

Legion loses double-header to visiting Colby

By Dick Boyd

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The Norton American Legion baseball team lost a double-header 10-9 and 9-2 to an outstanding visiting Colby nine on Wednesday, June 27 at John Ryan Field.

First game

Norton took a 1-0 lead in the bottom of the first inning when Dakota Dreher and Dalton Miller both singled and Andrew Ellis got on base on an error. Dreher scored.

Colby took the lead with six runs in the top of the second. Norton added a single run in the bottom of the inning to make it 6-2. Trevor Lewis got on base on an error and Jacob Brooks tripled him home.

In the top of the third, Colby was held scoreless and Norton came close with three more runs in the bottom of the stanza. Dreher, Miller and Tug Keiswetter singled in succession. Zach Hartwell got on base on a fielder's choice and Lewis singled. Dreher, Miller and Hartwell all scored.

Neither team scored in the fourth inning but Colby tallied three more in the top of the fifth to extend their lead to 9-5. The Blue Jays were unable to score in the bottom of the inning and the Eagles added one run to their total in the top of the sixth.

Norton was determined to rally for a win in the bottom of the sixth but four Blue Jay runs came up just one run short. Brooks doubled, Trey Millan singled, Dreher walked and Keiswetter and Ellis both doubled. Brooks, Millan, Dreher

and Keiswetter all scored to make the final 10-9 in favor of the visitors.

Norton had 13 hits in the game but just couldn't convert them to enough runs to put the game in the victory column.

Leading hitters for Norton were Keiswetter, 3 for 4; Dreher, 2 for 3; Brooks, 2 for 3 and Miller, 2 for 4.

Dalton Miller was the Norton pitcher. He allowed 12 hits, walked four and struck out seven batters.

Second game

The Blue Jays were only able to produce three hits in the nightcap which weren't enough to keep up with the Eagles, who collected 12 again.

Colby scored three runs in the top of the first and Norton answered with two in the bottom of the inning but the Blue Jays were shut out the rest of the way.

Norton's runs came when Millan singled, Keiswetter doubled and Ellis walked. Millan and Keiswetter scored.

Colby tallied two more runs in the second inning and four more in the top of the seventh.

Norton had three hits, six walks and 11 strike outs.

Tug Keiswetter was the Norton pitcher. He gave up 12 hits, walked six and struck out four batters.

Coach's comments

"We pitched well against a very good hitting team," said Norton head coach Scott Ellis.

"We just could not get any timely hitting."



Norton American Legion third baseman Trey Millan tags out a Colby runner who tried to steal a base during the Blue Jays' and Eagles' second game of a double-header here on Wednesday, June 27. Millan was able to make the play after receiving a very accurate throw from Norton catcher Dalton Miller.

-Telegram photo by Dick Boyd

Thunder plays in Hays tourney

By Dick Boyd

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The Norton Thunder 16 and Under Girls Softball team gained valuable experience when they competed in the Bickel Schmidt ASA Summer Sizzler Tournament on Saturday, June 30 and Sunday, July 1 in Hays.

Playing against teams from larger communities, the Norton girls won one game and lost three.

"We knew this tournament would be hard because it was open to Class A, B and C teams," said Thunder head coach Brandon Gay. "As it turned out, we were the only class C team to enter the tournament. So, not only were we playing teams from much bigger cities, we were facing the best players from those cities."

"I know some people felt we were crazy for even going to this tournament but the way we looked at it was that you can only improve so much playing against easy competition. There comes a time when, if you want to get better, you have to face really tough competition. We didn't go in thinking we'd definitely win the tournament but we didn't feel like we didn't belong either. We learned a lot from it. It was a great experience and we're going to be a better team this year and next because of it."

Norton opened the tournament on Saturday versus the Wichita Thunder and lost 11-1. In their second game of their pool, the Lady Thunder lost 14-2 to the Larned Renegades.

In their final pool game on Saturday, they defeated the Kearney Krush 11-2.

Norton competed in the Consolation Championship bracket on Sunday and lost 11-1 to the Hays Heat from the other pool.

