

Cougars Tie Mustangs in Summer Baseball, 4-4

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"He threw strikes. Justin hasn't been on the mound in a couple of weeks, so we were glad to get him back out there," coach McCaffrey said. "He did a nice job. Justin always is around the plate, throwing strikes, and he gives you an opportunity to win."

Fulinusz, who will enter his sophomore year this fall, left his catching position to relieve in the sixth inning and finished the game, allowing only one hit and no runs, while walking none and striking out one. In a previous non-league game against Scotch Plains-Fanwood, he demonstrated his offensive proficiency with three hits in three at-bats.

"Chris is a very good athlete. He can do a lot of things well on the baseball field. He can hit, he can pitch, he can catch, he can play first

base, so we are very excited about his career," coach McCaffrey said.

In the top of the first inning, Mustang leadoff batter Zach Buchold singled to center, and Eric Giordano was hit-by-a-pitch. Anthony Tortorcella loaded the bases with an infield single and centerfielder Chad Barrall ripped a two-run single to center. Joey Stone made the score, 3-0, with an RBI single to right.

Barrall made a fine catch in the first inning, one in the second and another in the third to stifle potential Cougar rallies. Trotter thumped a leadoff double in the fourth but was stranded. Finally in the fifth, the Cougars strung together five hits and a walk to plate four runs. Scherer singled and Gaeta plopped a double to right. Zaborsky slashed his two-run single to right then stole a base.

McGovern bounced an RBI single, stole second, moved to third on Trotter's single and scored when the Mustang catcher unsuccessfully attempted to gun down Trotter, who stole second. Trotter stole third and attempted to score the go-ahead run on an outfield fly ball, but he was gunned down at the plate.

Throughout the game, the Cougars did test several of their aggressive base-running skills, along with a few hit-and-run plays.

"It's still a learning curve. We have a long way to go, a lot of things we need to work on to get ready for next year. Hopefully, we will have a group of kids, who are focused, ready to go and will be a hardworking group," coach McCaffrey said.

Iselin-Kennedy	300	100	0	4
Cranford	000	040	0	4



NOT QUITE GETTING HOME ON TIME...Cougar Sean Trotter attempts to score but is tagged out by the Iselin-Kennedy Mustang catcher in the fifth inning at Memorial Field in Cranford.



PLOWING INTO THIRD BASE...Cougar Brendon Kane plows into third base with his second stolen base as Warren third baseman Mark Ball waits for the ball in the second inning of the Cal Ripken District 12 quarterfinal game in Westfield.

Warren 12s Startle Cugars in Ripken Quarters

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going to run ourselves out of an inning with a line drive and a double play. It's worked for us a bunch of times, and when we play next week, we will do it again," coach Norton said.

"Double plays at 50-70 [distance between bases were set at 70 feet] are not often, and that was a backbreaker. They had some injuries, but we weren't taking them lightly. They have some good players," coach Mastrobattista said. "Our defense is what keeps us in games."

Warren plated three runs in the top of the second. Knight issued three straight walks. One runner scored on a wild pitch, then Frank Rica bounced

a two-run ground-rule double over the right field fence. Two more walks and Nick Ugarte's RBI single in the third gave Warren a 4-1 lead. Third baseman Ball made a great catch and centerfielder Jon Catania added another to hold Cranford scoreless in the third.

Knight yielded a leadoff double to Stefurak in the fourth and an RBI double to Matt Mastrobattista. Savino relieved and yielded an RBI single to Marino to make the score 6-1. In the fifth, Rica walked, stole a base and scored on Ball's grounder to up the score to 7-1. In the bottom of the inning, Cougar Joe Norton reached

base on an error, swiped a pair of bases and scored on a passed ball. Josh Cucuzzella and Savino drew walks, but Warren added two more fine defensive plays to prevent further scoring.

Warren second baseman Mastrobattista added the defensive icing with a diving grab in the sixth inning.

"They made every single play. At this level, if you don't walk people and you make every play, you have a real good chance of winning the game," coach Norton said.

Warren	031	210	7
Cranford	010	010	2



AVOIDING THE PICKOFF ATTEMPT...Cougar Jamie Brawley quickly gets back to first to avoid being picked off by Warren pitcher Jack Stefurak and tagged by Mike Colantuolo, No. 99.

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