

July 22 District 12 11-year-olds: Another title for Nottingham



Will Adams (left) slides home safely with yet another run for the Nottingham 11s tonight, while Dom Chiarello has a happy welcome home committee after belting one of four Nottingham homers on the night (Photos by Ken Weingartner).

Nottingham has power to burn in winning district championship

By Ken Weingartner

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July 22: The only thing able to halt the Nottingham 11-year-old all-stars' march to the District 12 Little League championship was a lack of power.

Electrical power, that is. Nottingham's bats supplied plenty.

Nottingham blasted four homers tonight and got a one-hitter from pitcher Joey Sacco as it wrapped up the district title with a 19-0 win over Robbinsville at HTRBA's Van Horn Field. Sacco, Alex Coleman, Dom Chiarello and Will Cocroft all went deep for the Sayen Gang, with Cocroft homering in the second straight game.

The game ended after four innings because of the mercy rule, but not before the bottom half of the fourth was delayed for 30 minutes by a power outage that knocked out the field's lights.

When played resumed, Nottingham closed out Robbinsville and picked up its championship banner, joining the 12-year-olds as fellow district champions.

Nottingham begins sectional play at 8 p.m. Thursday at 6-11 against the District 19 champs.

"We've been working with these kids, and these parents, for a few years now and feel this is that next step on the road to get to the Little League World Series," Nottingham manager Mark "The Webmaster" Sacco said. "We have a great group of kids and they all chip in, up and down the lineup. They never give up, even when we were down against West Windsor the other night. They work hard."

Nottingham, which rallied for an extra-inning win over West Windsor on Tuesday, left no doubt about the championship game's outcome. Sacco and Coleman hit back-to-back homers in the top of the first inning as the squad erupted for a 6-0 lead.

Matt Adams started the inning by bunting for a hit and went to second on a wild pitch. He moved to third on a single by Chiarello and scored when Chiarello was caught in a rundown on a stolen base attempt. Chiarello ended up safe at second when Robbinsville tried to throw out Adams at the plate.

Sacco and Coleman then homered and Chris Cote followed with a single. Cote later scored on a bases-loaded walk by Gennaro Salzano. Andrew Barlow, who also walked in the inning, scored on a wild pitch to complete the scoring in the frame.

"That was big, to get ahead like that," Coleman said. "We felt very confident. We felt we could do this. We wanted to win this championship so bad, and it feels good to do it. Hopefully, we can win sectionals. We just

have to all contribute and make plays.”

Cote drilled a two-run double in the second inning to give Nottingham an 8-0 lead. Chiarello’s two-run homer highlighted a five-run third, with Tristan Spadola, Chris Harkness and Cocroft adding RBI singles.

Spadola had an RBI single, Harkness a two-run single and Cocroft a three-run homer – driving in Harkness and Ryan Bremer – to cap the scoring in the top of the fourth inning.

Cocroft finished the tourney with three homers, including a solo blast that tied the West Windsor game in the sixth inning and forced extra innings.

Nottingham saw every player in its lineup tonight either score at least one run or drive in at least one. Sacco and Coleman led the way by scoring four times apiece.

On the mound, Sacco gave up a single to Robbinsville’s first batter, but a double play erased the runner. Sacco finished with three strikeouts and no walks.

“I felt good; right from the beginning, even warming up, I could tell,” Sacco said. “Getting the big lead was huge. It pumped us up and I was able to calm down a bit (on the mound). I knew if I gave up a run or two at that point, it was fine.”

Of course, Sacco gave up nothing.

“To win the district championship is great,” he said. “This lets other teams know that we come to fight and play hard every day.”

Every night too. With power to spare.