Wichita Thunder

The Wichita team scored five times in the second inning, four runs in the third stanza and two times in the fourth inning.

Norton's only run came in the third inning when Sabre Plante singled and made it around the bases to score.

The Norton Thunder had four hits, no walks and four strike outs. Bri Karnopp, Kim Bradshaw, Ashley Hildebrand and Plante each had one hit.

Kirstin Georgeson pitched for Norton. She allowed 16 hits, walked one and struck out two batters.

"Against Wichita, we made some of the same mistakes we were making early in the season and I think it was mostly caused by the nerves of playing such an intimidating team," said coach Gay.

"But, we stayed in the game and lost 11-1, not 30-1. Now that we've been there, hopefully, we won't be as nervous the next time."

Larned Renegades

Against Larned, the Lady Thunder had trouble scoring

and allowed the opponents too many runs.

Norton's only two runs came in the first inning. Georgeson led off with a single, Skyler Davis walked and Bradshaw, Hildebrand and Shelby Mulford all singled. Georgeson and Davis both scored.

Larned tallied seven runs in the first inning, three in the second inning and four in the third.

Norton had five hits, one walk and six strike outs. Bradshaw was 2 for 2 with the bat and Georgeson, Hildebrand and Mulford each had one hit.

Bri Karnopp pitched for Norton. She gave up 19 hits, walked two and struck out three batters.

"Larned was a really good hitting team but still easier competition than our other opponents," said coach Gay. "Unfortunately, we just didn't play well in this game."

Kearney Krush

The Norton bats were really active in the first inning of the win over Kearney. The Lady Thunder collected seven of their 15 hits in the game in the first stanza and took an 8-0 lead.

Georgeson led off with a single, Davis followed with a single, Bradshaw doubled, Hildebrand singled, Green walked, Mulford singled, Plante singled, Jena Risewick was hit by a pitch and advanced and Tara Brachtenbach singled. All except Brachtenbach scored.

Kearney's two runs came in the third inning to cut the Norton lead to 8-2 but the Lady Thunder added three more runs in the fourth inning. Brachtenbach, Georgeson, Karnopp, Davis and Bradshaw singled in succession and all but Davis and Bradshaw scored.

Leading hitters for Norton were Bradshaw, who was 3 for 3; Brachtenbach, who was 2 for 2 and Georgeson, Davis and Plante, all of whom were 2 for 3 with the bat.

The Norton Thunder had two walks and eight strike outs in the game.

Kirstin Georgeson was the winning pitcher for Norton. She gave up just two hits, walked one and struck out two batters in four innings.

Kristen Burge hurled just one inning. She allowed one hit, walked none and struck out one batter.

"In this game, we got our timing down against the faster pitching and started hitting," said coach Gay. "Our number one pitcher Kirstin Georgeson is still recovering from an injury but she battled through it and combined with Kristen Burge to shut down Kearney."

"It was good to get a win in because it showed when we put everything together, good pitching, solid defense and a little bit of hitting, we can compete against really good teams."

Hays Heat

Against the Hays Heat, Norton actually led 1-0 after the first inning but was unable to score after that. Karnopp and Bradshaw both singled and Hildebrand doubled to bring Karnopp home.

Hays took a 3-1 lead in the second inning and added eight more runs in the fourth stanza.

Norton had five hits, two walks and nine strike outs. Bradshaw was 2 for 2 with the bat and Karnopp, Hildebrand and Mulford each had one hit.

Kirstin Georgeson was the Norton pitcher. She allowed 11 hits, walked six and struck out three batters.

"In this game, we faced the toughest pitcher we saw in the tournament and couldn't get much going offensively," said coach Gay. "We were in the game for three innings but they had a big inning in the fourth. We thought we could win the game but it got away from us."

Next action

The Norton Thunder hosted Smith Center on Thursday and will host Holdrege this evening. They will also host Phillipsburg at 7 p.m. this Thursday, July 12.

