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Miller all business on field

Written by

Chris Nelsen

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Despite his massive 6-foot-7, 235-pound frame, Jared Miller isn't afraid to show the softer -- and goofier -- side of his [personality](#).

"I like to joke around and lighten the mood," the former Avon High School baseball star said. "I could get on coach (Troy) Drosche's nerves every now and then because I was probably too laid back."

Once he stepped on the field, however, it was all [business](#) for the big left-handed pitcher. The Vanderbilt University recruit proved that time and time again.

Miller, also one of the area's top hitters, was named The Star's All-West Player of the Year. The award was chosen by a vote of area coaches with input from The Indianapolis Star high school sports staff.

Last season, Miller finished 5-1 on the mound with a 1.06 earned-run average and 76 strikeouts. At the plate, he boasted a .465 batting average with 42 RBI and 38 runs. He also blasted 13 home runs. His batting average, RBI and home run totals in the spring were all new Avon single-season records. The Orioles finished 25-7, which

broke the school record for wins in a season.

"To be Player of the Year is definitely an honor," Miller said. "Anytime you play in a county with teams like Brownsburg, Plainfield and Tri-West, there's going to be a lot of great players. This is something I'll always remember when looking back on my high school career."

Despite all his personal achievements, Miller's senior season didn't conclude with a storybook ending. He was unable to pitch against Brownsburg in a Class 4A sectional final because of inflammation in his left shoulder, hampering the Orioles' chances in a loss to the Bulldogs.

"It's going to be tough to look back on it. I didn't win my last high school [game](#)," he said. "I would have liked to pitch at the end of the season. I could have done more on the mound if my shoulder hadn't flared up."

Miller took a couple weeks off after the

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season and said the injury is almost fully healed. He pitched an inning at the Mr. Baseball Classic on June 21 and didn't feel any pain.

"I'm getting real close to 100 percent," he said. "I expect to go to Vanderbilt at 100 percent. There are no surgeries planned. It was just inflammation that needed rest."

Miller, who was recently named to the All-State First Team, expects to contribute next year in college. He chose Vanderbilt over Missouri and Arkansas, among many others. Vanderbilt, a Southeastern Conference school in Nashville, Tenn., made the college World Series this year.

"I definitely feel like I made the right decision," Miller said. "Their pitching coach (Derek Johnson) is one of the best in the country at developing young arms. I'm excited to get down there and work with him."

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