

JOHNSON 2B, 1B, 3 RUNS; FULLER, 'PAPA' 2-RUN 2Bs; BRANCATELLA BOPS 2-RUN SINGLE

Westfield Blue Stops Summit in N. Providence League, 9-4

By **DAVID B. CORBIN**

Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

Seven games in Cooperstown did not seem to slow down the Westfield Blue 12-year-old baseball team. After one day's rest, the Blue put together a strong pitching performance, assisted by fine defensive plays to go with an offensive assault to defeat Summit, 9-4, at Gumbert 3 Field in Westfield on July 7.

Starter Ryan Chirichella pitched three shutout innings, allowing four hits and no walks, while striking out four batters. Kevin Fuller pitched the fourth inning, Matt Feinberg pitched the fifth inning and Chris O'Connor tossed the sixth inning to slam the door on the Little Hilltoppers.

"We were focused out there today. I didn't know what type of team we were going to get when we came back. Up in Cooperstown, we played seven games in three days, four days. Everybody comes back. You have one day off then you start to finish the regular season," Westfield Head Coach Scott Faktor said.

Summit put the bat on the ball and finished with seven hits and even made a game out of it until Westfield broke loose in the bot-

tom of the fourth inning. Adam Klein led the Hilltoppers with two singles and a run scored, while adding a pair of stolen bases. David Axtell drilled an RBI double, and Max Model scored twice. Ian Filiault (RBI), Brad Klein, San Goldstein and John Dolan each added a single. Cole Model walked, and Vivek Mhatre ripped a pair of line drives that led to great defensive plays.

"Our kids put the ball in play. Making things happen! We struggled at the beginning of the

season, but they are getting a lot better at it. Hopefully at the end, we will be on top," Summit Head Coach Justin Vitti said.

Westfield totaled nine hits, and Jack Johnson led the way with a 2-for-2 morning, which included an RBI double, a walk and three runs scored. Jake Obsgarten (stolen base) delivered two singles, an RBI and a run scored. Fuller (run scored) and Lee Papadopoulos each drilled a two-run double, and Miles Brancatella bashed a two-run single and

scored once. Chirichella and O'Connor (run scored, stolen base) each singled. Robbie Faktor scored once, walked and swiped a base. Feinberg walked twice and stole two bases. Jason Glickstein walked once, and Hunter Hagen ripped a sharp liner to second.

"We had some great pitching. We made some great plays in the field. The bats woke up. We put nine runs on the board. We ran aggressively on the bases," Coach Faktor said.

Westfield Blue took a 2-0 lead in the bottom of the second inning. With Johnson and Brancatella on base, Papadopoulos looped a two-run double over first.

Summit knotted the score, 2-2, in the fourth, taking advantage of a pair of walks and three errors. The Blue answered with a four-run outburst to take a 6-2 lead, capped by Fuller's sharp two-run double to center field.

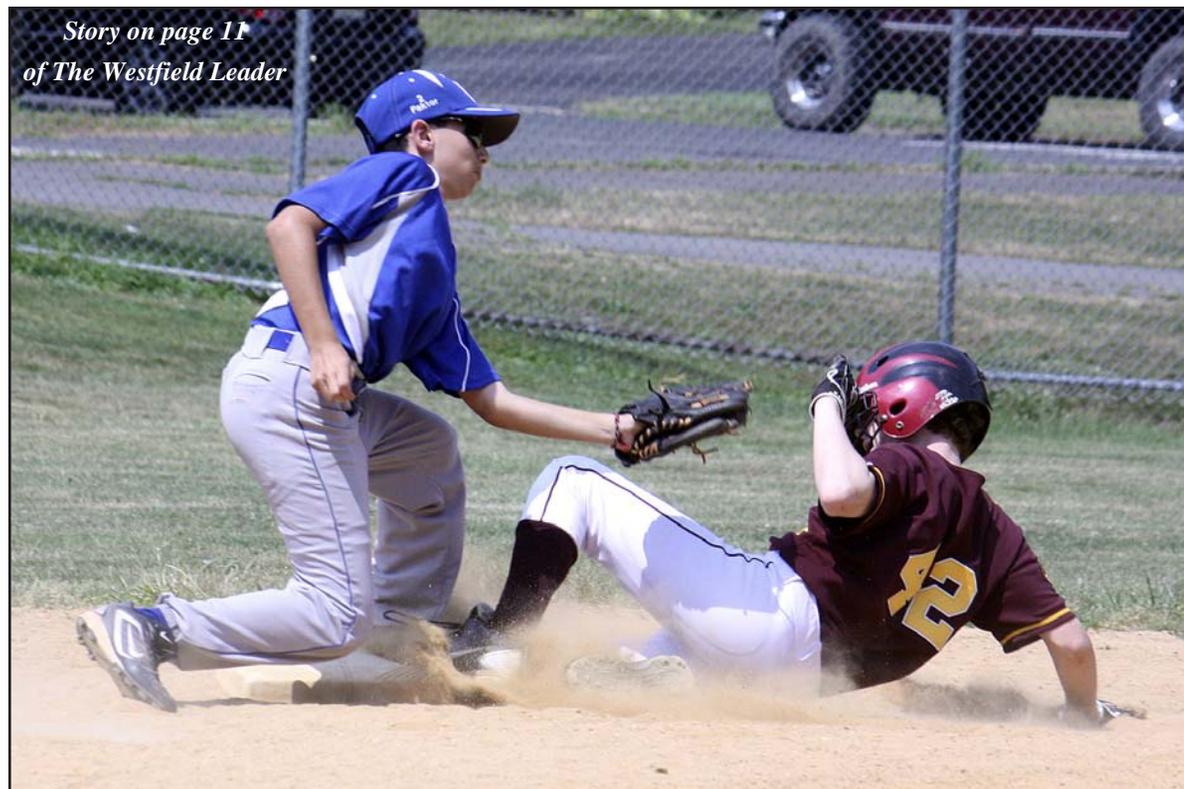
"Laser! That's his nickname. Laser hit a nice shot in the gap. We even had some hard-hit balls right to the outfielders. We couldn't really single out one guy, but there were some key hits. It all came together today," Coach Faktor said.

Summit inched closer with a pair of runs in the fifth. Axtell slashed an RBI double to the right field fence, and Filiault followed with an RBI grounder to second. Westfield Blue added three comfortable runs in the fifth. Johnson looped an RBI double to left, and Brancatella lined a two-run single to center.

In the Summit sixth, Goldstein chopped a leadoff single, but Fuller from his catcher's position later gunned him down as he attempted to steal second. Next, Papadopoulos made a fabulous sliding catch in right field. The final out was a grounder back to the mound.

"That was a great play. I think they made more plays in the field than we did," Coach Vitti said.

"Fuller threw him out, and Lee Papadopoulos made a great diving catch. It wasn't one hit or catch, it was a collective series," Coach Faktor said.



Story on page 11 of The Westfield Leader

David B. Corbin for The Westfield Leader and The Times

GETTING UNDER THE TAG...Summit's Adam Klein, No. 42, slides under the tag of Westfield Blue second baseman Jason Glickstein in the first inning of New Providence Green League action at Gumbert 3 Field in Westfield on July 7. The Westfield White defeated Summit, 9-4.

Summit	000	220	4
Westfield Blue	020	43x	9

SEE MORE PHOTOS ON PAGE 6

Please Support Youth Sports Programs

Go and See a Game!