

# Gullo Credits Staff For Fredonia's Success

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With Vince Gullo at the helm, the Fredonia baseball team has become a perennial contender for state titles.

This spring, even though the Hillbillies came up just short in the state championship game to Marlboro, it was the Hillbillies' fifth trip to the state final four under Gullo since 2005.

According to an article written by Gib Snyder in a June edition of the (Dunkirk) OBSERVER, the Hillbillies have gone 272-99 in Gullo's 15 seasons as head coach. They also hold a 125-43 mark in league play and a 50-13 record in the playoffs. His teams have won seven league titles, have a 9-0 record when playing for a Section VI Class B1 or B2 title, have won seven overall Class B titles, five New York State Public High School Athletic Association Class B Far West Regionals and two NYSPHSAA Class B state titles (2006, 2013).

Even after his unprecedented success, Gullo always emphasizes the contributions and tireless work of his outstanding coaching staff, which includes Tim Cowan, Phil Schrader, Jim Rush, Jake McCune, Charlie LaDuca and Terry Presto.

"I (am) very fortunate to have great assistant coaches," Gullo explained. "I rely so heavily on Charlie LaDuca, Tim Cowan, Terry Presto and Jake McCune. Our practices are super-organized and the level of baseball knowledge that our boys have everyday is far superior than (most) team(s) in the state. ... (Our coaching) is such a team, collective effort. I may be the head coach, but we rely on each other."

Along with their top-notch coaching staff, the Hillbillies also had gifted student-athletes all around the diamond in 2016.

Ace pitcher Jarod Burmaster was honored by the New York State Sportswriters Association as a first-team all-state selection in Class B while fellow teammates Reid Tarnowski, Ryan Mroczka, Lucas Voss and Vince Gullo were all Chautauqua-Cattaraugus Athletic Association Division 1 West first-team selections.

"That's how you know when you have a good team," Gullo said when asked about his team's vast array of talent. "When you (can) have (multiple) stars every game. Jarod was a star every game, but he couldn't do it all himself. Voss and Tarnowski on the mound and Gullo, Mroczka, (Seth) Schrader hitting the ball, we had quite a few stars throughout the year."

Between the perfect balance of coaching and skill, 2016 became a season the Hillbillies won't soon forget.

"This season we were a young team," Gullo emphasized. "Because there were so many B schools in Western New York Section VI, we were hoping we would have a chance to win a B2 section title and hopefully we would be in the B (crossover) game. With Olean, Gowanda, Springville, Alden, there were strong teams. (For us) to get through everybody (all the way to the state title game) was quite remarkable."

For leading the Hillbillies back to the state final four – a level they have become accustomed to reaching – Gullo is once again The Post-Journal's Baseball Coach of the Year.