

July 28 Babe Ruth SNJ State Tournament: Hamilton 14s still alive, Hamilton 15s lose first



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Hamilton's Nick Leona high fives Dan Mostrangeli after Mostrangeli tallied against West Windsor in tonight's 14-year-old loser's bracket final (Photo by John Blaine/purchase photos by e-mailing jbsportsphoto@aol.com).

Marcik on the mark as Hamilton 14s bounce back against WW

By Ken Weingartner
Fish4Scores.com

July 28: Justin Marcik's Houdini act helped prevent Hamilton's 14-year-old all-stars from disappearing.

Marcik pitched five strong innings tonight, giving up a run in the first frame but wiggling out of danger over the next four, to lead Hamilton to a 5-1 Southern New Jersey State Tournament win over

West Windsor-Plainsboro in the losers' bracket final at West Windsor's Ciuffani Field.

The victory moved Hamilton into Friday's championship round against Northern Burlington, which knocked the Switlik Gang into the losers' bracket with a 4-3 walk-off win Wednesday. Hamilton needs to beat NB twice tomorrow, with the first game scheduled for 6 p.m., to advance to the Mid-Atlantic Regional.

"I can't say enough about the way Justin Marcik pitched," Hamilton manager Mike "Mo" Mocerri said. "He gives up hits, gets guys on base, but he always seems to get out of it. He pitched a tremendous game. That's the way he's pitched all along. Every time we've asked him to pitch, he's pitched great."

Marcik allowed four hits and four walks with one strikeout. Dan Mostrangeli pitched the final two innings for Hamilton, allowing one hit.

Mo's Men scuffled through the early innings and trailed 1-0 before erupting for all five of their runs in the fourth inning.

Mostrangeli and Nick Leona led off with singles and Cody Astbury drove both home with a single. Luke McKeever's pinch single plated another run, Marcik drove home McKeever and Austin Constantini capped the rally with an RBI single.

Hamilton ran wild in the inning, stealing five bases. The five hits Mo's Men produced during the inning were all Hamilton would get, but they were enough.

"We were a little flat the first three innings," Mocerri said. "I knew we would be after last night's game. The kids were pumped up, but still looked a little flat.

"I was really pleased with the way we came back in the fourth inning. Christian Waters was pitching (for WW-P) and he's their best pitcher. He throws pretty good. We got the first two guys on, stole second and third, and Cody got that base hit. I think that kind of jump started it for us."

Hamilton saw an eight-game winning streak halted on Wednesday by Northern Burlington. Now, the Switlik Gang will try to avenge the defeat by taking two tomorrow.

The situation is not unlike Hamilton's run to the District One Tournament championship, when Mo's Men lost their opener and then won six in a row, including two on the final night.

Constantini will go to the mound for Hamilton in the SNJ championship opener.

"We'll take one at a time," Mocerri said, "and see what happens."

Hamilton 15's dropped into loser's bracket by Manasquan

Although it has an automatic bid into the Mid-Atlantic Region, Hamilton's 15-year-old team is still looking to win a state title.

The Switlik Gang needs to do it the hard way now, after dropping a 4-3 decision to Manasquan in the winner's bracket finals at Veterans Park tonight. It was Hamilton's first loss of the tournament season as it sat out the district tournament.

Hamilton must defeat tonight's Gibbsboro-Voorhees/Ewing winner tonight and come back to beat Manasquan twice on Saturday in order to win the title. Either way, it will play in next week's region tournament as the host team.

The Yardville Crew could not hold on to leads of 2-0 and 3-2, as Manasquan tied it with a run in the sixth and won it with a run in the seventh.

Hamilton had a run taken off the board in the first when Dan Garcia, who had doubled, was ruled to have left third base early on an apparent sacrifice fly John Mostrangelo. In the second, Hamilton loaded the bases before pitcher Tommy Toole struck out two straight.

In the third, RBI singles by Gerry Gomes and Mostrangelo gave Hamilton a 2-0 lead. But Manasquan came back to tie it, than knotted it again after Hamilton took a 3-2 lead, leaving the Switlik Gang needing a three-game winning streak for a title.