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On the pond at the
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Photo by Michaela Kelly/Nighthawk News

Senior Mannon Haynes takes a cut against USA Home School in a game earlier this month. After a quick recovery from an ACL injury suffered before football season, Haynes is now a key member of the baseball team.

Haynes hopes for home runs in a future of recovery

By Will McFarlane
Staff Writer

Sweat drips off of his face as he extends his leg one more time. The pain overtakes his body, but senior Mannon Haynes never gives up. Rehab for Haynes' knee was a seemingly endless process, but it was all worth it for him to play his senior season of baseball.

"I went twice a week to the physical therapist," Haynes said. "I had to run, do squats and do some jumping. It was pretty much like a full workout, and it was hard."

For Haynes, sports are everything. As a dual-sport athlete throughout high school, Haynes excelled at both baseball and football. During the summer going into his senior year, he tore his ACL during a football scrimmage at Northeastern High School.

"When it first happened I was feeling confident because I could walk on it," Haynes said.

However, the MRI he later took revealed a complete tear in his ACL, meaning his senior season of football was down the drain. With an injury as severe as his, it could have taken up to a full year for it to heal properly. But with the intense physical therapy he went through, the injury healed in just six months.

"I'm just glad I can get out there and compete again – in any kind of

sport," Haynes said. "Just to be able to be with my guys and be able to lead them in the right direction."

Not only is Haynes glad to be back, his teammates feel the same way. Junior McCoy Davenport knows that the team wouldn't be the same without him.

"He has a huge impact on the team with his speed in the outfield and his hitting ability," Davenport said. "Our team would be completely different. We would be down."

Coach Steve Saunders has seen what Haynes can do and is glad to have him back.

"(Haynes) is a great left-handed pitcher with great movement on his pitches and he locates well," Saunders said. "He knows how to get people out."

Last season, Haynes had a 0.88 earned run average, meaning that while he was pitching, the opposing team only scored an average of less than one run. His goals for this season are to be a solid individual player and to take things one game at a time.

"I want to bat over .300, I want to pitch well and not have too many errors in the field," Haynes said. "As for the team, I want to do

well in conference play and win at least one playoff game."

Haynes has played baseball for Saunders all four years of his high school career, so he knows exactly

what he would be missing if Haynes couldn't play.

"We would be missing our ace of the staff," Saunders said. "We also count on him for leader-

ship roles. He's not a vocal leader, but he leads well by example on and off the field."

Davenport also played football with Haynes for three years. He knows that Haynes is a natural competitor and is a huge asset to any team he is a part of. Davenport was on the field when Haynes got injured, so he knows first hand how impressive it is that Haynes is back and able to play baseball.

"Not playing football with him was weird because he was such a huge asset to that team, too," Davenport said. "For him to recover as fast as he did and to be able to play baseball at what I would say is at 100 percent is just incredible. I'm glad I got to witness both sides and see how greatly he's improved."

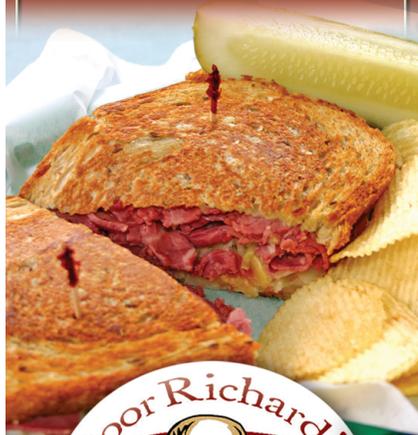
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- Mannon Haynes

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