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By Dennis Garcia  
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RANDLEMAN - The Randleman Tigers have put together one of the most impressive feats ever seen in high school baseball and if that streak is to continue, senior Seth Way is going to play a big role.

As the Tigers begin play tonight in the NCHSAA state playoffs, they will be looking to extend a streak that has seen them advance to at least the fourth round of that tournament 13 years in a row. If the Tigers achieve that impressive accomplishment in 2024, Way is going to be one of the main reasons. He's certainly one of the biggest reasons as to why the success at Joe Brookshire Field has continued throughout the 2024 season. The Tigers will host West Lincoln in first-round state 2-A tournament action Tuesday.

"He's done it all year for us," RHS veteran coach Jake Smith said after Way handcuffed Southwestern Randolph in a 6-1 Piedmont Athletic Conference Tournament semifinal win last week. "He commands the zone with his fastball on both sides of the plate and he can throw offspeed, any pitch on any count. It's tough to sit back on one pitch. He's a great leader as well. He trains and does everything right and that carries over to the field."

Way, the younger brother of Uwharrie Academy and Randleman player Trey Way, who attends Virginia Tech, has certainly stepped out of that proverbial shadow and generated his own solid career.

As a freshman, he played jayvee, but also dressed for varsity action where he saw firsthand the commitment it takes to win a state championship.

"Just to get him experience and be around the dugout and see how we do things," Smith said of dressing Way as a freshman. "I knew he would be a valuable piece throughout his career."

His role increased his sophomore year as he saw some action on the mound and he also earned a starting spot in the outfield, hitting seventh and, once again, the Tigers claimed a state title. On the mound, he was 3-0 with a 2.45 ERA, striking out 44 in 25 innings of work.

Last year, his role increased as he combined with Austin Lemonds - who is now at UNC Greensboro - to provide the Tigers a solid one-two punch on the mound. He was 8-2 with a 1.85 ERA, striking out 123 in 72 innings of work.



*Randleman senior Seth Way.*



*Randleman Tiger and Virginia Tech commit Seth Way.*

This year, he has been a leader on and off the field, with a 7-1 record and a 1.95 ERA. He has fanned 105 in 60 innings of work. But just as important is the offense he has provided the Tigers since his sophomore season. Way said he isn't pleased with his .323 average this year, but he has slugged four home runs and knocked in 29 his senior campaign.

"He really works hard on his hitting as well," Smith said. "He's right in the middle of our lineup and has done a great job. He's developed a body over the past four years where he can run the ball out of the park. He's gotten some big hits for us. He's an all-around great player."

Way has definitely shown improvement over the past few years and he gives a lot of credit to Brandon Golden of The Ghost Lab in High Point. Golden is the founder and Director of Performance for the elite training lab.

"We work on being more explosive, confident and what pitch to throw on what counts," said Way, who has been going to the Lab for nearly two years. "We work on grips, getting faster in general and getting everything to just work better."

Smith said it is that work ethic that has really benefited Way.

"It all goes back to training," Smith said. "A lot of kids will work in the off season, but then just throw when they have to when the season starts. He works hard in the off season and during the season. He's really mature, doesn't get rattled and he's a fantastic person more than anything."

Way said he implements all the lessons he has learned from the Lab, Smith and family members and executes a simple philosophy, but one that is hard for some to execute.

"Attack and be able to throw any pitch at any time," said Way, who is heading to Virginia Tech in the fall. "I've been working on my two-seam to get a lot of jam shots and rollovers and a lot of weak fly balls. I keep working on my (velocity) and working on my changeup to make sure it gets in the zone on any count."

As part of a program that has seen nothing but success for more than a decade, Way said he realizes his time with the Tigers is running out. And he wants to take advantage of every minute he has remaining.

"It's been absolutely awesome," Way said of his prep career. "Having Coach Smith around us all the time has been awesome. Wearing a Tiger uniform has been awesome."

That's an accurate word to describe what Way has accomplished as well.