



Knight named National Coach of the Year

Over the past four years, Sumrall baseball coach Larry Knight and his staff have built Sumrall High School baseball into the top program in the state and one of the best in the nation. In 2008, Knight led Sumrall to its first ever state baseball title by beating Mooreville. He has followed with two more consecutive titles by beating South Pontotoc in 2009 and Water Valley in 2010. During his four years with the Bobcats, Knight's team has gone 135-12 and have won 72 of their last 73 games. Sumrall is only the fifth team in Mississippi history to win three straight baseball titles. The last team to do so was Stringer, who won titles in 1991-1993.

In 2009, Coach Knight coached his team to 36-0 and joined New Hope as the only two teams in Mississippi to go undefeated in a season. That Bobcat team also finished ranked #1 nationally by MaxPreps Xcellent 25 poll. In 2010, his team set the Mississippi state record for most consecutive wins with 67, which is also ranked fourth all-time nationally. The 2010 squad finished ranked #1 in the nation by USA Today, Collegiate Baseball, and MaxPreps. Coach Knight was selected as the #1 Mississippi coach and also the #1 coach in America. He was chosen to coach the East in the seventh annual AFLAC High School All-American Baseball game played at PETCO Park in San Diego. Knight is the first coach from Mississippi to be chosen for the event.

Regarding Coach Knight and his staff, first year Sumrall football coach Mark Mchale said, "They do an excellent job in teaching the skills needed to win. Their organization and discipline they bring to the field is what I want to teach my guys."

When asked how he balances teaching and coaching, Knight said, "Its not real easy. The key is time management and prioritizing. I try to put just as much effort into teaching as I do into the baseball team, so that my students will be just as successful as my players."

His success with his players can be seen with Jared Miller signing with Mississippi State in 2009 and Jackson Posey signing with Southern Mississippi in 2010. He also has two players that have verbally committed to Division-I universities for the 2011 season.

Knight also said, "I constantly tell my players that they don't want to be over-confident because any day you don't play well, you can be beat."

As for now, Coach Knight is back from San Diego and is preparing his team for a run at a fourth consecutive 3A state title and an eighth title for Knight during his coaching career.

