

Lakeview Jr. High 8th Grade Baseball

2011 Season Summary

- The 2011 Season for the Lakeview Panthers was rewarding and exasperating all at the same time. The season began with 3 weeks of indoor conditioning and practice, due to the record breaking rainfall this spring we were never able to practice outside. Even though we had to practice indoors, thanks to our outstanding facilities, we did some excellent hitting in the cage, as well as soft tossing and hitting from a Tee. Our pitchers got a chance to throw off a mound (even if the mound was made of hard plastic and rubber) alot and got in good quality pitching time. Of course the down side is there is never enough room for infield, cut-offs and even playing catch becomes an adventure.
- The regular season began with a hard fought 2 - 1 victory over Lancaster as Ryan Merrick and Devin Raub combined to shut down the Lancers offense. Cameron Thacker and Brendan Green drove in runs with some clutch hitting. We ended the week with 2 more victories as we defeated a travel team from Marysville 11 - 6 scoring 7 runs in the top of the 7th for a convincing come from behind victory. Tyler McCafferty, Ryan Merrick, Derrick Herd, Michael Pagano, Brendan Green and Trent Utz all had key hits in the decisive 7th inning. Wes Hanlon got the victory in relief and Derrick Herd pitched 4 strong innings to begin the game. Our final game of the week saw us beat Reynoldsburg 9 - 0 as Michael Pagano pitched a 5 inning no hitter and Zac Carlisle faced only 3 hitters in the 6th inning as strong pitching shut down the Raiders. Nic Varda, Derrick Herd and Wes Hanlon had big days at the plate.
- Week Two saw the Panthers get in 3 games and those resulted in 3 more victories, 8 - 3 vs Liberty Union, 5 - 2 vs. Lancaster and 11 - 3 vs. Marysville Brunfield. We jumped out to leads early in every game thanks to the hitting of Tyler McCafferty, Derrick Herd, Camron Thacker, Brendan Green, Zac Carlisle, and Liam Carothers. Derrick Herd, Ryan Merrick and Michael Pagano collected wins with solid pitching performances.
- The next 3 weeks were as close as you could come to a complete washout. We only got in 2 games and one we played because the players spent 2 hours before the game working on the field. This was after Mrs. Kose had worked on it earlier in the afternoon. Yes, it was the famous squeegee game. We did win both games, the first was a 13 - 6 victory over Hillard Heritage. Ryan Merrick again picked up the win by pitching 4 strong

innings and Derrick Herd combined with Zac Carlisle to finish the game. We jumped out to a quick lead with Ryan Merrick, Tyler McCafferty, Wes Hanlon and Derrick getting key hits in a 7 run first inning. We played add on later in the game with strong hitting from Richard Sklenar, Trent Utz, Liam Carothers and Brendan Green. The squeegee game was next and after all the work we won 26 - 0 in a 3 inning blow out. Obviously everyone hit the ball well with Tyler McCafferty, Devin Raub, Ryan Merrick, Derrick Herd, Liam Carothers, Cameron Thacker and Nic Varda all having multi-hit games.

- With a record of 8 and 0 we entered the last week of the season. On our schedule was 3 travel teams and 2 games against Ridgeview. The week started on an ominous note as the first game was called because Watkins field was under water even though the weather was a great 75 degrees and sunny. We played Marysville travel and lost 11 - 10 in 9 innings. It was a great game where we scored 5 runs in the last 2 innings to take a 2 run lead. Derrick Herd, Brendan Green, Ryan Merrick, Michael Pagano and Josh Blair had key RBI in the comeback. Trent Utz and Tyler McCafferty each had 2 walks to aid the cause. Unfortunately Marysville scored 3 in the top of the 8th to take a 1 run lead but we came back with Derrick driving in the tying run keeping us alive. But in the 9th Marysville scored 2 and we came back as Brendan Green delivered an RBI single to bring us to within 1, he then stole 2 bases but was left on 3rd as the game ended.

- Our last victory came against Jonathan Alder's club team. They came into the game with a 15 and 2 record. We went into another 9 inning game and when the dust cleared we had come away with a 9 - 8 victory. We scored 4 runs in the last two innings to force extra innings and won it in the 9th with a bases loaded 2 out single by Liam Carothers then held on in the bottom of the inning as Wes Hanlon got a fly out to center with the tying and winning runs in scoring position to end the game. It was a great team victory with Zac Carlisle pitching his 2nd game in as many days and getting us 5 good innings then Wes came in and gutted out the win. Richard Sklenar got the ball rolling by using his head and getting us 3 runs in the first inning with 2 outs. Everybody contributed to the victory with Brendan Green, Michael Pagano and Tyler McCafferty having multiple hits and keeping us in the game until Liam ended it with his clutch hit.

- We ended the season with a final record of 9 - 3. It was a great season in many ways and I look forward to seeing these players help Pickerington North maintain a standard of excellence in baseball

