

# Akron Beacon Journal

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## Sports

### Spring sports spotlight: North Canton Hoover baseball

By **Michael Beaven**

**Beacon Journal**

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**Editor's Note:** The Beacon Journal is going to spotlight spring sports teams and athletes each weekday for the remainder of June who compiled standout seasons last year, but were unable to compete this year due to the coronavirus pandemic.

**Sport:** Baseball

**School:** North Canton Hoover

**Last year's records:** 17-12 overall, 8-4 Federal League

**Last year's accomplishments:** Hoover was the Federal League runner-up, a Division I sectional champion and a district runner-up. Jackson topped Hoover in the Federal League and a district title game.

**Quotable:** “We knew going into the 2020 season we would be extremely young and inexperienced, however, we also knew that we would be very talented. As a coaching staff, we were excited to see this group compete. We felt the chemistry and all the pieces and parts were there, but they just needed to gain the experience and confidence for us to have a special season. Having the season canceled was definitely upsetting and frustrating for sure; many spring athletes missing opportunities to compete in sports they love tears your heart out. You don’t get those days back and that’s what makes it so difficult. Although, we all know that the safety and well-being of everyone, young or old, is of more importance. I am definitely very proud of our team and how they handled a tough situation with compassion, maturity and respect.” — Hoover coach Bryan Ashby

– **Michael Beaven**

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**Returning starters:** Connor Ashby, Jr., SS-P; Owen Blackledge, Jr., 1B-P;  
Jamison Ellis, Sr., P

**Notes:** Hoover won 11 out of its final 15 games in 2019.... Ashby is committed to play baseball at Kent State University and Blackledge is a Texas Christian University recruit.... Ashby has earned All-Federal League, All-Northeast Ohio District and All-Ohio honors in baseball as a shortstop and football as a quarterback. Ashby hit .380 last season with 38 hits, 24 runs, 18 RBI and 13 stolen bases.... Hoover was set to feature nine seniors in 2020, including Ellis (Ohio Wesleyan golf recruit) and four college baseball recruits — third baseman Connor Mayle (John Carroll), pitcher Ben Mohler (Walsh), catcher Nick Presutto (Mount Union) and outfielder Griffin Wieck (Mobile).... The Vikings graduated eight starters from last year's team: Brendan Auman, Sam Bucher, Nick Friedl, Markos Kantzos, Mitch Maurer, Josh Salinas, Brody Ware and Cody Wilson. Five are on a college baseball team, Ware at Kent State, Maurer and Salinas at Malone, Auman at Mount Union and Wilson at Hiram.