

Harlan County Schools - Athletic News

March 30, 2011

Harlan County High School Baseball

With some of the region's top young hurlers returning, Harlan County coach John Lewis knew he could count on good pitching coming into the 2011 season.

He didn't know the Bears would be this good, this early, with their bats. "It's the first time in a long time that we've opened the season like this with everybody hitting the ball," Lewis said Tuesday after the Bears pounded out 13 hits in a 10-2 win over visiting Knox Central. "We're hitting the ball with runners in scoring position. We are executing bunts and hits and runs and everything else. Our bats are hot right now." The offensive explosion was more than enough for Harlan County ace Tyler Boggs, who overcame a slow start to win his second game in as many starts. Boggs, a sophomore righthander, scattered seven hits while striking out seven and walking two.

"Knox Central has some good hitters. Tyler had to pitch his heart out to beat them. They are one of the best teams in the region," Lewis said.

While the Bears off to a hot start, Knox Central fell to 1-4 and coach Brandon Hillard says the Panthers are lacking aggressiveness, especially at the plate.

"We're not competitive," Hillard said. "This is four games in a row where we seem to open 0-1 with every at bat. The talent and athleticism are there, but we're in a funk right now. We didn't put any pressure on (Boggs) when we had some opportunities and then he settled in to a groove."

Junior designated hitter Chris Southerland and Boggs led the Harlan County offense with a double and two singles each. Scott Bailey had a double and single. Braxton Fields singled twice. Andrew Dozier, Stephen Dozier and James Bond each added one single.

Brent Mills led Knox Central with a double and single. Aaron Smith singled twice. Tyler Gilbert doubled. Seth Branum and Justin King each contributed one single.

Harlan County took a 1-0 lead in the first inning as Fields led off with a walk and scored on Boggs' ground out.

Bond and Fields had RBI singles in the second inning, driving in Ryan Cope, who was hit by a pitch, and Bailey, who doubled.

Boggs singled to open the third inning and courtesy runner Aaron Johnson scored on Southerland's double. Stephen Dozier added an RBI single.

Knox Central broke through against Boggs in the fourth inning. King singled and Gilbert doubled before Joey Broughton walked to load the bases to set up a two-run single up the middle by Mills.

Andrew Dozier singled with one out in the bottom of the fourth and scored on a double by Boggs. Southerland singled home Johnson for a 7-2 lead. With two outs in the fifth inning, Fields singled up the middle and Andrew Dozier was safe on an error. Boggs singled home Fields when Lewis called for a hit and run. Southerland followed with a bloop single to bring home Dozier.

Bailey singled in the sixth inning and scored on a wild pitch by Gilbert, the second Knox Central pitcher. Mills gave up nine runs on 12 hits in five innings.

Gilbert allowed one run on one hit.

Harlan County returns to action Thursday at home against Lynn Camp.

Knox Central 000 200 0 - 2 7 6

Harlan County 122 221 x - 10 13 1

Mills, Gilbert (6) and Helton; Boggs and McArthur. W - Boggs, 2-0. L - Mills, 0-2.