

## Highlanders win close 3-0 decision over Cougars in baseball

Written by Administrator

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The Floyd Central Highlanders won a close 3-0 decision over the visiting North Harrison Cougars last Wednesday, but Highlander coach Casey LaDuke was glad to get the win, and Cougar coach Gregg Oppel was scratching his head after the game, wondering what it will take to get his team to play with more desire against Floyd.

The hosts jumped out on top 2-0 in the bottom of the 1st inning, when Tyler Amos was hit by the North Harrison pitcher, and went to first base as a result. Eric Schmitt then tripled to right center field, and drove in Amos. John Boyle then singled in Schmitt for the second Highlander run.

In the bottom of the 4th inning, Jimmy Orr singled, and Garrett Shanks then singled in Orr for the third and final run in the game.

LaDuke thought striking first and scoring early in the game was a big difference in the outcome of it.

"When you can score first, I think that's a big deal," LaDuke said. LaDuke said that being ahead early gave his team more freedom to run the bases, bunt, and be more aggressive on the base paths.

Floyd didn't leave very many people stranded on base, either.

"I think there was an inning where we left somebody at second base," said LaDuke.

Starting Highlander pitcher Ryan Cain walked two North Harrison batters, threw a complete game, and got his first varsity win as a pitcher. He also struck out eight Cougar batters.

In several instances, North Harrison batters swung for the fences on three ball-one strike counts, and the lack of patience has Oppel concerned. He also thought that his team showed a lack of interest in the game, possibly looking forward to the game with Corydon the following day.

"How many third strikes did we swing at?" asked Oppel.

"I don't know what it is," Oppel said. "Coming into Floyd Central when I was in school, it was the biggest game of the year. It's my job to get them ready to play, and they weren't. I guess I'm going to have to make some (personnel) changes."

Oppel continued, "You've got to make routine plays. Until we have a better approach at the plate, we won't win many games."

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