

# Sports



Incarnate Word's Zach Zepeda hits the ball at the game against St. John Paul II on Thursday at Whataburger Field.

PHOTOS BY ANNIE RICE/CALLER-TIMES

## IWA back at state tourney for first time since 2003

Len Hayward

Corpus Christi Caller Times  
USA TODAY NETWORK — TEXAS

The Incarnate Word Academy baseball team enters Tuesday's TAPPS Division II state semifinal with some confidence and something that is a key to playoff success — pitching depth.

The Angels will take on Houston Lutheran South at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday in Crosby and Perry Burkett and Zach Zepeda have provided a solid 1-2 punch in a run to the program's first state tournament appearance since 2003.

"That's huge because as you know it's back-to-back games in a tournament and with the depth we have in our pitching we can roll our No. 2 or No. 3 out there," first-year baseball coach Josh Aguas said. "Zach Zepeda has been our No. 2 all year and we are just as confident in him."

The Angels won the TAPPS Division II District 6 championship, which included topping crosstown rival John Paul II twice this season. They followed with a 2-1 win over Fort Bend Christian and Burkett threw a complete-game shutout in a 4-0 victory against San Antonio TMI-Episcopal.

Burkett had 14 strikeouts in the victory.

"(Burkett) knows how to prepare for games," Aguas said. "We sit down at the beginning of the year and we figure out a schedule and a throwing program that's going to work for him. Plus, he goes and does a lot of stuff on his own."

Burkett is 10-0 this season and has compiled 99 strikeouts in 69.1 innings.



Incarnate Word and St. John Paul II play in a game Thursday.

Zepeda, meanwhile, is 4-3 with 78 strikeouts in 42.2 innings. The two have also combined for 32 walks in a combined 112 innings pitched this season.

"Pitching and defense is what we live and breathe on," Aguas said. "We have some timely hitting. But the boys have

just bought into that. They play with intensity and go to work every day. After they lost last year, actually to Lutheran South, we asked the boys just to make a commitment to the program and they've really taken off as a team."



Quinton Martinez

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## Boling gives Texas HS track a new legend

AUSTIN — You wake up 12 hours later and wonder if it really happened.

Matthew Boling decided he had a little Johnny 'Lam' Jones in him hours after his record-breaking 10.13-second 100-meter dash.

Jones, the former U.S. Olympian, New York Jet, Texas Longhorn and Lampasas Badger, has been the face of the UIL State Track Meet for nearly 40 years. And he's the No. 1 topic of recollection of graybeard Texas sports reporters for more than a generation.

Former longtime San Angelo Standard-Times reporter Jack Cowan told me about him. He spoke about Jones' feats in 1976 like they were yesterday — chasing down the entire field as the anchor leg of Lampasas High School's mile relay to win gold at the UIL State meet.

In a decade of covering the state meet I couldn't recall the hype that surrounded Boling after his wind-aided 9.98 went viral and caught the nation's attention.

Walking on over to a crowd of three dozen photojournalists parked behind the long jump pit early in the afternoon, I saw Boling long jump once, a pedestrian-for-him 25-foot jump that was spectacular to watch.

As fans (25,858 in total) began to fill every corner of Mike A. Myers Stadium in preparation of Boling's attempt at history in the Class 6A 100 meters, there was an excitement level and eagerness unseen in years at the Texas state meet.

Part carnival barker, part WWE introduction, the crowd was whipped into a frenzy by the announcer just before the marquee event and when Boling's name was announced everybody but the coaches and family of the other eight runners in the 100 roared.

Unbelievably, Boling did not disappoint and separated from a talented field of sprinters, cruising to a state and national record of 10.13 seconds that was wind-legal this time.

Expectedly, hundreds of fans (maybe a few thousand) left after watching what they thought was the moment of the meet.

Maybe even the moment of the decade or beyond.

Boy, were they wrong.

Just before 11 p.m. in the final race of the two-day meet, Houston Strake Jesuit's 1,600 relay team hung with DeSoto just enough to give Boling a prayer when he took the baton from teammate Job Trahan.

Boling stared at a 20-to-30-meter deficit with 400 meters of his high

See MARTINEZ, Page 3B

## Woods looks 'solid' at Bethpage ahead of PGA Championship

Steve DiMeglio  
USA TODAY

FARMINGDALE, N.Y. — Tiger Woods, dressed appropriately to combat the biting chill in the air and the spattering of raindrops from above, got back to work Monday at saturated Bethpage Black.

Woods, wearing extra layers and a wool ski cap he draped over his golf hat, didn't resent the foul weather. Instead, his spirits were high despite the temperatures being low as the week of the 101st edition of the PGA Championship commenced.

Shortly after teeing off on the first hole at 7:40 a.m. with the thermometer reading 43 degrees, Woods got a chuckle after the impact of his approach to the green brought up a couple of worms. Yes, thousands of worms littered the fairways after a drenching on Sunday. The extra spectators have been in waiting at Bethpage Black as prolonged

stretches of rain and bitter temperatures have hovered over the public course for weeks.

Woods had another chuckle at the uphill par-5 fifth when his second shot, with 250 yards to the front of the green, came up 25 yards short despite his mighty whack with a 3-wood. The ball just won't go anywhere in the frosty and thick air.

But Woods said he feels good going forward despite not playing since his emotional victory at the Masters. It was his 15th major triumph but first in 11 years, his fifth Masters title but first in 14 years.

"I feel good," Woods said. "Played at home for four days. Got a couple more days of work to get in and I'll be ready to go."

Woods spent a considerable amount of time on and around each of the greens as he polished off the front nine in 2 hours, 20 minutes, the heavy, wet rough

rimming the putting complexes sometimes giving him fits. But other than a few head-scratching moments, Woods was spot on.

"First and foremost, he looks good and he's moving around well," said Joe LaCava, Woods' caddie. "That's the first thing I look for, especially considering the conditions. He's driving it well; the game looks pretty good, and his short game around the greens looks really good. I know it's just a practice round but still, looks pretty solid."

LaCava said he isn't concerned about Woods taking a month off between starts, that going from one major to another isn't as alarming as some would think.

"Being well rested is more important than anything," LaCava said. "And winning the Masters took a lot out of him. Playing another tournament, wherever

See PGA, Page 3B



Tiger Woods plays from the fairway on the ninth hole during a practice round for the PGA Championship on Monday at Bethpage State Park-Black Course.

PETER CASEY/USA TODAY SPORTS