992, 1993

* **South Seven**
1997, 1998

* **Southwestern**
2006, 2008, 2010, 2011

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Never rest on yesterdays
success; the work you
put in today will make you
a champion tomorrow!

The Gashouse Gazette

The Newsletter for O'Fallon Panther Baseball
Vol. 1; Issue 1

Message from the 3rd Base Coaches Box

The Gashouse Gazette is a monthly newsletter produced by the O'Fallon Panther Baseball Program to help better inform the community of O'Fallon about events and happenings in the Panther Baseball program as well as provide instructional, organizational and training tips from different members of the OTHS coaching staff to help better prepare the players in our community for the future. The Panther Baseball program is one of the most successful programs in the state of Illinois and is widely known across the Midwest to produce quality players year in and year out. The Panther Baseball program is interested in the development of all the players in the community and provides opportunities for development throughout the year. Development of players happens at different ages and in different fashions, continue to work at the game and always have fun playing the game regardless of the success you think you are having as a young player. There are plenty of leagues and organizations that are offered right here in O'Fallon to keep our kids active and opportunities to play the game they enjoy. If you ever have any questions or needs related to the game please feel free to contact me anytime at portzj@oths.k12.il.us

Yours in Baseball,

Jason Portz

Head Baseball Coach

Follow Panther Baseball

- **Web**
www.ofallonpantherbaseball.com
- **Facebook**
www.facebook.com/ofallonpantherbaseball
- **E-Mail**
www.diamondboosters@oths.k12.il.us
- **Twitter**
[@othsBaseball](https://twitter.com/othsBaseball)

Important Up Coming Dates

- **Diamond Booster Meetings**
 - OTHS Smiley Multi-Purpose Room
 - Tuesday October 4th, 7:00 pm
- **OTHS Baseball Rummage Sale**
 - OTHS Smiley Campus North Gym
 - **Drop Off**—Fri. December 2nd, 3pm-7pm
 - Saturday December 3rd, 7:00am-2:00pm
- **OTHS Baseball Christmas Tree Lot**
 - Gators Custard Parking Lot
 - Saturday December 10th, 9:00am-7:00pm
- **OTHS Baseball Youth Winter Clinic**
 - OTHS Smiley Campus Panther Dome
 - Sat Feb. 19—1:00pm-4:00pm
 - Sun Feb. 20—9:00am-12:00pm
- **Diamond Booster Dinner Dance and Auction**
 - O'Fallon K of C Hall (HWY 50)
 - Sat Feb. 25—6:00pm-1:00am

"Tradition Never Graduates"

Austin Bossart—Class of 2011

Where is he now? University of Pennsylvania

Message from the Alumni: "Panther Baseball. Such simple words can mean so much. Throughout my four years playing in the O'Fallon baseball program, I took for granted many things we received and the excellent atmosphere we were surrounded by day in and day out at Blazier Field. Now that I have graduated and moved on into a new chapter of my life, I can fully appreciate the lessons I learned, not only about baseball, but about life as well. No other high school program could have prepared me more adequately for the atmosphere and challenge of college baseball. I will always cherish the experiences I shared with my teammates, and I will never forget the tireless hard work the entire coaching staff expended every day so we could enjoy the greatest game ever invented. Now, and for the rest of my life, I will proudly say, I played Panther Baseball."

Did you know?that Austin was a first team All-State Catcher and a member the IHSA All Academic Team his sr. yr.?

From the Desk of Hitting Coordinator—Joe Bauer

Top 5 Ways To Improve Your Mental Approach To Baseball

- Cincinnati Reds Scout* Andy Swenson

1. Watch- When attending higher level games (high school, college, professional), watch the player at the position you play and observe his actions and demeanor on and off the field. Before and after each pitch, watch his preparation, what he does after each pitch, and how he communicates to his teammates.

2. Learn- Observation from players older than yourself is the best way to learn how to play the game, talk the game, and respect the game. No player is bigger than the game of baseball. It has been around way before you were here and it will be around long after you are gone.

