

# First State Bank finishes season with 15-5 mark

By Daniel L. Chamness  
If the summer of 2022 made Tuscola First State Bank head coach Ron Urban smile, you might want to check him out in

the summer of 2023. His team posted a record of 15-5 this year. Of the 12 players on the team, they lose only Jack Koehne from the 9-10

year old group. "Jack is not just a great baseball player, but he is a great athlete," said Urban. "He plays everything. One thing you can

count on from him is he brought it. He gives 100 percent not only in the games, but practice as well."

The 10-year old was one of six players to hit .483 or better on the team. Of those, three hit over .500. The team was led by Kingston Urban, the son of the head coach. Urban hit .579 on the year. He was backed up by two other hitters that hit .500 each. Wyatt Hershberger, who played in all but two games, had 17 hits in 34 trips to the dish, while (need a first name) Lockwood, who only appeared in five games, finished with three hits in six trips to the plate.

Owen Laurers and Koen Shipley joined Koehne in the .480's. Both were steady players on the team as Laurers pounded out 21 hits in 19 games for a .488 batting average. His hit total was second on the team only to Urban, who finished with 22. Shipley, who played in 16 games, swatted the per at .486 pace. He had 17 hits, 11 of which were singles.

Vincent Talbot had eight hits in 18 games for a .400 batting average.

And that is just the offense. Shipley and Laurers accounted for 10 of those 15 wins. Shipley, the ace of the team, ran his record to 7-1, while Laurers was 3-2 with three saves. Shipley retired 77 batters by striking them out, while Laurers fanned 68. When those two were not on the hill, Koehne, Urban or Troy Boyer were.



TROY BOYER, a member of the First State Bank 9-10 Year Old Team, watches a pitch in the first round game of the playoffs. First State Bank won the game 18-3 and it was over 3.5 innings as there is a 15-year slaughter rule after three innings. Photo by Daniel L. Chamness.



JACK KOEHNE, PLAYING in one of his final games with First State Bank 9-10 Year Old Team, throws a pitch home. The 10-year old was the pitcher of record in their 15th win of the year. With the 18-3 win over Tolono, First State Bank moved to the second round. Photo by Daniel L. Chamness.

"At this age, the game is more about having fun, not so much about winning," said Urban. "We want the boys to have a good time and enjoy the time with their friends. We want to celebrate their personal achievements, which could be anything done at the plate or on the hill. Win or lose, we always tried to keep it fun."

The season came to an end on Friday night, when they lost to St. Joseph #2 in the third round of the tournament by a 22-12 score. First State Bank actually outthit St. Joseph, post-

ing 18 hits to their 17. A total of six players had multiple hits lead by Shipley, who was 3-for-4 and homered twice. He drove home three runs and crossed the plate three times. Hershberger and Koehne each had three hits as well.

To earn the right to play St. Joseph #2, they topped Tolono #2 in the second round. In the 18-3 win, Koehne was the pitcher of record working the final 2 1/3 innings. Laurers led the way offensively for First State Bank with a 3-for-4 performance. He drove home four runs and scored once.



JACK KOEHNE DIVES in to ultimately take 1st place in 50yd Freestyle. Photo by Margie Carter.



LYDIA KOCH competes in breaststroke for the first time. Photo by Margie Carter.

## Illinois could see controlled power outages this summer

By TAMMIE SLOUP  
FarmWeek

As electricity demand across the Midwest climbs, the amount of power available to the grid servicing a large swath of Illinois has dipped, prompting regulators to warn of controlled outages during extreme summer weather.

Rolling blackouts or brownouts typically associated with Western states may be necessary in Illinois and other Midwest states in the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) footprint. MISO is the regional electric grid operator that oversees power in 15 states, including the southern two-thirds of Illinois.

Several factors are contributing to the heightened risk, including some early generator retirements, changes to the generation resource mix and increased demand for electricity, Brandon Morris, MISO adviser-strategic communications, told FarmWeek.

