

Norton K-18 season ends at Russell Regional Tourney

By DICK BOYD

The Norton K-18 baseball team completed an outstanding 17-10 season last Friday, after losing a 16-1 game to No. 2 seeded Colby in the Russell Regional Baseball Tournament.

Norton batted first in the game. Spencer Shirk and Zach Bainter both singled but were stranded on the bases.

Terrell Lane started on the mound for Norton. He walked two batters early in the inning, then surrendered a home run to Schlick that put Colby on top 3-0. After another batter walked, another gained first base on an error. Two more walks allowed two more runs to come in and built Colby's lead to 5-0.

At this point, Landon Hamel relieved Lane as the Blue Jay pitcher. Three more Eagle runs scored before Hamel was able to retire the side, giving Colby an 8-0 advantage.

In the top of the second inning,

Landon Keiswetter singled but was not able to score and Colby remained on top 8-0. In the bottom of the inning, Hamel retired the side without any hits.

Norton was three up, three down in the top of the third.

A walk and Norton error in the bottom of the third allowed Colby to score one more run and extend their lead to 9-0.

In the top of the fourth, Norton scored their only run when Matt Stanley was hit by a pitch and walked. He stole second, then was driven home on a single by Zane Perez.

In the bottom of the fourth, the first Colby batter flied out to catcher Stanley. The next batter singled, however, then Hamel walked the next two batters. After a Colby single and error, the Eagles had scored two more runs to make it 11-1.

Zach Bainter relieved Hamel on the mound. Bainter walked three batters and gave up two singles

and Colby scored their final five runs to extend their lead to 16-1 and end the game on the 15-run rule.

Lane was the losing pitcher. Although Colby scored 16 runs, they had just five hits against the three Norton pitchers. Only three struck out, however, and 13 Eagle batters walked.

Winning pitcher was Rasmussen. He gave up just four Norton hits, walked none and struck out two. Hitting for Norton were Shirk, Zach Bainter, Perez, all of whom were 1-2 and Landon Keiswetter, who was 1-1 at the plate.

Colby continued on to win the championship and advance to the State Tournament in Lucas. Colby defeated Ellis in the championship finals on Sunday evening and will play Belleville in their first game of the State Tournament today.

"Colby was the best team we've played all year," said Norton coach Ward Foley.



Norton K-18 baseball coach Ward Foley talked with his players after the season-ending regional tournament loss to Colby last Friday in Russell. At Foley's right is assistant coach Dave Bainter and at his left is assistant coach Lamont Shirk. Not pictured but present was assistant coach Mike Terrell.

— Telegram photo by Dick Boyd

"We threw every pitcher we had against them. We played well but they played excellent.

"I'm really proud of our players. They played hard the entire season; they never gave up and rallied to win a number of games. I knew

we had a young team this year. My goal at the start of the season was to qualify for the regional tournament and we did.

"We only lose four or five players from this team next year, so we can look forward to another good

season." Coach Foley thanked his assistant coaches Lamont Shirk, Dave Bainter and Mike Terrell for helping coach the team this year and also thanked all the parents and other fans for their support.

Outstanding Blue Jay athlete signs with Sterling College

By DICK BOYD

Luke Pfannenstiel, an all-Mid-Continent League football player and state champion wrestler for Norton Community High School, has signed a letter of intent to play football this fall for Sterling College in Sterling, Kan.



Pfannenstiel

A 2006 graduate of Norton Community High School, the 5-foot, 10-inch, 155 pound Pfannenstiel was a quarterback and defensive back for the Blue Jays.

At the end of his senior season, he was a unanimous choice for first team defensive back by the Mid-Continent League coaches on the All-Mid-Continent League team. He was honorable mention on defense as a junior.

He had 32 solo tackles, eight assists for 40 total tackles, four fumble recoveries and three pass interceptions this season.

He returned eight kickoffs for a 21.6 yard average and seven punts for a 9.7 yard average.

Also, this year, Pfannenstiel was

chosen honorable mention all-league from his quarterback position. He passed for 724 yards and averaged 15.1 yards per reception. He passed for eight touchdowns and ran for three.

At the end of this season, Pfannenstiel was chosen to the Class 3A All-State Football Team by the Kansas High School Coaches Association and was also named to the 11-Man First Team by the Hays Daily News.

Pfannenstiel was also named "Most Valuable Defensive Back" by this year's Blue Jay team and was also one of the team captains.

Pfannenstiel was a Class 3-2-1A state champion wrestler at 152 pounds this year and compiled a 33-6 record. In four years of wrestling, he was 91-24.

He is expected to play a defensive back for coach Andy Lambert's Sterling football team.

"Luke can be an outstanding safety," said his former Norton coach Bruce Graber.

"He is very intelligent. He understands the reads. Having also played quarterback, he saw the defensive position from both sides. The two positions work hand in hand.

"Luke has great football skills. He has great reactions to what he

sees. His biggest plus is his great feel for the game.

"He has never backed away from a hit. To play football, you have to love contact and he does.

"I'm really happy to see him make this decision. I think he'll enjoy it. He loves the game. You could tell every day at practice that he loves the game.

"He's going to have fun. He'll be playing against some people he knows, such as Seth Mills from Norton who plays for Tabor."

"We're really happy to sign guys from programs like Norton," said Sterling head football coach Andy Lambert.

"Since he was a state champion wrestler, that makes a great combination.

"That tells us what a great athlete he is. We know he is a hard-nosed, tough player. He's a great fit for our program.

"We also try to get guys with solid characters and we have a good feeling about Luke and his character."

Coach Lambert is a former player for Smith Center High School. He played football two years for Dodge City Community College and two years for Trinity International University, Deerfield, Ill.

He was also an assistant coach for six years at Trinity and head coach for seven years prior to becoming head coach at Sterling two years ago.

"When we came here, Sterling had lost 20 games in a row," said coach Lambert. "We're rebuilding the program and have won 10 games the last two years."

Brother Chuck Lambert from Smith Center is an assistant coach. Another assistant coach is Shane Elwood, a graduate of Decatur Community High School, Oberlin, and a former Sterling player.

Brother Tim Lambert is the St. Francis High School football coach.

Area players recruited to play as freshmen for Sterling this fall include Dustin Patee, lineman, Osborne and Gabe Smull, running back, St. Francis.

Already playing for Sterling are Dustin Quenzer, lineman, Colby, sophomore next year and Casey Higley, lineman, Atwood, sopho-

more next year. He is the grandson of JoAnn and Bernie Bowen of Norton and Jane and Marvin Pfannenstiel of Hays.

Pfannenstiel is the son of Connie Pfannenstiel and Dan Pfannenstiel, both of Norton.

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