

Colts Squeak by Summit 7-6

AHS March 26, 2010. The Arlington Colts JV team used a late rally to trip up Mansfield Summit 7-6. In the first inning the Colts tied a dubious record by striking out four times, but still scratched out a run to take the early 1-0 lead. With one out Matt Barber walked and stole second, Lawrence Brandt whiffed on a curve in the dirt, and took a slightly serpentine path down the line to try to block the throw. With Barber steaming into the third, the catcher elected to eat the ball rather than risk an errant throw, and Barber later scored on a wild pitch. Brandt, in his first start since the season opener, walked the leadoff hitter, plunked the two-hole hitter with a 3-2 curve ball, and then gave up a wild pitch to put runners on 2nd and 3rd. Neither of them scored. First baseman Adam Noonkester made a nice play on a wind-blown pop-up (initially called by the shortstop!), then Brandt fielded a comebacker, looked the runner back and got the out at first, and finally Matt Juarez made a nice play at third to preserve the lead. Over the next three innings the Colts struck out seven more times, with Matt Juarez collecting the only hit, a ringing double to left center. Meanwhile Brandt got the Colts through the second with the lead, converting a line drive with dental work written all over it into a double play. In the third with one out and runners on the corners after a “broken bat” single over second base, the Colts almost turned the pitcher’s best friend (a 6-4-3 double play) but the relay was a little late and the game was tied. The Panthers then had four straight hits two each off Brandt and reliever Jordan Miller to claim the 4-1 lead before Miller got the punch out to stop the bleeding. Ashby Dean relieved in the fourth and kept the score at 4-1 taking advantage of the Umps penchant for calling the low outside pitch to ring up a couple of frozen Panthers. Then it was Rally Time with a capital Rally. Singles by Eddie Lozano and Matt Barber and a walk by Brandt loaded the bases with one-out. Juarez singled in a run, but Barber got the thumb on a close play at the plate leaving the Colts one out from a 4-2 defeat. Duane Hughes took one for the team to re-load the bases, bringing up professional pinch-hitter Trevor Phillips. Phillips, who has been on fire, hit a comebacker, but with a 3-2 count the runners were going, and the pitcher sequentially looked to home, third, and second, before throwing it too late to first to get the hard running Colt. Pinch hitter/closer Omar Frias then drilled a doubled to left center to put the Colts on top 5-4. Catcher Brad Johnson lashed a single to left sending Frias rumbling home, and Lozano’s second base-knock of the inning plated Phillips with another insurance run, capping the six run rally. The Colts quickly filed an insurance claim, as two errors sandwiched around a hit batter put the tying run on with nobody out. Frias then got a big “K”, followed by an exciting ground out—the exciting part being a throw in the dirt that first baseman Brandt managed to block with his body, snagging the ball with his bare hand in the nick of time, as the runner from third scored, and the tying run advanced to third. Frias then earned the save by painting the outside corner for the game-ending whiff. The Colts sixth straight win over an opponent not named Martin put their overall record at 9 and 5.