

Cougars split recent Legion games

Continue learning through tough early schedule

BY ETHYN WILLIAMS-CALVERT
Sports Editor

The Central McLean Cougars continued their American Legion baseball season with a pair of contrasting results over the past week, earning an impressive home victory over Hazen before running into a strong Bulldogs Legion 18U squad on Monday.

The split leaves Central McLean at 3-7 on the season, though head coach Gryphon Mulkey believes the record does not fully reflect the level of competition his young team has faced.

“We have started the year off 3-7, but we have played a very tough Garrison team twice where in our last encounter we gave ourselves a good shot to beat them,” Mulkey said. “The biggest thing that we need to improve on is limiting the damage we do to ourselves. The self-inflicted wounds have been our Achilles heel so far this season, but will improve as we are still pretty young for a legion squad.”

The Cougars showed what they are capable of on June 10 when they rallied for a 7-4 victory over Hazen Post 189 in a game that turned dramatically in the middle innings.

Hazen jumped out to a quick 2-0 lead in the opening inning, but Central McLean’s pitching staff settled down and kept the Astros off the scoreboard over the next three frames.

That gave the Cougars an opportunity to climb back into the contest.

The breakthrough came in the bottom of the fourth inning.

Trailing 2-0, Central McLean erupted for four runs to take its first lead of the game. The Cougars capitalized on timely hitting and kept the pressure on Hazen’s defense during the decisive rally.

Hazen cut the deficit to 4-3 with a run in the fifth inning, but Central McLean responded again in the sixth.

The Cougars plated three insurance runs to build a 7-3 advantage heading into the final inning.

The Astros scored once in the seventh, but reliever Landon Saueressig closed the door to secure the victory.

Cooper Kittler paced the offensive attack with a perfect 3-for-3 performance and drove in three runs.

Dawson Smith added two hits and two RBIs, while Ethan Hanson also collected two hits and drove in a pair of runs.

Saueressig contributed a hit and reached base twice, while Jackson Blotter, Chase Kinn and Jayden Troyna each worked walks to help keep innings alive.

On the mound, Hanson delivered a strong start. The right-hander worked five innings, allowing four hits and three earned runs while striking out six batters. Saueressig handled the final two innings, giving up just one hit while striking out three.

Five days later, however, the Cougars found themselves facing a Bulldogs Legion team that controlled the game from the outset.

The Bulldogs scored two runs in the first inning and added six more in the second to build an early 8-0 lead. Central McLean struggled to generate offense against Bulldogs pitching and was limited to just two hits in the contest.

The Bulldogs added two runs in the fourth inning and another in the fifth to complete an 11-0 victory in five innings.

Smith and Hanson accounted for the Cougars’ only hits. Beckett Vaagene drew a walk, while the remainder of the lineup was held in check throughout the afternoon.

Despite the lopsided result, Mulkey remains optimistic about the direction of the team. The Cougars feature a youthful roster that continues to gain experience against quality opponents, and the coaching staff believes the lessons learned now will pay dividends later in the summer.

Central McLean has already shown flashes of its potential, particularly in games like the victory over Hazen, where strong pitching, timely hitting and resilience after an early

deficit produced a complete team effort.

As the season progresses, the Cougars will look to reduce mistakes, build consistency and turn the experience gained against tough competition into more wins in the weeks ahead.

Central McLean Cougars Legion Baseball

June 10
Hazen Post 189 Astros at Central McLean

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
R H E	2	0	0	0	1	0	1
HAZ	4	5	1				
CM	0	0	0	4	0	3	0
	7	8	2				

CM Stats:
Dawson SMith 2-4 2 RBI
Cooper Kittler 3-3 3 RBI
Jackson Blotter 0-3 1 walk
Chase Kinn 0-2 2 walks
Jayden Troyna 0-3 1 walk
Ethan Hanson 2-4 2 RBI
Landon Saueressig 1-3 1 walk
Beckett Vaagene 0-2
Aiden Hanson 0-2

