

K-18 baseball team hosts Goodland, takes doubleheader

By DICK BOYD

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The Norton K-18 baseball team hosted Goodland, one of the top teams in northwest Kansas, on Thursday, July 10 at John Ryan Field in Norton and won a doubleheader by scores of 6-5 and 13-2.

Norton entered the first game tied with Goodland and Colby with 13-3 records.

Opener

Neither team scored in the first inning but Goodland ran four runs across home plate in the top of the second. Norton was still unable to score in the bottom of the inning and Goodland added another run in the top of the third to lead 5-0.

Norton scored their first run in the bottom of the third inning when Josh VanLaeys walked and Collyn Auker singled him home.

With Trenton Wright pitching, Goodland was held scoreless the rest of the game. Norton did not score again until the bottom of the sixth when the Blue Jays tallied five runs to win 6-5!

Jacob Green and Auker both walked, Trenton Wright singled, Will Ellis singled, Hayden Wiltfong walked and Riley Sides

doubled. Green, Auker, Wright and Ellis all scored before Wiltfong stole home on a wild pitch for the winning run!

Norton had 6 hits, 5 walks and 8 strike outs in the game. Sides went 2 for 4 with his bat.

Trenton Wright pitched the entire game for Norton, giving up 7 hits, walking just 1 batter and striking out 5.

"We entered these games knowing that Norton, Goodland and Colby would all advance to the Regional Tournament in Hays this weekend but we needed to improve our seeding," said Norton head coach Rick Green.

"We fell behind early in the first game but kept battling until the end. They actually hit the ball better than we did but Trenton did a good job of not allowing them to bust the game open, retiring 10 out of their final 11 batters.

"Trailing 5-1 going into the bottom of the sixth, we had some great at-bats to put ourselves in position to win the game. Jacob and Collyn got it started with a couple of hard earned walks.

Trenton got a single to load the bases and Will drove in two runs with his single. Then, with

two outs, Riley got a game-tying two-run double and moved Hayden to third. Then, we got the wild pitch and Hayden came in for the winning run."

Nightcap

The momentum from the win in the first game carried over to the second contest as Norton scored nine runs in the bottom of the first inning. Sides, Green and Auker all singled before Ellis, Jace Ruder, Wiltfong and Ryan Johnson all walked. In their second time up in the inning, Sides, VanLaeys and Green all walked and Auker singled. All scored once except for Sides, who tallied twice.

Norton added two more runs in the bottom of the second inning when Ellis walked, Ruder doubled and Wiltfong singled and Ellis and Ruder both scored to make the score 11-0.

The bottom of the third saw two more Norton runs as VanLaeys walked, Green doubled, Auker walked, Ellis walked and Ruder walked and VanLaeys and Green both scored to extend the lead to 13-0.

Goodland scored their only two runs in the top of the fourth inning but it was too little, too

late for the visitors.

Norton had 7 hits, 12 walks and 2 strike outs. Leading hitters for the Blue Jays were Green and Auker, both going 2 for 2.

Jace Ruder was the winning pitcher. He allowed just 1 hit, walked 3 and struck out 3 batters.

"The final inning win in the first game pumped up up for the second game and we jumped on them with nine runs to start," said coach Green. "Jace pitched well, allowing only three base runners in the first three innings but no runs. They had a little rally in the fourth inning but never really threatened us.

"These two wins were a great confidence builder for us."

(Pictured right)

Norton came from behind to edge Goodland 6-5 in the first game of a doubleheader at John Ryan Field on Thursday, July 10. Hayden Wiltfong is shown scoring the winning run in the bottom of the sixth inning when he stole home after a wild pitch by Goodland.

- Telegram photo by Dick Boyd



K-18 baseball team wins doubleheader on the road at Goodland

By DICK BOYD

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After defeating Goodland twice in Norton on Thursday, July 11, the Norton K-18 baseball team traveled to Goodland on Friday, July 12 and returned with two more victories.

The young Blue Jays outscored the young Cowboys 10-5 and 16-3 to end the regular season with 14 wins in a row for a 17-3 record!

Opener

Goodland took an early 2-0 lead in the first inning. Norton tallied five runs in the top of the third inning to lead 5-2. Ross Cole singled, Riley Sides was hit by a pitch and advanced, Josh VanLaeys singled, Jacob Green got on base on an error, Collyn Auker singled, Trenton Wright got on base on a fielder's choice, Will Ellis singled, Hayden Wiltfong got on base on an error. All except Auker, Ellis and Wiltfong crossed home plate.

Goodland tied the score at 5-all with three runs in the bottom of the third.

It was all Norton the rest of the way, however. The Blue Jays broke the tie with two more runs in the top of the fourth and three more in the top of the fifth inning.

Norton's two fourth inning runs came when VanLaeys got

on base on an error and Green and Auker both doubled back-to-back. VanLaeys and Green scored.

In the top of the fifth, Jace Ruder got on base on an error, Wiltfong walked, Cole singled for the second time in the game, Sides singled and Green singled for the second time in the contest. Ruder, Wiltfong and Cole all scored.

Norton had 11 hits, 4 walks and 7 strike outs. Leading hitters for Norton were Green, 3 for 4; VanLaeys, 2 for 4; Auker, 2 for 4 and Cole, 2 for 3.

