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SportsTone.net

RAMSEUR - Lincoln Coble let out a primal scream as he recorded the final out of the sixth inning Tuesday night in a victory at Eastern Randolph. The tall slender right-hander from Trinity High School had just pulled off another magician-like performance, keeping a slim one-run lead after getting out of a bases-loaded jam by striking out three straight hitters.



Coble and the Bulldogs finished the 3-2 win over the Wildcats to run their record to 3-1 on the young season, with Coble fanning 11 in 6 $\frac{2}{3}$ innings before being removed because of his pitch count.

It was the second straight impressive performance for Coble, who pitched a complete-game two-hitter in a season-opening 1-0 win over Southeast Alamance. Coble walked one and fanned 12. In his two starts, he's gone 13 $\frac{2}{3}$ innings, allowing two runs on five hits with 23 strikeouts. Batters are hitting .125 against him.



Trinity senior Lincoln Coble pitching Tuesday night at ERHS.

"I'm not used to it," THS coach Ryan Spencer said about having a hurler with the talent Coble possesses. "I have been coaching for 10 years and have only had one or two guys come through and do what he's doing. He's the best as far as stuff goes."

His stuff, Coble said, wasn't as sharp against ER as it was against SE Alamance, but he had enough to keep Eastern Randolph winless at that point at 0-2.

Coble entered his senior season with high expectations. As a junior, he was 7-3 with 86 strikeouts in 57 innings. The Bulldogs finished 18-8, advancing to the third round of the playoffs where they were edged out by Randleman, who trailed 2-0 before tying the game in the fourth and winning it in walk-off fashion.

If Trinity is going to enjoy a season as successful as last year, Coble will be right in the middle of it.

"Lincoln can mix his pitches, but his velo changes the game," Spencer said. "It's great to have a dude with this much talent."

Coble worked out of a number of jams against ER, who did plate single runs in the third and sixth innings. But when backed up against the wall in that sixth after ER pulled to within 3-2, Coble shined brightest.

"When guys are on base, I don't think about it, I just throw to the plate," Coble said. "I just try and throw the ball in the zone."

Coble said he's gained a lot of confidence, strength and improved his mechanics thanks to a five-month stint at Carolina Acceleration in Greensboro. Plenty of weight lifting and throwing has excelled his game even further.

The Bulldogs, who lost to Union Pines on Thursday, face a busy week with games scheduled against Western Alamance, Morehead and Forbush.

Coble, a N.C. A&T commit, said he's excited about this season.

"We have great pitching and defense," he said. "Win the conference and go to the playoffs."

Where Coble and Bulldogs will more than likely make a lot of noise once again.