

**July 23 Babe Ruth SNJ 13s**

## **Nottingham comes out flat in loss to Washington Township**

**By Rich Fisher**

**Fish4Scores.com**

**July 23:** Things started slow and never picked up for the Nottingham Babe Ruth 13-year-old All-Stars to today, and the result was an 11-5 loss to Washington Township in the SNJ State Tournament.

In suffering their first loss of any kind this summer, Nottingham dropped to the loser's bracket and will play the loser of Sunday's game between Hightstown/East Windsor and either Mount Holly or Atlantic Shore at Monday, 8:30 p.m. at East Windsor PAL Field.

"I'm very disappointed in how we played," manager Jim Maher said. "We left 10 guys on base, we didn't pitch well. We threw the ball around in the infield and the outfield.

"I don't know what it was, but some guys looked like they were scared to death. You gotta get better pitching. You can't give up 11 runs in a winner's bracket game and expect to win."

Nottingham's pitchers struggled, allowing 10 walks, including four in the first inning that led to five Washington Township runs.

Maher felt that inning may have set a tone.

"You play better when pitchers are throwing a lot of strikes," he said. "You're ready to play. We walked too many guys."

The 13s got one back in the bottom of the first when Shane Keledy singled and eventually score on a wild pitch. But Washington got five more in the third to go up 10-1 and Nottingham could never make a run despite putting the leadoff man on in six of seven innings. The Veterans Park gang left 10 on base.

"We were like a hit away from getting back into it but the bottom line is we don't deserve to win today," Maher said. "I give (reliever) Sean McGeehan credit. He battled. He went out and competed and kept us in striking distance."

Nottingham is hurt by the loss of Kyle Muller, who suffered a concussion Thursday night. Maher is uncertain if he will be able to return in the states.

"It definitely hurt us on the mound, he would have pitched today and I think we would have won," the manager said. "There's no way that team is six runs better than us. They're not a bad team, but they're not six runs better.

"The tough thing is we got put in a situation where I couldn't use (Anthon) Francioso, (Riley) Schmitt or (Frank) Lucchesi because I have to look at the big picture. We have to win three games to advance."

Keledy led the offense with a hit, RBI and two runs, while Steve Moticha had a hit and two RBIs, Anthony Francioso had a double and run scored and Riley Schmitt had Nottingham's only other hit.