Hayden Wiltfong pitched three innings for Norton, giving up 4 hits, walking 3 and striking out 3 batters. He was relieved by Josh VanLaeys who allowed no hits, walked just 1 and struck out 5 batters in three innings.

"Having just played Goodland the night before, I was curious to see how both teams would respond," said coach Green. "Once again, they took an early lead, then we batted ten players in the third and took a 5-2 lead. After they tied it at 5-all, we got five more runs to win the game 10-5.

"Hayden started pitching and battled hard for three innings and then Josh came in and did a great job of shutting them down, allowing only two runners in three innings. Five of those nine

outs were strikeouts."

Nightcap

Norton scored just one run in the top of the first inning in the second game but six more in the top of the second, eight more in the top of the third and one final run in the top of the fourth inning in the 16-3 win.

Norton's single first inning run came as Green doubled, Auker singled and Wright singled and Green scored.

In the top of the second stanza, Ruder singled, Wiltfong singled, Ryan Johnson got on base on an error, Riley Sides doubled, VanLaeys walked, Green doubled, Ryan Lively walked and Wright singled. All except Lively and Wright scored.

Goodland had still not scored when Norton came up in the top of the third inning. Johnson singled, Sides walked, VanLaeys walked, Green was hit by a pitch and advanced, Wright got on base on a fielder's choice, Braden Smith singled, Ruder walked, Wiltfong singled, Johnson singled for the second time in the inning and Sides got on base on a fielder's choice in his second time up in the inning. All scored once in the inning to extend the Norton lead to 15-0.

Goodland scored once in the bottom of the third inning.

Norton's final run came in the top of the fourth stanza when

Green walked and Lively got on base on an error and Green tallied.

Goodland added two runs in the bottom of the fourth to make the final 16-3.

Norton had 12 hits, 6 walks and 4 strike outs. Leading hitters for Norton were Wright, 2 for 4; Green, 2 for 2; Wiltfong, 2 for 3 and Johnson, 2 for 3.

Jacob Green pitched two innings for Norton, allowing no hits, walking 1 and striking out 5 batters. He was relieved by Ross Cole, who also pitched two innings, giving up 6 hits, walking 1 and striking out 2 batters.

"Once again, the final blows in the first game helped us out in the second game," said coach Green. "We scored seven runs in the first two innings and Jacob was throwing awesome with five of six strikeouts and only two batters putting the ball in play. Then, we pounded them with eight runs in our half of the third to give us the 15-0 lead. So, I made some changes in our lineup to let some of our younger boys play and we still went on to win 16-3. Ross pitched the last two innings and did a good job of allowing minimal damage.

"For us to take all four games in two nights was unbelievable! Goodland is a good hitting

team but we proved we are, too, by outhitting them 36 to 18 in those four games. This really reinforces my thoughts all year that we have an advantage in the pitching department as long as we throw strikes and make the plays defensively, we will be tough to beat.

"We ended the regular season with 14 wins in a row and are playing with confidence heading into the regional tourna-

ment. As a coach, that's about all I can ask of our boys and I am very proud of what they have accomplished but we still have some work to do!"

Next action

Norton will now play in the Western Regional Tournament this Saturday and Sunday in Hays.

Seedings have not yet been announced.

Norton trackster signs letter of intent

By DICK BOYD

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Cristine Nelson, outstanding member of the Norton Community High School girls track and field team has signed a letter of intent to compete for Dodge City Community College.

Cristine has been a steady performer for the Lady Jays in the shot put and discus. She is a three-year letter winner who competed in the Kansas State Track & Field Meet in Wichita to complete her senior season in 2014.

This season, she placed fifth in the shot put with a heave of 32'6.5" in the Mid-Continent League Track Meet and hit a personal record of 34'1.25" in the shot put in the Class 3A Regional Track Meet to place third and qualify for the state meet.

She had the 15th best distance in the state meet at 30'5".

"I am very happy and excited for Cristine and for her future in track and field," said Norton head track and field coach Jason Jones. "She is a great athlete who has always worked hard. She has experienced success at the high school level because of her hard work.

"We will miss her contributions.

"I have every confidence that her hard work will lead her to additional and continued success during her competitive time at Dodge City Community College. I fully expect her to become a highly valued asset to their program

"I wish Cristine the very best of luck and I will be looking forward to great performances from her at the collegiate level!"

Comments from college coach

"Cristine is a nice person; she

is a poster child for a young lady who could benefit from a junior college setting," said Dodge City Community College track and cross country head coach Cole Ballard.

"She will have more concentrated coaching in junior college. We try to get Kansas athletes to compete for us and are pleased to be able to get her. We believe Cristine has the capability to score points at this level.

"She wants to do it and that's very important."

Coach Ballard said Cristine would be throwing the shot, discus and weight during indoor competition and the shot, discus and hammer outdoors.

This fall, coach Ballard will begin his fourth year as the head coach of both track and cross country at Dodge City.

Cristine's guardians are Melissa and Brian McMullen.

Cristine Nelson signs with Dodge City Community College



An outstanding senior track performer for Norton, Cristine Nelson is shown here signing a letter of intent to compete for Dodge City Community College. Pictured with her are her head Norton Community High School coach Jason Jones and her guardian Melissa McMullen. Not pictured is guardian Brian McMullen.

Good Luck and Congratulations from . . .

-Telegram photo by Dick Boyd

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