

## **2010 Varsity Baseball**

### **February 23: LCA Lions Win Season Opener!**

The LCA Lions Baseball Team won their season opener on Tuesday, February 23, at Central Fellowship by a score of 4-2. Austin Latham picked up the win in relief of starter Spencer Earle, by retiring the six batters that he faced in order. Harrison Monda and Matt Kirkland also pitched well in relief for LCA. The Lions fell behind 1-0 early in the contest, but rallied in the top of the 3rd inning on a two run home run by senior, Nathan Owens, which was the first of his high school career. The Lions added another run in the top of the 3rd inning when Matt Kirkland singled to left to drive in Brett Gealy. Gealy had three stolen bases on the day and later scored from third base on a wild pitch in the 5th inning. Earle also picked up where he left off last year by doubling over the center fielder's head in his first at bat. Harrison Tobin also had a great game in his first varsity start behind the plate. Tobin blocked numerous pitches in dirt with runners in scoring position and threw out one runner stealing. "It was a big confidence builder for us to get off to a great start by playing well in every phase of the game", LCA Head Coach Vince Kirkland said of his team.

### **March 1: LCA Lions Win Home Opener!**

The LCA Lions Baseball Team won their home opener on Monday, March 1, vs. Crown Athletics by a score of 7-1. Spencer Earle picked up the win, while Matt Kirkland also pitched well in relief for LCA. Kirkland (2-3, 2 2B, 2 RBI), Earle (2-4, 2B), Austin Latham (2-2, 3 SB), and Marshall Dreyer (2-3, 3 RBI, 2 SB) had the hot bats for the Lions. When asked about his team, LCA Head Coach Vince Kirkland said "We have a few things that we need work on, but overall, I am very pleased with our effort in front of our home crowd today".

### **March 5:**

The Lions scattered 12 hits on Friday, March 5, to win their first region contest against Horizon Christian Academy by a score of 18-2. Matt Lype collected the first 2 hits of his varsity career, including double and 2 RBIs. Marshall Dreyer went 2/3 with 2 RBI's, Austin Latham and Nathan Owens both went 2 for 3 with 1 RBI. Thomas O'Neal picked up the win in relief of starter Spencer Earle. Hank Cohen also pitched well in relief. "We jumped out to an early lead, which gave our young players a chance to get several key innings of experience," stated Coach Kirkland.

### **March 16: LCA Defeats Covenant 11-2**

Our LCA Lions' defeated region opponent Covenant Christian Academy on March 16 by a score of 11-2. Spencer Earle recorded eight strikeouts in five innings to pick up his second win of the season. Matt Kirkland recorded three strikeouts in the final two innings in relief. The hot bats for the Lions' were Harrison Monda went 2 /3 with 3 RBI's, Kirkland had a double with 2 RBI's, Earle went 3/3 with 3 RBI's, , Austin Latham went 2/3 with 1 RBI, while Drew Sewell went 2/4. The Lions' had no errors and no strike outs in this game. "We threw strikes, made the easy plays and put the ball in play, which are the keys to winning baseball games", noted LCA Head Coach Vince Kirkland. The Lions' are now 4 - 0.

### **March 18: LCA No-Hits Heritage 15-0**

Harrison Monda and Thomas O'Neal combined to pitch a no-hitter against Heritage Academy on March 18. The Lions scattered 11 hits with Monda having a double and 2 RBIs, Matt Kirkland went 2/4 with 3 RBIs, Spencer Earle went 2/2, Marshall Dreyer had a double with 1 RBI, Matt Lype a double with 1 RBI, and Harrison Tobin went 2/3 and 4 RBIs for the Lions. "It was great to see Monda and O'Neal take charge on the mound. We will need both of them to pitch well and provide depth to our pitching rotation down the stretch," noted Coach Kirkland.

### **March 20:**

The LCA Lions lost for the first time this year by a score of 10-0 at Southside Christian School (Greenville, SC). Harrison Monda had a double and Drew Sewell went 2/2. They were the bright spots at the plate for LCA. "The bottom of their order came through with a couple of key two-out, two-strike hits to drive in four runs early in the game. Later in the game we gave up several runs on passed balls and wild pitches trying to get them to chase pitches off the plate. We also missed several opportunities with runners in scoring position. We will get back to work and try to correct these issues before we hit the heart of our region schedule over the next two weeks," noted Coach Kirkland. The Lions (5-1, 3-0) will play again on Tuesday, March 23 at 4:00 at Killian Hill in a non-region contest.

### **March 23:**

The LCA Lions Baseball Team scored 7 runs in the top of the ninth inning and held on to beat Killian Hill 8-1 in a non-region game on March 23. Harrison Monda singled, stole second, and scored on an RBI single by Spencer Earle in the third inning. The score remained 1-0 until Monda gave up a solo home run in the sixth inning. Matt Kirkland started the seventh inning and shut out Killian Hill for the remaining three innings to pick up the win. Kirkland, Earle, and Drew Sewell had multiple hits for the Lions. "Monda and Kirkland both pitched extremely well through several jams. This was a huge win to restore our confidence after our first loss this past weekend," noted LCA Assistant Coach Greg Earle.

### **March 25:**

The LCA Lions picked up their fourth region win by a score of 3-1 on the road against three-time defending ICSGA State Champion New Creation Center on March 25. Junior Spencer Earle pitched a brilliant complete game to pick up his third win of the season. New Creation scored their only run on a passed ball in the fifth inning. The Lions rallied in the top of the sixth inning, when Brett Gealy walked and stole second base with one out. Harrison Monda then singled to move Gealy to third and later stole second base. Matt Kirkland followed with an RBI base hit bunt on a safety squeeze to score Gealy for the tying run. Earle then followed with an RBI ground out to first base to plate Monda. Marshall Dreyer ended the scoring with a single to left to score Kirkland. Earle struck out the final two batters with the tying runs on base to end the game. "Spencer was absolutely dominant on the mound today. We struggled early trying to pull the ball against their lefty, but we figured it out the third time through the lineup. This was a huge win for our program and will give us confidence going into the playoffs," noted LCA Head Coach Vince Kirkland.

**March 30:**

The LCA Lions lost a close non-region game at defending GISA Region 4-A Champion Kings Ridge by a score of 7-6 on March 30. The Lions jumped out front 2-0 in the first inning when Brett Gealy walked, stole second, and was sacrificed to third by Harrison Monda. Matt Kirkland singled to plate Gealy, and Marshall Dreyer later singled to score Kirkland. Kings Ridge responded with single runs in the first three innings to take the lead. The Lions responded in the fourth inning when Spencer Earle led off with a double and Dreyer was safe at first due to a throwing error on a sacrifice bunt. Austin Latham then doubled in two runs to give the Lions the lead again. Kings Ridge responded in the fifth inning with a three run home run to regain the lead. LCA responded to tie the score in the top of the sixth inning when Latham and Harrison Tobin singled and both scored on Gealy's single. Kings Ridge regained the lead for good in the bottom of the sixth inning when their leadoff batter walked and later scored on a full-count single off Kirkland, who pitched the final inning in relief of Earle. Monda, Earle, Latham, and Tobin all had multiple hits for the Lions. "We made a few defensive mistakes early, but I'm proud of how our kids battled back from deficits twice against a very good Kings Ridge team," noted LCA Head Coach Vince Kirkland.