3. Listen- Listen to baseball discussions amongst coaches, players, announcers, and even parents as experience is key to growing as a player on and off the diamond.

4. Absorb- Be a sponge to all things related to the game as it will only make you a better player as your skills expand and you get stronger as an individual player.

5. Practice- Perform proper mechanics as often and intensely as you can for short durations of time. Long practices with poor mechanics will only hammer the bad tendencies into a player's arsenal and that is detrimental to the development of you as a player. The phrase 'Practice Makes Perfect' is only true if the practice is with sound/solid/proper mechanics, otherwise practice with bad mechanics will only make perfect outcomes for the opposing teams as wins will be theirs and not yours.

From the Desk of Pitching Coordinator—Nick Seibert

Mechanical Steps to a Stretch Delivery

Ready Position Feet are no more than shoulder length apart. **Glove** is on front hip open and blocking ball. **Ball** is on back hip thumb in waist-line and fingers pointing down. **Upper Body** is erect
Set Position-Hands meet at Belly Button. **Feet-** left foot moves slightly towards back foot.

Step 1-Hands rise slightly no higher than pectorals. **Lift Knee** rises until thigh is perpendicular to drive leg. **Drive Knee** is slightly bent staying tall. **Foot** should be directly under knee toe pointing towards the ground. **Chest** slightly hunched to keep balance

Step 2-Hands start to separate with throwing hand moving toward thigh and hip, **glove hand** raising to near eye level with palm down. **Lift leg** will go down towards the ground to a hovering position just above ground helping us to keep weight back and time for arm swing. **Drive leg** will stay tall to help create tilt and late explosion. **Chest** will stay tall and closed.

Step 3-Glove Hand-glove has reached highest point with glove near eye level with palm down. **Throwing hand** is in a power position somewhere between shoulder height and above with right angle in arm. **Lead leg** reaches out to point of contact with toe and leg slightly closed landing on firm foot. **Drive leg** still bears most of the weight still remaining tall on backside. **Hips and Chest** should remain aligned in this step

Step 4—Glove Hand will pull down and into chest. **Throwing hand** will release out in-front at full extension continuing to follow thru to opposite side of body **Lead leg** will be firm but not completely straight to prevent jarring. **Drive leg** will pivot and push to maximize torque at the end of the delivery completing this force should result in the back leg coming up and over to a balanced athletic position. **Chest** should be over front side and down to maximize extension.

From the Desk of Strength and Conditioning Coach—Jamie Vanderheyden

One of the most common pieces of advice I "hit" into the heads high school athletes is the fact that we need to examine the ratio of time NOT working out, to the time we ARE working out. In the off season, our ratios on a daily basis are generally 23:1 or 22:2. Simply stated, we spend most of the day NOT working out. Over the course of the week (168 hours) we see the ratio extended to about 162:6 for athletes also in Sports P.E. or 166:2 for the freshman who are coming to open room workouts with me.

As a result, it is very crucial for the boys to be maximizing their efforts OUTSIDE of the weight room environment. The question is, how do we "maximize" OUTSIDE of the weight room. Often times the efforts AWAY from the weight room help determine our success...while we are recovering.

Below I have listed some very simple everyday items to pay attention to.

1. Eat MORE protein in the forms of chicken, fish, lean beefs, loins, eggs, and low fat dairy products. With growing young men, where muscles are CRAVING to grow, protein will be the building block to help with this process. Simple suggestions are to eat scrambled eggs instead of a sugary bowl of cereal or replace that afternoon bag of chips with a protein shake with some peanut butter blended in with it.

2. Get lots of sleep (8 hours or more) I hate to say it, but I know that teen age boys these days have many external distractions like girls, technology, and terrible late night reality television. You would be surprised the number of kids I know who sleep with their phones, and text off and on throughout the night. GET MORE SLEEP...and watch your body grow! Let those natural growth hormones be released!

