

Norton Legion team defeats Ellis

By DICK BOYD

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The Norton American Legion baseball team treated the home fans to two exciting victories over Ellis on Monday evening at John Ryan Field in Norton.

In the first game, Norton took an 11-7 lead into the sixth inning and held off the Railroaders to win 11-9. The second game saw the Blue Jays come from behind 9-5 with five runs in the bottom of the seventh to win 10-9!

Opener

In the first game, Ellis scored twice in the top of the first inning and twice more in the top of the second to take a 4-0 lead.

Three runs by the Blue Jays in the bottom of the second made it a 4-3 game. Lane Bigge walked, Tyler Cook singled, Jacob Brooks got on base on an error, Brett Terrell got on base on a fielder's choice and Trey Millan reached base on an error. Bigge, Cook and Brooks all scored.

Ellis extended their lead to 7-3 with three more runs in the top of the fourth. In the bottom of the inning, Norton kept it close with two more runs to make it 7-5. Cook walked, Kaid McKenna got on base via an error and Terrell and Millan both singled. Cook and McKenna both scored.

The Railroaders were unable to cross home plate in the top of the fifth and the Blue Jays took the lead for good with six big runs in the bottom of the inning! Chris Maddy singled, Bigge walked, Cook singled, McKenna doubled, Terrell singled, Dalton Miller walked and Andrew Ellis singled, as Norton batted around in the inning to take an 11-7 lead!

Ellis scored two runs in the tip of the sixth and none in the top of the seventh to make the final 11-9 in favor of Norton.

The Blue Jay bats were very active in the game as Norton pounded out 11 hits, had six base on balls and just one strike out.

Leading hitters for Norton were Terrell, 3 for 5; Millan, 2 for 4 and Cook, 2-3.

Miller was the winning pitcher. He gave up seven hits, walked nine and struck out seven batters.

Riley was the Ellis pitcher.

Nightcap

In the second game, Norton took a 2-0 lead in the bottom of the first inning when Terrell walked,

Millan got on base on an error and Tug Keiswetter walked and both Terrell and Millan scored.

Ellis scored once in the top of the second to make it 2-1. The visitors took a 3-2 lead in the top of the third and added one more run in the top of the fourth to make it 4-2.

The Blue Jays tied the score at 4-4 with two more runs in the bottom of the fifth. Ellis, Miller and Dakota Dreher all singled and Ellis and Miller both scored.

The Railroaders ran five runs across home plate in the top of the sixth inning but Norton did not fold. Norton got one more run in the bottom of the sixth. Keiswetter got on base via an error and Cook and McKenna both singled and Keiswetter scored.

Ellis was three up, three down in the top of the seventh and Norton scored their five needed runs to win 10-9. Miller walked, Dreher singled, Troy Bainter walked, Keiswetter, Bigge and McKenna all singled. Ellis got on base on a fielder's choice and Cook singled McKenna home for the winning run!

Miller, Dreher, Bainter and Bigge all scored earlier in the inning.

Norton bats were alive once again as the Blue Jays had 10 hits. Six Norton players walked and seven struck out.

Leading batters for Norton were McKenna, 2 for 3; Cook, 2 for 4 and Dreher, 2 for 4.

Millan started on the mound for Norton and pitched three innings. He allowed two hits, walked seven and struck out six batters. He was relieved by Keiswetter who hurled four innings, gave up seven hits, walked three and struck out five batters.

J. Kindernecht was the Ellis pitcher.

Coach's comments

"We play hard, tough baseball with class," said Norton head coach Scott Ellis.

"We are looking forward to hosting the Zone Tournament in Norton next week."

Next action

Norton will host the Zone Tournament, beginning on Sunday but will have played two doubleheaders to tune up for the tournament. On Tuesday, the Blue Jays traveled to Holdrege and on Thursday they traveled to Goodland for pre-tournament action.



The Norton Legion's Lane Bigge sprints across home plate to score one of Norton's runs in their exciting 10-9 win over Ellis on Monday evening in the second game of a twinbill at John Ryan Field. Every run was important in the game as well as in the opener which was won by Norton by an 11-9 score.

- Telegram photo by Dick Boyd

12 and Under team finishes 13-1 season

By DICK BOYD

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The Norton 12 and Under baseball team completed their 2011 season with a tremendous 13-1 record and a championship in the Nebraska League Tournament, where they avenged their only defeat by Holdrege Hillsabeck earlier in the season.

Lexington

Norton warmed up for the league tournament with a 17-0 shutout of Lexington on June 23 in Lexington.

Jacob Green started the scoring for Norton with a solo home run in the top of the first inning.

Jace Ruder followed with a double but did not score.

