

Legion team splits with Cambridge in Norton

By Dick Boyd

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The Norton American Legion baseball team split a double-header with Cambridge on Wednesday, July 11 at John Ryan Field in Norton.

The Blue Jays won the opener 10-6 but lost the nightcap 15-7.

First game

Norton held Cambridge scoreless in the top of the first inning and scored four runs in the bottom of the inning to lead 4-0. Trey Millan walked, Dakota Dreher doubled, Dalton Miller got on base on an error, Tug Keiswetter doubled, Andrew

Ellis singled, Trevor Lewis was hit by a pitch and advanced.

Millan, Dreher, Miller and Keiswetter all crossed home plate.

Cambridge came back to score four runs in the top of the second to tie the score at 4-4. Norton edged back ahead 5-4 in the bottom of the second when Travis Cressler and Millan both walked, Miller singled and Cressler scored.

Cambridge was three up, three down in the top of the third and Norton answered in the bottom of the inning with five more runs to make it 10-4. Lewis and Jordan Wahlmeier both singled,

Cressler was hit by a pitch and advanced, Millan got on base on an error, Dreher walked and Miller singled. All except Miller scored.

Two runs by Cambridge in the top of the fourth were too little, too late and Norton won 10-6.

The Blue Jays had seven hits, six walks and seven strike outs. Leading hitter for Norton was Dalton Miller, who was 2 for 3 and the only Norton player with more than one hit.

Trevor Lewis pitched for Norton. He allowed only four hits, walked eight and struck out four batters.

Second game

In the nightcap, Cambridge scored four runs in the top of the first and two more in the top of the second to lead 6-0.

Norton cut the Cambridge lead to 6-2 in the bottom of the second. Keiswetter and Ellis doubled in succession. Wahlmeier singled and Jacob Brooks got on base on an error. Keiswetter and Ellis both scored.

Cambridge was three up, three down in the top of the third and Norton ate away at the Cambridge lead with two more runs to make it 6-4. Millan, Dreher, Miller and Keiswetter singled in succession and Millan and Dreher both tallied.

Norton was scoreless the next two innings and Cambridge added two more runs in the top of the fifth to make it 8-4.

The visitors added five more runs in the top of the sixth to extend their lead to 13-4.

Norton added three more runs in the bottom of the sixth. Cressler and Millan both singled, Dreher blasted a triple and Keiswetter singled. Cressler, Millan and Dreher all scored.

Two Cambridge runs in the top of the seventh extended their lead to 15-7 and Norton was unable to score again.

Despite the loss, Norton had 15 hits in the game, two walks and 13 strike outs.

Leading hitters for the Blue Jays were Keiswetter, a perfect 4 for 4 with the bat; Millan, Dreher and Ellis, each 2 for 4.

Dakota Dreher was the Norton pitcher. He gave up 12 hits, walked nine and struck out five batters.

Next action

Norton hosted Smith Center on Monday evening of this week. The Blue Jays now await Division AA Zone Tournament action in Goodland, Sunday, July 22-Wednesday, July 25.

Colby will play Goodland at 3 p.m. on Sunday and, at 7 p.m., Norton will play the winner of the Colby-Goodland game.

K-18 defeats Phillipsburg in twin bill

By Dick Boyd

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The Norton K-18 baseball team journeyed to Phillipsburg on Monday, July 9 for makeup play from a June 18 postponement and returned with a double victory.

The Norton bats were very active in both games as the Blue Jays won the opener 13-10 and the nightcap 19-6.

First game

Norton scored four runs in the top of the first inning. Brant Cox singled, Mickey Hahn doubled, Jacob Green doubled, Kendall Miller singled and Kobie Unterseher singled. All but Unterseher scored.

Phillipsburg added three runs of their own in the bottom of the inning but four more Blue Jay tallies in the top of the second extended the visitors' lead to 8-3. Caden Kinderknecht singled, Clint Cole singled, Cox walked, Hahn doubled again and Josh VanLaeys walked. All except VanLaeys scored.