The summer peak forecast is 124 gigawatts with 119 gigawatts of projected regularly

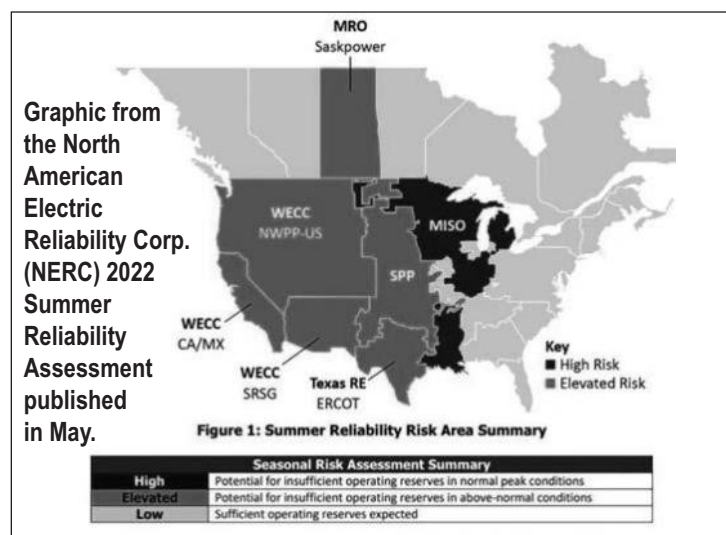
available generation within MISO.

"Over the last several years, MISO has observed concurrent trends of increasing extreme weather events that strain the system and an evolving generation portfolio with a higher percentage of renewables that increases the complexity of managing the bulk electric grid," Morris said. "The reality for the zones that do not have sufficient generation to cover their load plus their required reserves is that they will have increased risk of temporary, controlled outages to maintain system reliability."

MISO generally has access to significant energy imports from neighboring grid operators, and in emergency conditions MISO can also access additional resources including operating reserves, Morris added.

"But this year's summer assessment and capacity auction reflect the potential for the tightest conditions we've experienced," Morris said.

And that assessment has



state Rep. Charlie Meier, R-Okawville, worried. Meier, who raises beef cattle, testified during a joint hearing between the Illinois House's Public Utilities and Energy & Environment committees last month, sharing his concerns, especially for farmers.

"If my power goes out and it was a very hot day, or a very cold day, we could lose our livestock. They wouldn't have water. The heaters wouldn't kick on. The fans wouldn't kick on," he said during the hearing.

Meier recently spent thousands on a new generator to ensure his livestock would be able to survive if he's not home to flip the switch.

"We need a reliable base-load energy source," Meier said. "I'm not against clean energy. We need to have a plan that's focused on getting there before we're shutting everything down."

Aside from logistical issues on the farm during a power outage, Meier pointed out another concern - energy prices.

Ameren Illinois warned customers they will pay more for electricity because of inflation, the conflict in eastern Europe and the closure of coal-fired electric generation facilities.

The average customer could see an increase of more than \$600 annually.

But farmers aren't the average customer.

"Can you imagine a farm when we go into drying grain? What that's going to do (to our bills) now?" Meier told FarmWeek.

In the coming weeks, Meier plans to issue safety advisories, such as warning people not to run generators in their garages or homes.

"We need to be putting out reminders all summer long knowing that this is going to be a possibility," he said.

Among the most vulnerable areas heading into summer is southern Illinois, according to a forecast by the North American Electric Reliability Corp. (NERC), a regulatory authority that monitors risks to the grid. "Industry prepares its

equipment and operators for challenging summer conditions. Persistent, extreme drought and its accompanying weather patterns, however, are out of the ordinary and tend to create extra stresses on electricity supply and demand," said Mark Olson, NERC's manager of Reliability Assessments, in a news release. "Grid operators in affected areas will need all available tools to keep the system in balance this summer."

Morris said temporary, coordinated power outages are extremely rare and a last-step emergency measure implemented to protect the electric grid.

"MISO and its members drill and prepare for energy emergencies, and have many tools at our disposal to maintain grid reliability throughout these conditions," he said.

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