

April 14: Late Martin Rally Trips Up Colts Freshman 3-2

In a tense, hard fought game, the Colts outplayed Martin, but came up on the wrong end of the score despite another stellar pitching performance by hard-luck losing pitcher Lawrence Brandt. The Colts started out stroking the ball as center fielder Tyler Rice responded to being moved to lead-off hitter by opening the game with the single. With one out, shortstop Kelsie Dancer continued his torrid hitting with a drive over the right fielder's head, putting runners on second and third with one out. Martin starter Blake Johnson, a former teammate of several of the Colts, struck out the next two batters to keep the Colts off the scoreboard. After a 1-2-3 inning, Lawrence and DH Daniil Lysenco singled with two outs, but the Colts did not score. The Colts stranded six in the first four innings, including runners on third in every inning, while going 0-8 with runners in scoring position.

In the bottom of the third, the Warriors got their first base-runner as the leadoff hitter drew a walk after fouling off a few 3-2 pitches. Then, after a bloop single and a strikeout, the Colts almost turned an inning-ending double play, but the relay throw sailed high and Martin grabbed a 1-0 lead. In the bottom of the 4th, after hitting the leadoff hitter, Lawrence threw a high inside fastball hitting the second hitter, who was briefly awarded first before Coach Womack pointed out to the umpire that the hitter had attempted to bunt the pitch; after huddling, the umpires correctly reversed the call (!), and the bruised Warrior subsequently struck out. The Colts were not yet out of the inning though, as a two-out infield hit was followed by a single to right, which might have plated a run, but right-fielder Austin McKinney's strong throw sent the runner scampering back to third. Third baseman Clayton Johnson, who made several nice plays, got the force out at second to end the inning.

The Colts finally broke through in the 5th as Tyler singled and scored when Kelsie's smash up the middle caromed off the mound into center field, with Kelsie taking third on a throwing error. Duane Hughes' sacrifice fly gave the Colts freshman their first lead of the season over Martin. Lawrence set Martin down easily in the 5th and 6th, but the Colts could not extend the lead off the Martin reliever.

So it all came down to the bottom of the 7th with the Colts clinging to a 2-1 lead, hoping to pull off the upset. A walk and an infield single put two on with none out. A slow grounder to the mound looked to be the first out, but the throw eluded first baseman Omar Frias, who had been the only Colts fielder with more than four chances without an error. The tying run scored on the play, and Colts reliever Jeremy Cook inherited a desperate none out second and third situation. After an intentional walk, the winning run scored on a wild pitch just ahead of the tag, setting off a raucous celebration by the home team. Although it was the Colts third straight loss dropping them to 6-9 on the season, they have clearly narrowed the gap against the top three teams in the district, losing the three games by a total of four runs.