Phillipsburg did not score in the bottom of the inning and

Norton added five more runs in the top of the third. Unterseher doubled, Kinderknecht and Cole both walked, Cox and Hahn both singled and Green doubled. All except Green scored.

Phillipsburg responded with four runs in the bottom of the fifth inning and two more in the bottom of the sixth made the final 13-10.

Norton had 15 hits, three walks and two strike outs. Leading hitters for Norton were Unterseher, 3 for 3; Hahn, 3 for 4; Cox, 2 for 3 and Green, 2 for 4.

Mickey Hahn was the winning pitcher. He allowed seven hits, walked five and struck out three batters in two and one-third innings. He was relieved by Kendall Miller who gave up two hits, walked four and struck out four batters in three and two-thirds innings.

Second game

Norton tallied eight runs on eight hits in the top of the first inning to bat around and lead

8-0. Cole and Cox both singled, Hahn was hit by a pitch and advanced, Green singled, Kendall Miller walked, Unterseher singled, Wright got on base on an error, Ruder singled, Will Ellis walked and Cole and Cox both singled again in their second time up in the inning. All except Unterseher scored.

Phillipsburg managed just two runs in the bottom of the inning but added four more in the bottom of the second to cut the Norton lead to 8-6.

The rest of the game was all Norton as the Blue Jays scored six more runs in the top of the fourth and five more in the top of the fifth to win going away 19-6.

In the top of the fourth, Cox walked, Hahn belted a three bagger, VanLaeys was hit by a pitch and advanced, followed by walks by Kendall Miller, Unterseher, Wright and Ruder. Ellis got on base on a fielder's choice. All except Unterseher and Ellis scored.

In the top of the fifth stanza, Hahn singled, Green walked,

Kendall Miller singled, Unterseher walked, Ruder got on base on a hit and all scored.

Norton had 13 hits, 11 walks and just two strike outs. Leading hitters for the Blue Jays were Cole, who was 3 for 4; Cox, who was 2 for 3; Hahn, who was 2 for 3 and Kendall Miller, who was 2 for 2.

Norton used three pitchers. Josh VanLaeys got the win. He gave up three hits, walked five and struck out two batters in two innings. Jace Ruder hurled two innings, giving up no hits, walking two and striking out two batters. Trenton Wright finished with one inning. He allowed no hits, no walks and had no strike outs.

Coach's comments

"Once again, we hit the ball well but had way too many errors," said Norton head coach Rick Green. "We need to tighten up our defense heading into the sub-regional tournament. For the evening, we banged out 28 hits and scored 32 runs. Any coach would be happy with that but we allowed them back into both games with sloppy defense. We can't keep giving up extra bases and especially not give teams extra outs in innings."

K-18 takes third in Sub-Regional

By Dick Boyd

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The Norton K-18 baseball team had a good weekend, winning three of four games and placing third in the Sub-Regional Tournament played in Plainville.

In the process, they qualified for the Regional Tournament to be played in Ellis this Saturday and Sunday.

At 11 a.m. on Saturday, Norton opened tournament play and defeated Russell 11-1. Their second contest began at 8 p.m. on Saturday and resulted in an 11-1 loss to undefeated Victoria.

Beginning at 9 a.m. on Sunday, Norton outscored Hays 13-1 and, in a 3:30 p.m. contest on Sunday, the Blue Jays whipped Smith Center 14-3.

First game

The 10-run rule came into effect after three and one-half innings in the 11-1 win over Russell.

Norton scored three runs in the first inning, six in the second and two in the third. Russell's only run came in the bottom of the third.

In the first inning, Brant Cox and Mickey Hahn both singled, Jacob Green doubled, Josh VanLaeys and Kobie Unterseher both singled and Trenton Wright got on base on a fielder's choice. Cox, Hahn and Green all scored.

To start Norton's half of the second inning, Jace Ruder, Layton Miller, Clint Cole, Hahn, VanLaeys and Unterseher all singled and all scored.

