

Grant Ketel

St. Michael

1997 MVP

Class C

In his own words: That's the year that I pitched three games—every weekend and I think I pitched a fourth because we played Friday night and Monday, the championship.

I do remember pitching against my college catcher, he was from Jackson and I knew him pretty well. We had had many memories together. I didn't want to face him but I had to (St. Michael 12, Jackson 3). We both went to Grandview in Iowa. The only other big highlight, I think it was in the 10-inning game against Regal. My dad was the manager, so we had a guy on third with one out and it was the winning run because it was the bottom of the inning. My dad went to talk to the batter and said—second pitch we are going to suicide squeeze—thinking he won't swing at the first pitch. Well, he took a full cut and fouled it back. That could have been a double play or a pop-up and there goes our plan back to square one. Anyway, he fouled it back and they weren't ready for the suicide squeeze on the next pitch and he laid down a perfect bunt and that was the winning run (St. Michael 5, Regal 4). That was the highlight of the last weekend.

Then we came around and played Regal again in the championship. They were out of pitching and fortunately I could come back. Back when I was a lot younger on three days rest, pitch Friday night and come back on Monday (St. Michael 13, Regal 0).

I pitched the Forest Lake game (St. Michael 2, Forest Lake 1) and started four overall. We felt like we should have won the 1996 tournament, but we didn't. Fortunately everyone came back and we definitely had a target on our back the whole tournament in 1997. We came a pitch away in 1996 from going to the championship. Lost to Gaylord. I did come in in relief in that one on two days rest and blew that one. So we were all determined to win it in 1997, right in our backyard at Maple Lake and Delano. Only about 15 miles from home. We had a good turnout, good fan base, too.

We had a good core. We were all classmates. Two of us played at Grandview and actually a third one did come down for fall so we had been playing baseball with each other since seventh grade, plus T-ball. A couple that were a year younger that had been playing with us and not many older ones. Dad (Roger Ketel) took over for John Wilkens, a great mentor and he taught the game how it's supposed to be played. My dad was the JV coach and they had been coaching together for many years. So dad took over. Thanks to dad and Wilks it got to be a good success story and we had success for many years.



- Grant Ketel, St. Michael, 1997
- Pitcher
- Pitched 29 innings
- Allowed only total four runs on 14 hits
- Held a 0.62 ERA for the Tournament
- Walked five while striking out 24



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