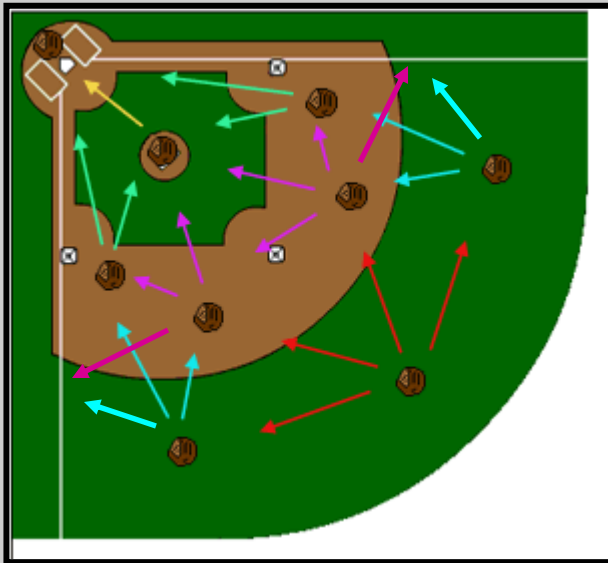
3. Develop a system of support. Surround yourself with people who share a common goal as you. Selecting friends and people to hang out with who have direction and focus will help with not only your weight room physical efforts, but your success in school as well.

Instructional Tip from Blazier Field — Head Coach Jason Portz

Who's In Charge? - Teaching Fly Ball and Pop-up Fielding Priority

A fly ball is hit to left-center, who calls for it? How do the two fielder's determine who has priority? This situation can occur in many places on the field and can sometimes result in a collision or more often having two players looking at each other as the ball drops to the ground between them. In order to prevent these situations it's important to teach your team:

1. Which positions are in charge and able to call off other players.
2. Different set of commands for the player who's in charge and those who aren't.



1. The priorities for a fly ball start with the center fielder having complete control over everyone on the field and then moving in. The basic premise is to have the player moving in on the fly ball have control and the ability to call off the other player. If you look at the diagram below you'll see the arrow pointing from each player to the other players that he can call off. All outfielders have the ability to call off all infielders. The shortstop has the ability to call off all other infielders but not outfielders. Basically if he is moving back into the outfield he no longer has priority. All infielders have the ability to call off the pitcher.

You'll notice in the diagram that I have the pitcher being able to call off the catcher. This really is an age/skill thing. In higher levels of baseball the pitcher will rarely catch a pop fly, but for younger players the reality is that the pitcher will often have a much better chance than the catcher to catch any pop fly hit in front of him. It's a difficult skill for the catcher to learn to catch a fly ball out in front of the plate, so until you know you have a catch that can do it, I would give the pitcher priority.

2. Having each player yelling "I got it" doesn't really help determine who has priority when there is more than one fielder who can catch the ball. To reduce that confusion you can teach the players who have priority to use a different call. I use "Ball" from the fielder who has priority. So if a ball is hit into shallow left field, the shortstop going back on the ball would yell, "I got it". The left fielder coming in would have priority and would yell, "Ball", "Ball", "Ball". Anyone who has called "I Got It" and hears "Ball", "Ball", "Ball" should immediately give way to the other fielder.

Another useful call is to confirm to the other fielder that he has it. So, using the same example the shortstop is going back on the ball and calls "I got it". As he is getting close to the ball he hears the center fielder running hard towards him. His natural reaction will be to worry about the center fielder running into him. He may catch the ball or he may slow down and have it drop behind. The chance of this happening can be reduced if the center fielder can give a call to confirm that the shortstop is the one who is going to catch the ball. We do this by having the other fielder confirm with "Take It, Take It, Take It". When a player that has yelled "I got it", hears "Take It, Take It, Take It" from the other player, he can be confident in making the play.

