

BATTER'S BOX



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All things North Star League
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MY POSTSEASON AWARDS

Most Valuable Player:

Since moving back to one single division in 2012 we have yet to run into pitcher/position player who can pitch and hit well enough to win both the League MVP and Pitcher of the Year Award, but it is looking like Hunter Malacheck may have done just that finishing the year on the mound 7-0 with a 2.44 ERA and league leading 96 Strikeouts. Malacheck also logged 66.33 innings, good for third most. At the plate, Malacheck hit .386 with 32 RBI, 32 hits, 32 runs scored and 3 HR's

Manager of the Year:

Clean sweep with Maple Lake's Casey Pack taking home the Manager of the Year Award. Year in and year out, the Lakers get it done. They have made their 8th State Tournament in a row and are easily one of the best teams in the state. Lakers finished with an 18-4 NSL record (20-5 overall), had the leagues leading hitter in Ben Clapp, while Hunter Malacheck led the league in RBI, Runs, and Doubles.

****These awards aren't official, just opinions**

WEEKEND 2 PREVIEW

For the first time in a long time, we have the top six teams in the standings vying still playing going into weekend two of Regions. The top two teams will play for the Region Championship, and seeds 3-6 are playing to get into the State Tournament. Maple Lake and Delano have already qualified for State 2023 and have a great matchup lined up for Saturday at 1pm for the number 1-seed. Maple Lake looks to turn to probably NSL MVP and Pitcher of the Year in Hunter Malacheck, while Delano would seem to favor sending Max Otto to the mound.

Our first Elimination/State Qualifier game on Thursday features the Litchfield Blues, looking to make their first state tournament since 2002 and the Region host Loretto Larks. Litchfield has their ace and one of the top pitchers in the league ready to take the ball to get them over the hump. And the offense is vastly improved from years past giving them a great shot on Thursday night to win and play a state tournament game at Optimist Field! Loretto has multiple options to turn to on the mound. Miles Nablo gave up zero earned runs in its opening game v. Buffalo though he suffered a 3-1 loss. I see Loretto using their bullpen early if need be, with Caleb Koskie back, and Andrew Kemper and the back end for a potential save opportunity. Tyler Maher and Kent Koch have done a great job offensively in its first two Region games, but they'll need some youngsters to step up if they are looking to get a few runs off Liestman.

Friday night features the big bats coming out! Buffalo will try and keep Hutchinson from making it's third state tournament in a row, while trying to get back to state after a two year hiatus. Look for the Bulldogs to go with reliable Jon Euerle with Even Soeffker, John Weber, and Ethan Hansen all ready to go out of the bullpen. Hutch should have enough days off to give the ball back to Lane Glaser, who has been their most reliable top end arm. On the offensive side look for Buffalo to get a big game out of Colton Haight, and Justin Jefferson, while Hutchinson will try and out hit the Bulldogs with Jake Wendland, and Marcus Hahn staying hot.

Since the inception of this Region 12C format in 2012, we've certainly had our share of big time matchups in weekend 2, and 2023 will be no different. As mentioned before, we have our top 6 teams still fighting for state berths and seedings.

ALL NSL 1ST AND 2ND TEAM

Pitchers (Starting)	Team	IP	W	L	H	R	ER	K's	BB	ERA
Hunter Malachek	Maple Lake	63.33	7	0	46	19	18	96	28	2.44
Gunnar Goodwin	Maple Plain	49.00	5	2	27	20	14	51	24	2.57
Lane Glaser	Hutchinson	46.33	4	3	47	25	15	41	25	2.65
Avery Liestman	Litchfield	53.00	3	3	46	22	20	67	22	3.40
Max Otto	Delano	57.00	7	0	31	16	11	79	13	1.74
Austin Schnieder	Delano	35.00	4	0	28	9	5	19	7	1.29
Pitchers (Relievers/Closers)	Team	IP	W	L	H	R	ER	K's	BB	ERA
Jacob Niemela	Dassel-Cokato	48.33	3	2	41	29	24	44	24	4.47
Jake Nelson	Delano	15.00	3	0	10	5	5	25	3	3.00
Jayden Fleck	Hutchinson	37.33	3	2	31	21	11	18	18	2.65
First Team	Team	Position	AB	Runs	Hits	Avg.	RBI	2B	3B	HR
Austin Kantola	Cokato	Catcher	68	5	22	324	17	5	0	0
Jake Wendland	Hutchinson	1B	59	27	23	390	28	4	0	7
Evan Soeffker	Buffalo	2B	74	20	26	351	15	6	0	1
Ben Clapp	Maple Lake	3B	72	28	34	472	20	8	1	3
Trevor Jaunich	Delano	SS	88	30	33	375	22	3	2	3
Donnie Mavencamp	Maple Lake	OF	80	20	33	413	23	7	1	3
Hunter Malacheck	Maple Lake	OF	83	32	32	386	32	10	1	3
Colton Haight	Buffalo	OF	88	30	33	375	5	5	0	1
Tyler Maher	Loretto	DH/Hitter	86	21	34	395	24	8	1	1
Mike Frericks	Maple Plain	DH/Hitter	75	19	26	347	15	7	0	2
Second Team	Team	Position	AB	Runs	Hits	Avg.	RBI	2B	3B	HR
Brandon Brolin	Loretto	Catcher	75	14	23	307	11	7	1	0
Hunter Hart	Delano	1B	54	18	22	407	15	2	0	3
Nick Kulseth	Loretto	2B/SS	73	24	23	315	13	3	2	2
Luke Fobbe	Maple Lake	SS	77	23	25	325	8	3	0	0
Jack Paulson	Delano	3B	61	15	23	377	20	4	2	1
Brady Miller	Delano	OF	55	20	23	418	9		0	0
Isaac Nelson	Cokato	OF	85	14	34	400	22	8	0	1
Eddie Estrada Jr.	Litchfield	OF	57	18	20	351	25	3	0	7
Eric Hulterstnum	Litchfield	Hitter	86	20	30	349	13	5	1	1
Matt Piechowski	Hutchinson	Hitter	69	29	26	377	17	4	0	0