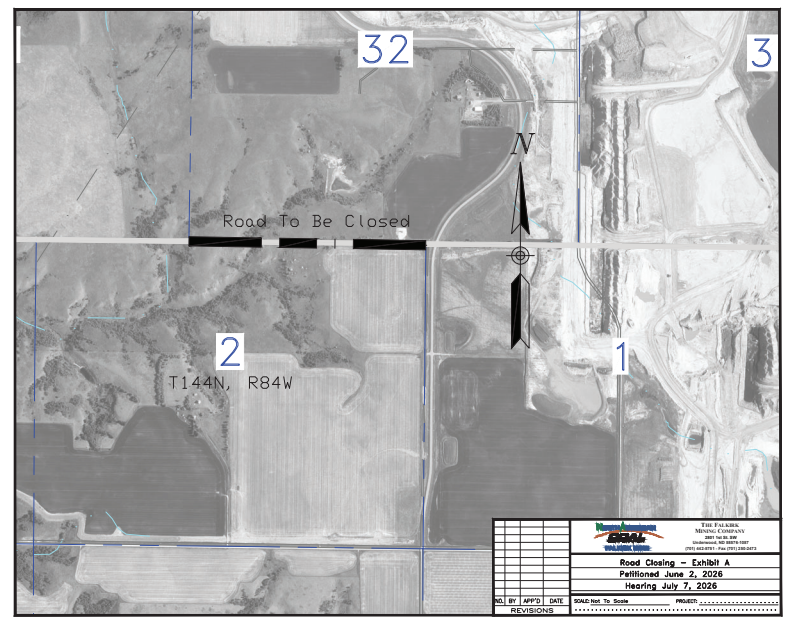
Pitching:
Ethan Hanson 5.0 IP 4 hits 3 runs 3 runs 3 ER 3 walks 6 strikeouts
Landon Saueressig 2.0 IP 1 hit 1 run 0 ER 0 walks 3 strikeouts

June 15
Central McLean vs Bulldogs Legion 18U

	1	2	3	4	5	R	H	E
BUL	2	6	0	2	1	11	12	2
CM	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0

CM Stats:
Dawson SMith 1-3
Ethan Hanson 1-3
Cooper Kittler 0-2
Jackson Blotter 0-1
Chase Kinn 0-2
Jayden Troyna 0-2
Landon Saueressig 0-2
Beckett Vaagene 0-1 1 walk
Aiden Hanson 0-2

PUBLIC NOTICES



Notice Of Hearing On Petition To Temporarily Close Certain Section Line Roads

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a Petition has been filed by The Falkirk Mining Company, P.O. Box 1087, Underwood, North Dakota 58576, with the Board of McLean County Commissioners requesting that the following section line roads be temporarily closed in order to conduct surface coal mining and reclamation operations:

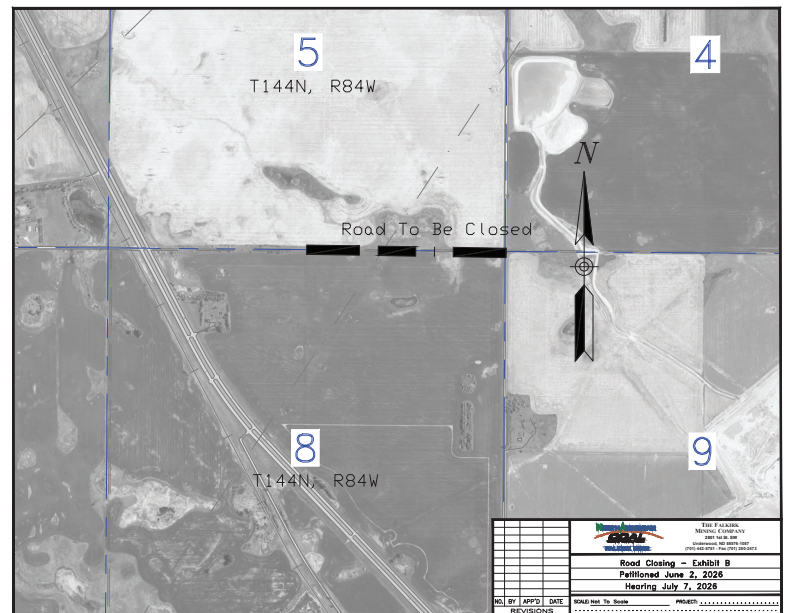
- The section line trail located between Lots 1, 2 and the easternmost 570' of Lot 3 of Section 2, Township 144 North, Range 84 West and the westernmost 3,220' of Section 32, Township 145 North, Range 83 West
- The section line trail located between the SE4 of Section 5 and the NE4 of Section 8, Township 146 North, Range 82 West

After the completion of surface coal mining and reclamation operations, Falkirk will restore the closed sections

line roads to as good a condition as existed prior to the closing of such roads to the extent required by the Board of McLean County Commissioners.

A hearing on the Petition will be held by the Board of McLean County Commissioners in the McLean County Courthouse at Washburn, North Dakota, on the 7th day of July, 2026, at 9:00 a.m., CDT, for the purpose of receiving testimony and evidence bearing upon the above request by Falkirk. Statements may be made orally or in writing at the time of the public hearing. The Petition, along with the map showing the effected section lines, is on file in the office of the McLean County Auditor and may be viewed by interested persons during regular office hours.

By order of the Board of McLean County Commissioners.
Beth Knutson, County Auditor



(June 18 & 25, 2026)

WEATHER

Date	Max	Min	Precip
Jun 8	77	53	.00
Jun 9	90	54	T
Jun 10	71	56	.00
Jun 11	70	51	.04
Jun 12	70	45	.00
Jun 13	65	48	.00
Jun 14	73	44	.0

Larry Dziuk

Rodney Zimmerman, MD

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