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News and Notes

Upcoming Season Information

- **Tryouts**—Monday, February 27—March 3, 2012
- **Spring Sports Meeting**—Tuesday February 21, 2012
- **Sports Physical**—Every athlete must have a current physical on file with the nurses office to be able to tryout. Don't wait, check with the nurses office today to make sure your physical is current and if not get a current physical on file today.

Hitting Lessons, Pitching Lessons and Teams Sessions

Sign up today for individual or group hitting and/or pitching lessons. Each lesson will focus on a different fundamental aspect of the hitting and pitching game. Athletes receive instruction on the proper mechanics and strategy associated with the offensive and pitching aspects of the game. Lessons are scheduled specifically with an O'Fallon Township High School baseball coach at a convenient time that best fits your schedule. Athletes will be grouped individually or in pairs to maximize instruction that best fits the needs of the student. We will also offering group lessons for our youth to help fit some of the financial needs of some of our participants. If you wish to register for a group session you will need to compile a group of four (4) students and enroll them in the same session.

PROGRAMS OFFERED

- Individualized Hitting and Pitching Lessons (1-2 students)
- Group Hitting and Pitching Lessons (4 Students)
- Team Practice Sessions
 - o (Please have your coach contact me to arrange instructional practice sessions for you team of 10-14 players)

To arrange hitting lessons, pitching lessons, or team sessions with a member of the O'Fallon Panther Staff please email Head Coach Jason Portz at portzj@oths.k12.il.us

2012 O'Fallon Panther Baseball Winter Clinic

Mark your calendars for this years winter fundamentals clinic!!

- Sun. Feb. 19, 1pm-4pm & Mon Feb. 20, 9am-1pm
 - Registration and payment at www.ofallonpantherbaseball.com
- Youth Coaches are welcome to observe, follow and take notes.**



"Spotlight on a Panther"

#5—Cory Beyersdorfer

Yr: Senior—Class of 2012

Pos.: Outfielder

Bats: Left

Throws: Right

Favorite Former Panther Player Growing Up: Nick Johnson—CF ('09)

Favorite MLB Player: Ken Griffey Jr.

Favorite MLB Team: St. Louis Cardinals

What Has Panther Baseball Taught You?: "What it feels like to be a part of something important and how to respect and trust people who are smarter than I am."

Most Memorable Baseball Moment: "Miles Quintal's homerun off 1st round pick Mike Foltyniewicz of Minooka (94mph) in the IHSA Sectional Championship in 2010."

Diamond Booster Club

• **Diamond Booster Meetings**

- Are held the first Tuesday of Every Month in the OTHS Smiley Campus Multi-Purpose Room
- Any and all baseball program supporters are welcome and encouraged to get involved with the diamond boosters today by contacting Booster Leader Kevin Boewe at diamondboosters@oths.k12.il.us to obtain information.
- **NEXT MEETING**—Tuesday, October 4th—7:00pm

• **Rummage Sale**

- Saturday December 3rd—OTHS Smiley North Gym
- ??Do you have any items in your garage, storage closets, attic or shed that you can no longer use or that you would like to get rid of??**

If so please consider donating your items to the annual O'Fallon Panther Baseball Rummage Sale. Any items that are not sold at the Rummage Sale on Saturday December 3rd will be donated to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in St. Louis.

Any and all donations are graciously accepted and are Tax Deductible as a donation to O'Fallon Township High School Baseball. Receipts for all donations will be available and all proceeds from the sale will go directly to O'Fallon Panther Baseball.

Item Drop Off

Date: Friday December 2nd, 2011

Time: 3:00pm-7:00pm

2011 Golf Scramble A Success!!

- A special thanks goes out to Beth Hopkins and all the boosters who helped make the 10th Annual Diamond Booster Golf scramble a success. We had nearly 80 golfers at Yorktown Golf course on Saturday September 24th. Great food was provided by **Texas Roadhouse** and **Shooters Bar and Grill**. Please stop by and patronize both these supporters of Panther Baseball.