In the top of the second, Norton tallied six runs to make it 7-0. Ward Hays, Colton Greving and Layton Miller each singled, Trenton Wright, Kaden Kindernecht, Kade Unterseher, Josh VanLaeys, Jacob Green and Jace Ruder all walked. All except VanLaeys, Green and Ruder scored.

Norton ran across eight more runs in the top of the third inning to extend the visitors' lead to 15-0. Ward Hays walked, Colton Greving tripled, Layton Miller walked, Trenton Wright, Kaden Kindernecht, Collyn Auker and Josh VanLaeys all singled. Jacob Green blasted a triple and Jace Ruder singled. All except Ruder scored.

Norton's final two runs came in the top of the fourth inning. Miller, Wright, Kindernecht, Ryan Johnson and Auker all walked and Miller and Wright scored.

Norton had 12 hits, 14 walks and seven strike outs. Leading hitters for Norton were Green, 2 for 2; Ruder, 2 for 2 and Greving, 2 for 3.

VanLaeys pitched for Norton. He gave up just two hits, walked four and struck out five batters.

Kulhanle pitched for Lexington.

Cambridge

The league tournament was played in Holdrege and second-seeded Norton played Cambridge on June 26.

The young Blue Jays shut out Cambridge 5-0.

Norton's first runs came in the bottom of the second inning when they put three runs on the board. Trenton Wright walked, Will Ellis and Colton Greving both singled and Kaden Kindernecht walked. All but Kindernecht scored.

Norton tallied one more run in the bottom of the third when Unterseher singled and scored later in the inning.

The final Norton run came in

the bottom of the fourth inning when Wright singled, Miller walked and Wright was able to score.

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

Jace Ruder pitched four innings for Norton. He allowed no hits, walked four and struck out 10 batters. Trenton Wright pitched the final inning and also allowed no hits, walked none and struck out two batters.

Holdrege Landmark

In the second round of the tournament on June 27, Norton played Holdrege Landmark and won a defensive battle 3-1 to advance to the semi-finals.

All three of Norton's runs were scored in the bottom of the first inning by the top of the batting order. Kade Unterseher and Josh VanLaeys both singled. Jacob Green walked, Jace Ruder singled and Will Ellis walked. Unterseher, VanLaeys and Green all scored.

Holdrege scored their only run in the top of the third inning.

Norton had six hits, two walks and nine strike outs.

Leading hitters for Norton were Unterseher and VanLaeys, both of whom were 2 for 2 at the plate.

Jacob Green pitched four innings for Norton, allowing one hit, walking nine and striking out 11 batters. Trenton Wright pitched one inning, allowing no hits, walking nine and striking out two batters.

Alma

Norton played Alma on June 28 in the tournament semi-finals and won another defensive oriented game by a 2-1 score to advance to the championship finals.

In the top of the first, Alma scored what would be their only run of the game when their first batter at the top of the order singled and scored later in the inning.

Norton's two runs for the win came in the bottom of the fourth inning when Unterseher and VanLaeys both singled and Ruder walked. Both Unterseher and VanLaeys scored and Ruder died on third.

The good Norton defense continued in the top of the fifth inning when only four Alma batters were faced by the young Blue Jays and no hits and no scores were recorded.

Norton had three hits; Unterseher was 2 for 2 with the bat. The young Blue Jays had two walks and nine strike outs.

Josh VanLaeys pitched four innings for Norton, allowing four hits, walking one and striking out five batters. Jace Ruder relieved

him for one inning, giving up no hits, walking one and striking out two batters.

Holdrege Hillsabeck

On June 30, Norton faced Holdrege Hillsabeck for the league tournament championship against the only team that had beaten them all season.

When the two teams first met on May 26 in Holdrege, the Holdrege nine won a 4-2 game and continued on to the league championship with Norton placing runner-up in the league.

This time around, the score was the same but the winner was Norton!

The young Blue Jays showed their determination to earn the league title when the top of the batting order produced three runs in the top of the first inning!

Unterseher led off with a double, VanLaeys, Green and Ellis followed with singles. Unterseher, VanLaeys and Green all scored.

Holdrege answered with two runs in the bottom of the second to make it a 3-2 game but was shutout the rest of the contest.

Norton scored an insurance run in the top of the fourth when Jacob Green put the exclamation mark on the game with a home run!

Norton had six hits, one walk and six strike outs.

Leading hitter for Norton was Green, who was 2 for 2.

Jacob Green also pitched the first three innings. He allowed one hit, walked seven and struck out 6 batters. Josh VanLaeys finished on the mound for the victorious young Blue Jays. He allowed four hits, walked none and struck out three batters in two innings.

Coach's comments

"Our bats quit on us in the tournament but we've learned how to win close games," said Norton head coach Rick Green.

"We had a good season and winning the league tournament was a good way to complete it."

Green's assistant coach this season was Kyle Wright.

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