Community Calendar

Please submit your events for the
Community Calendar
which is printed in the Monday EXTRA.
Events may be e-mailed to:
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K-18 team takes Phillipsburg

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The Norton K-18 baseball team hosted Phillipsburg on Monday, July 2 at John Ryan Field and won both games of the double-header.

In the first contest, the Blue Jays outscored the Panthers 6-3 and the nightcap was an 18-8 win for the home team.

First game

Phillipsburg scored one run in the top of the first inning but Norton matched it in the bottom of the inning. Clint Cole led off with a double and Mickey Hahn followed with a single. Jacob Green got on base on an error and Kobie Unterseher singled. Cole scored.

Norton added two more runs in the bottom of the second when Unterseher singled again, followed by singles by Will Ellis and Cole. Unterseher and Ellis both scored, putting Norton ahead 3-1.

The Blue Jays extended the lead to 4-1 with another run in the bottom of the third. Josh VanLaey's walked and scored in the inning.

Neither team scored in the fourth stanza.

The Panthers added one run in the top of the fifth, making it 4-2. Norton extended their lead to 6-2 in the bottom of the fifth. Jace Ruder led off with a single and was followed by a single by Brant Cox. Mickey Hahn followed him and also singled, then Green singled as well. Ruder and Cox both scored.

Phillipsburg managed to score just once in the top of the sixth, making the final score 6-3 in favor of the Blue Jays.

Norton collected nine hits, had one walk and three strike outs.

Leading hitters for Norton were Clint Cole, Mickey Hahn and Kobie Unterseher, all of whom were 2 for 3 with the bat.

Mickey Hahn was the winning pitcher. He hurled the first four innings for Norton, allowing three hits, two walks and one strike out. He was relieved by Josh VanLaey's for the final two innings. He gave up two hits, walked two and struck out three batters.

Second game

Norton's bats were very active in the nightcap where they smashed 16 hits in the 18-8 win.

Phillipsburg was three up, three down in the top of the first.

Norton scored five runs in the bottom of the first. Cox and Hahn both singled Green

walked, Kendall Miller got on base on an error, Unterseher singled, Layton Miller singled and Caden Kinderknecht and Ryan Johnson both walked. Ruder, Hahn, Green, Miller and Unterseher all scored.

Phillipsburg tallied four times in the top of the second to trail by just 5-4.

Norton answered with three more runs to extend the lead to 8-4. Ruder walked, Hahn was hit by a pitch and advanced and Green doubled. All three scored.

Phillipsburg scored two more times in the top of the third to cut the Norton advantage to 8-6.

Norton ensured a win when they scored eight runs in the bottom of the third to lead 16-6. Kinderknecht singled, Johnson was hit by a pitch and advanced, Cole, Hahn, Green, VanLaey's, Miller and Unterseher singled in succession and all tallied.

Phillipsburg cut the lead slightly with one run in the top of the fifth and another in the top of the sixth but Norton had added two more runs in the bottom of the fifth to make the final 18-8.

Ruder walked, Hahn got on base on a fielder's choice, Green was hit by a pitch and advanced and VanLaey's and Miller both singled. Hahn and Green both scored.

In addition to 16 hits, Norton had eight walks and three strike outs. Leading hitters for the Blue Jays were Mickey Hahn and Kobie Unterseher, both 2 for 3; Kendall Miller, 3 for 4; Josh VanLaey's, 2 for 4 and Jacob Green, 2 for 2.

Kendall Miller was the winning pitcher. He hurled one and one-third innings, giving up no hits, walking six and striking out one batter. He was relieved by Jace Ruder, who allowed one hit, walked seven and struck out five batters.

Coach's comments

"I was really happy against Phillipsburg because we got some other players some pitching experience," said Norton head coach Rick Green. "All four of our pitchers did a good job for us."

"We especially hit the ball well in the second game when we pounded out 16 hits."

"We need to find some fire and energy to finish the season out strong. We played a little flat and almost lazy at times."

"We batted just above .500 for the night as a team and almost everyone had a hit, including some of the guys who have limited playing time."

"If we continue to hit the ball and limit our mistakes; we will do fine in the future."



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