

# Joe Shallenberger

Minnetonka 2004/2009/2012/2016 MVP Class A

**In his own words:** It's kind of hard to remember individual years. They all jumble together. In 2004, I was just coming back from trying out my hand in Independent ball that year. I had a couple of seasons with the St. Paul Saints and then I went to Kalamazoo, MI for a couple of months and played out there. I ended up coming back right around the Fourth of July. Called Kevin (Hoy) up and said hey I'm back in town, can I come and join the team? He said sure. At that point Steve Schmitz had joined the team and was playing shortstop. I actually played the rest of that year at third base.

In 2009, that year just kind of felt like one of those years. We got on a roll offensively and knew it was going to be tough for us to be beat. We played the finals at Dunning field in St. Paul. It's a smaller park for sure. I remember playing Commanding Edge on a Friday night so it was a big game. I was able to hit a couple of home runs that game. We kind of pulled away late to beat them (Minnetonka 8, Commanding Edge 4). Knowing we had to play Air Freight the next day, they had worked their way through the losers' bracket. They just didn't have enough pitching left and that was one of our years with the most firepower at one time (Minnetonka 20, Air Freight 5). It was a lot of fun.

2012 was in Bloomington. The second game against Stockmen's I believe Nate Melek threw a no-hitter (Minnetonka 4, Stockmen's 1). I remember some of the games. The St. Paul Capitals were one of those up and coming teams. We just rolled right over them (Minnetonka 16, Caps 0). A couple years after that they finally got their championship and took us down a couple of times. We were almost always able to get that Friday night win and stay out of the losers' bracket.

2016 was one of those years we had to come through the losers' bracket. We lost the first game (Minnetonka 1, Diesel Fuels 7). They had a guy that just shoved it to us that game. We were able to battle back from behind the eight ball. We had enough pitching depth to keep us in it. We got lucky and played a really tight game against the Caps (Minnetonka 8, Caps 7) and were able to come out on top. Once we got to the championship game against the Shark (Tri-City), a team we know well, they have a lot of good guys on their team, we were able to set the tone early and jump out in front. They were a good team that year, but we were a force after we won four games coming through the losers' bracket. It was going to be tough to hold us back (Minnetonka 9, 11; Tri-City Sharks 3, 0).

Good memories. It's funny to hear some of those scores now. Playing as many games as we have throughout the years and as old as I am (42) you have to go back and think about what each game was and how they all played out. I'm getting close to the end now, my boy is almost 10 and my daughter is playing softball, too.



- Joe Shallenberger, Minnetonka, 2004, Third Baseman
- Batted .500, going 8 for 16 and scoring six runs
- Hit two homers and drove in 8 RBI
- Joe Shallenberger, Minnetonka, 2009, Shortstop
- Hit 10 for 17 at the plate, a .588 batting average
- Knocked out five home runs and rove in 13 RBI
- Joe Shallenberger, Minnetonka, 2012, Shortstop
- Hit 9 for 17 (.529 average), scoring eight runs
- Hit two home runs and three doubles, driving in 12 RBI
- Joe Shallenberger, Minnetonka, 2016, Shortstop
- Batted .581, going 18 for 31 at the plate
- Knocked out four homers, three doubles and 14 RBI



**We were able to jump on them early. I've always been very blessed to have great hitters in front of me where when they get on based and I get a hit, I'm able to drive in runs."**

