

Lions hope 'laugher' will get them going

Written by Jim Ecker

Thursday, 03 July 2014 21:44 - Last Updated Thursday, 03 July 2014 21:55



The Linn-Mar baseball team has gone through a rough year with tight losses, injuries and all-state catcher Brandt Ollinger leaving for travel ball, but the Lions finally got to laugh a little Thursday night.

Linn-Mar belted Washington, 17-2, in four innings in the second game of a Mississippi Valley Conference doubleheader at the Linn-Mar Complex to wash away some of the frustration.

Washington took the first game, 7-3, for a much-needed victory of its own.

Linn-Mar sent 12 men to the plate and scored seven runs in the first inning of the nightcap, then sent 13 men to the plate and scored seven more times in the second for a 14-1 bulge.

"We'll take it," said Linn-Mar Coach Chad Lechner after his club won by the 15-run rule in the bottom of the fourth. "We need wins at this point to get our confidence up.

"It's been a tough schedule and we've played a lot of good teams. We just need something good to happen at this time of year that we can build on, so hopefully that's it."

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The split left Linn-Mar at 12-19 overall and 7-13 in the conference. Washington finished the day at 8-15 and 7-11 in the league.

The Lions took a 16-2 lead in the fourth inning when pinch-hitters Wes Gaiser and Nic Redmond were hit by pitches with the bases loaded, netting a painful RBI for each batter. Ryan Wyant ended the game with a single to drive in the 17th run and invoke the 15-run mercy rule.

Wyant went 3-for-4 with four RBIs and a double in the big victory. Like his coach, Wyant hopes the "laugher" will lead to better things for Linn-Mar coming down the stretch.

"I think so," he said. "Yeah, I think so."

Wyant said the Lions have tried to deal with a disappointing season as best they can. "Trying to pull through, I guess," he remarked.

Lechner thinks his club has the ability for a successful July.

"The key for them is to play clean on defense. Stay positive. Keep working, keep plugging away at it," he said.

"Just to see them hit hard line drives and hard ground balls up the middle ... I can't tell you how many times we've had the bases loaded against quality teams this year and didn't get the hit.

"Finally," he said, relieved.

Jackson Jacobs, Adam Bradley, Adam Stolley, Taylor Yoke and Andrew Gassman had two hits for Linn-Mar in the second game. Jacobs and Yoke had two RBIs.

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Washington starting pitcher Johnny Dobbs was charged with 14 runs in one-plus inning of work. He faced 20 batters and got only three outs before being relieved.

Chris Harrington pitched a complete game for Washington in the opener. The Warriors built a 7-0 lead before settling for the 7-3 victory.

Trey Leonard socked a two-run triple for Washington in the first game.

Game 1

Washington	300 400 0 - 7 4 1
Linn-Mar	000 102 x - 3 5 1

W - Harrington. L - Hilsenbeck.

Game 2

Washington	011 0 - 2 2 2
Linn-Mar	770 3 - 17 15 2

W - Larson. L - Dobbs.