In the third inning, Norton completed scoring when Ruder got on base on a fielder's choice, Miller and Cole both singled, Cox got on base on a fielder's choice and Hahn singled, Miller and Cox both scored.

Norton had 14 hits, no walks and one strike out.

Leading hitters for Norton were Hahn, 3 for 3; Unterseher, 2 for 2; Miller, 2 for 2; Cole, 2 for 3; VanLaeys, 2 for 3.

Clint Cole was the winning pitcher. He allowed two hits, walked four and struck out seven batters.

Second game

Against the unbeaten and eventual tournament champion Victoria team, Norton had the bases loaded in two different innings but was unable to score but once in the bottom of the first inning.

Walks were the reason for Norton's one run. Cole was hit by a pitch and advanced, Hahn was hit by a pitch as well, Green also received a free base and Miller was hit by a pitch. Cole came home.

Victoria scored three runs in the first inning, four in the second, three in the third and one in the fourth.

Norton had two hits, six walks and seven strike outs. Cox and Green each got one hit.

Jacob Green was the losing pitcher. He pitched three innings, allowing four hits, six walks and striking out five. Josh VanLaeys pitched two-thirds of an inning, giving up one hit, walking two and striking out no batters.

Third game

In beating Hays 13-1, the 10-run rule came into effect once again.

The only run scored by Hays was in the top of the first inning.

In the bottom of the first, Norton scored three runs. Cole and Cox both walked, Hahn got on via a fielder's choice, VanLaeys got on base on an error, Miller walked and Unterseher was hit by a pitch and advanced. Cole, Hahn and VanLaeys all scored.

The Blue Jays tallied seven runs in the second stanza. Mitchell Hickman was hit by a pitch and advanced, Cole walked, Cox doubled, Hahn, Green and VanLaeys all singled and Miller and Unterseher both walked. Cole, Cox, Hahn, Green, VanLaeys, Miller and Unterseher all scored.

Norton's final three runs came in the bottom of the third inning. Miller and Cox both doubled and Hahn singled and all three scored.

Norton had seven hits, eight walks and five strike outs. Leading hitters for the Blue Jays were Hahn, 2 for 3 and Cox, 2 for 2.

Winning pitcher was Clint Cole. He pitched three innings, allowing just two hits, walking two and striking out five batters. Jace Ruder relieved him for one inning. He gave up no hits, walked one and struck out one batter.

Fourth game

The 10-run rule also came into play when Norton defeated Smith Center 14-3.

Smith Center's only three runs came in the top of the fourth.

Norton scored one run in the bottom of the second when Unterseher walked and Wright singled him home.

In the top of the third, the Blue Jays ran 13 runs across home plate. Ryan Johnson was hit by a pitch and advanced, Cole singled, VanLaeys walked, Green was hit by a pitch and advanced, Miller singled, Unterseher doubled, Wright walked and Johnson walked again, Cole and VanLaeys both doubled, Unterseher got on base on a fielder's choice and Wright walked. Everyone scored and Johnson, Cole and VanLaeys all scored twice.

Norton had eight hits, eight walks and one strike out.

Leading hitter for the Blue Jays was Cole, who was 2 for 3 with the bat.

Winning pitcher was Jacob Green. He allowed two hits, walked one and struck out two batters in three innings. Hurling one inning was Jace Ruder. He allowed no hits, walked four and struck out two batters.

Coach's comments

"Overall, I am very happy about going 3-1 over the weekend and advancing to next weekend's Regional Tournament in Ellis," said Norton head coach Rick Green. "Things went pretty much as we expected. Three of the top four teams came out of our division and Victoria stayed unbeaten and won it."

Victoria defeated Plainville to win the championship and Russell defeated Hays to place fifth.

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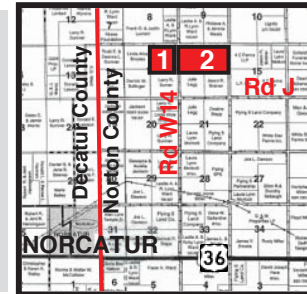
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