

# K-18 wins double header against Smith Center

By Dick Boyd

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The Norton K-18 baseball team won a double-header with Smith Center on Thursday at John Ryan Field in Norton.

Norton rallied to win the opener 10-9 with three runs in the bottom of the fifth. In the nightcap, the Blue Jays took control early to win 10-3.

## First game

Norton led 1-0 after the first inning where Clint Cole walked, Mickey Hahn reached base on a fielder's choice, Jacob Green singled and Kendall Miller singled. Hahn scored.

Smith Center scored four runs in the top of the second inning and one more in the top of the third to lead 5-1. Norton tallied one run in the bottom of the third when Brant Cox and Green both singled and Cox scored to make it 5-2.

Smith Center extended their lead to 8-2 with three more runs in the top of the fourth. Norton rallied with five runs in the bottom of the fourth to cut the visitors' advantage to 8-7. Josh VanLaeys doubled, Trenton Wright singled, Jace Ruder walked, Caden Kinderknecht walked, Cole singled and Cox doubled. All except Cox scored.

Smith Center was able to score one final run in the top of the fifth to make it 9-7.

In the bottom of the inning, Green singled, Miller walked, VanLaeys singled, Kobie Unterseher singled, Wright got on base on a fielder's choice and Ruder walked. Green, Miller and VanLaeys scored to earn the 10-9 win for the Blue Jays.

Norton had 12 hits, five walks and four strike outs.

Leading hitters for Norton were Green, 3 for 3 and Cox, VanLaeys and Unterseher, all of whom were 2 for 3 with the bat.

Jacob Green pitched the first three innings, allowing two hits, walking eight and striking out six batters. Winning pitcher was Josh VanLaeys, who gave

up three hits, walked four and struck out one batter in two innings.

"This was kind of an ugly win but we will take it," said Norton head coach Rick Green. "Our players came out flat and we fell behind 8-2 but I was really proud of the way they battled back for the victory, scoring eight runs in the last two innings.

"Josh VanLaeys came in and threw strikes for us and allowed the defense to help him out."

## Second game

In the nightcap, Norton pitcher Clint Cole allowed Smith Center no runs until the top of the fourth inning. Meanwhile, the Blue Jays tallied seven runs in the first two stanzas to lead 7-0 after three.

In the bottom of the first, Cole singled, Hahn walked, Green doubled and all three scored.

In the bottom of the second, Unterseher, Wright and Will Ellis all walked. Cole singled, Cox walked, Hahn got on base on a fielder's choice and Green walked. Unterseher, Wright, Ellis and Cole all scored.

Neither team scored in the third inning. The visiting Redmen scored their only three runs in the top of the fourth inning to make it a 7-3 game.

Norton answered with three more runs in the bottom of the fourth. Miller walked, Cole doubled, Hahn tripled and Green singled. All except Green scored.

The Blue Jays had six hits, seven walks and five strike outs. Leading hitters were Cole, 3 for 3 and Green, 2 for 2.

Clint Cole pitched the entire game, giving up just three hits, walking two and striking out 10 batters.

"In the second game, we came out strong and kind of let them get back in it," said coach Green. "But, then we finished strong.

"Clint Cole pitched his best game of the year and did a great job of keeping their hitters off balance."

## Next action

Norton hosted Phillipsburg on Monday but the Norton Telegram's press time deadline was too early to report the results.

The Norton K-18's next game will be Thursday when they travel to Plainville.

The double-header will begin at 6:30 p.m.

(Right) Norton catcher Jace Ruder did a good job of protecting home plate when he tagged out a Smith Center runner trying to score during the first game of the double-header here on Thursday. Every run was important as the Blue Jays ended up winning by just 10-9. Norton also won the nightcap 10-3.

—Telegram photo by Dick Boyd



## Kansas native to entertain at Phillipsburg's Rodeo

Kansas native Slim Garner will serve as the barrel-man in the 83rd annual Kansas' Biggest Rodeo in Phillipsburg in August. He has worked in rodeo arenas for the past 21 of his 39 years, growing up around it as his dad, also a rodeo clown, did the same.

The Fredonia native is best known for his over-sized gadgets and props. He'll bring a barbecue grill, Cowboy Cadillac, and airplane to Phillipsburg to cook chicken in the arena and take cowboys on short plane rides. He likes to take unusual

ideas and make them into funny situations at a rodeo. Most of his ideas come to him as he's sitting around, shooting the breeze with friends.

Kansas' Biggest Rodeo takes place August 2-4 at the rodeo arena north of Phillipsburg. Tickets range in price from \$12-\$14 for adults and \$9-\$10 for kids ages three to 12. Tickets are on sale at Heritage Insurance Group in Phillipsburg (785-543-2448). For more information on the rodeo, visit [www.kansasbiggestrodeo.com](http://www.kansasbiggestrodeo.com)

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