

# Wynkoop excited about helping Gamecocks try and accomplish goals

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Pitching duels usually happen between two teams during the season, but for the Gamecocks there's a pitching duel happening in the preseason.

The battle is not to see who wins the game, but to see who wins the opening day starting spot. Jordan Montgomery moved on to the professional ranks after last season, leaving the Friday night starting spot for the taking.

The duel is between the two remaining weekend pitchers from last season: Wil Crowe and Jack Wynkoop.

Wynkoop, who started 16 games last season, is the probable opening day starter after being No. 2 last year to Montgomery.



Even though he was second in the rotation, he produced top-of-the-rotation numbers last year. He went 7-6 and had an ERA of only 2.86.

Now that he is entering his third year with the team, he is being looked upon to help anchor a team with majority underclassmen.

"I'm excited to be one of the older guys on the team this year and I'm really excited about the guys we're putting out on the field," Wynkoop said. "I think we have to do things we've done in years past and work as hard as we can every day and hopefully accomplish our goals."

Wynkoop and Crowe both said that it doesn't matter where they start that both of them will go out and pitch well. Wynkoop will go out there throwing to a catcher not named Grayson Greiner, but he sees it as an opportunity to mentor the younger catchers on the team.

"It's nice throwing to an older guy, but now that I'm older it'll be nice to help some of the younger catchers in there. We have four talented catchers, so that's pretty exciting," Wynkoop said.

Wynkoop knows that the team playing behind him will have some younger guys on it and he is ready to take one of those weekend spots and help the team win.

He said that the team is doing the little things to create a tough identity by working hard in the weight room and on the field and he's just a smaller part of the bigger whole.

That effort, he said isn't just him doing it — it's a team effort. And with College of Charleston quickly approaching it's important to continue showing those younger players what the team is about.

"I think all the older guys are just trying to lead by example and show these guys what we're all about. I think they've caught on really well," Wynkoop said. "The young guys are playing a big role this year and I think they're ready for that. They're real mature kids, so we're not too worried about them."

**\*\*Story by Collyn Taylor/Photo by Allen Sharpe\*\***