

SportsWeek

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Challenger League brings out baseball's best

By DAVE KONOPKI

Jackie had played the game of baseball before but this was his first time playing under the lights. So when the little round sphere found its way off the bat and into the moonless sky, you would think he would have trouble seeing the ball up in the lights.

But Jackie braved the elements and, in the process, made a terrific catch.

Fifteen minutes later Jamie stepped to the plate with all the confidence and coolness of a Ted Williams. It was obvious that, she too, had been there before. It took her just one swing to get the job done, smacking a base hit down the third base line.

Sounds like a typical day at any Little League field, right?

But, you see, Jackie made that fearless catch sitting in a wheelchair. And Jamie never saw the bat hit the ball and make its path through the infield grass. That's because Jamie is blind.

Last Saturday night W.W. Kubis Memorial Field was host to a very special baseball game, played by very special players. The Challenger Division of Little League Baseball offers young boys and girls with physical and mental disabilities the chance to do what they love: play baseball.

The Back Mountain was fortunate to host the game. I was fortunate enough to be there.

I've had a love affair with baseball since I was old enough to tie my own shoes (some would argue my late teens). But everything was put into a new perspective on Saturday night when a group of kids showed me a different side of the game and, in the process, taught me a les-

son in life itself.

I was asked to announce the game on the field's PA system. Introduce the players and add some entertainment. But that was like asking someone to touch-up the Mona Lisa, add a few sentences to the Constitution or add a book to the Bible. You don't mess with perfection. These kids were the stars of the show and on Saturday night they shone brightly.

I think it would be a great idea to force every major league baseball player to sit down and watch a Challenger Baseball game before they renegotiate their next contract. Then let them whine and complain about their \$5.6 million annual salaries.

After just one inning of watching the game I wanted to grab and hold my own kids. Despite the trials and tribulations that many of us endure each day, this game makes you realize just how good the Lord has been to each of us. But more than that, you truly appreciate what these kids and their families have overcome and the role models they represent.

For one night they are not disabled children, but rather baseball players, playing with all the enthusiasm and innocence that once made this game great.

Back Mountain Baseball will host another Challenger Baseball game on Saturday night, August 8. Make it a point to attend. Put off that movie or go to dinner the following week. Instead, gather up the family and head to W.W. Kubis Memorial Field. Sit your kids on your laps and experience all that is good in America.

Trust me, it's an experience you'll never forget.



Area youth attend Seminary sports camp

Young people from all around the area are taking part in the fun of Blue Knights Summer Sports Camp this year at Wyoming Seminary. An annual tradition with coaches Marvin Antinees and Tom Rokita, the camp offers a variety of activities for all ages. Campers learn skills in football, bowling, soccer, basketball and swimming. Instruction takes place rain or shine on the fields and in the gymnasiums of Wyoming Seminary Upper School, Kingston. The camp will run until July 31, and is open Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Pictured are some of the campers who have enjoyed the activities this summer, from left, first row, Camp co-director Tom Rokita, Ben Harris, Kingston; Nick Ouellette, Dallas.

Second row, George Yukas, Harveys Lake; Ben Gaia, Dallas; Eli Fried, Graydon Speace, Matt Duncan, Dallas; Amy Antinnes, counselor.

Third row, Jaron Stern, Dallas; Andy Gaia, Dallas; Eli Fried, Kingston; David Lucchino, Dallas; camp co-director Marvin Antinees.

Fourth row, Kyle Williams, Dallas; Jordan Moseman, Dallas; Michael Strauss, Kingston.

Fifth row, Dan Volpetti, Dallas; Chad Williams, Dallas; Sunny Sheth, Dallas; Alex Russin, Kingston; Taylor Wielage, Dallas.

Final registration July 27 for Dallas Junior Football

Dallas Jr. Football Assoc. will hold its final Mini-Football Registration for the 1992 season for the A-Team and B-Team football players on Monday, July 27, at the practice field (upper field of the Little League) in Dallas from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

A-Team requirements: Must be 12 years old and not more than 13 years old on August 1.

B-Team requirements: Must be 10 years old and not more than 11 years old on August 1.

A photograph and copy of birth certificate is required for first time registrants. The registration fee is \$20 per participant and \$5 for each additional family member. For additional information, call Len Tarreto, President at 675-7310.

Jack Barnes wins HL Commodores Cup

Commodore Clinton J. Lehman, MD, presided over the Annual Commodores Cup Comet Sailboat Race as well as the Back Mt. Handicap Race on Sunday, July 19. Acting race chairman, Scott Shuster, fired the starting gun at 12:30 p.m. He was assisted by Peg and Jim Swaback on the committee boat. Dorothy Chaney served as official observer during the event.

The race started at the club continued to marker #2 at Point Breeze then on to Hanson's and the Campbell boathouse, the race continued on to a marker in the Alderson area with the finish at the clubhouse buoy.

The day was clear and sunny with winds of 5 to 10 knots arising from the west-south-west. The winds began to shift and swirl by mid-race as is customary in lake sailing. By the end of the race the surface of the lake was agitated by speeding motorboats of all descriptions to such an extent that one foot waves were created.

Many spectators were on hand to welcome the winners and offer encouragement to the other contenders. Commodore Lehman

posted the following results: Commodores Cup first place, Jack C. Barnes with Leigh Schoner-Runner as crew; second place, Dr. Lane Giddings and crew Megan Murphy; third place, Joan Williams and Viet Huynh, crew. Dr. Fred Meyers and Eric Myers also sailed.

The Back Mountain Handicap Race was won by Jack C. Barnes and Leigh Schoner-Runner; second place was won by Frank Wadas who sailed a Lightning and was assisted by Sandy and Ted Struthers as crew. (A Lightning is one of a class of sailboats about 19 feet in length that are sloop-rigged and have a centerboard). Third place, Dr. Lane Giddings and Megan Murphy. Others who sailed were Joan Williams with Viet Huynh and Karl Arbogast with Susan Verdone as crew.

The Harveys Lake Yacht Club invites all with board boats (Sunfish, Sailfish Phantom etc.) to join in the fun at the club on Sunday, July 26. At 1 p.m. prizes and trophies will be awarded, no entry fee but a reservation is a must. Call Frank, 696-1614; Scott, 696-1954 or 823-4712; Jack, 696-3460

Rec. Center sponsors trip to Baron's game

The Dallas Borough Recreation Center is sponsoring a trip to Lackawanna County Stadium on Monday, July 27 to see the Red Barons vs. Pawtucket. Cost is only \$5 per person and includes bus transportation from the Rec Center. There are several openings. Call 675-4736 if you are interested.

Back Mountain girls take District 16 championship

The Back Mountain Girls' Little League all-stars won their second straight District 16 championship with a 13-3 win over Nanticoke Saturday, July 18. Back Mountain won five playoff games without a loss to take the title.

"I think the kid's have lots of desire, and we play tough defense," said head coach Gary Beisel of the team of 11 and 12-year-olds. Good pitching adds to the mix, as the local team used four pitchers in the five playoff games. Under Little League rules, pitchers cannot work consecutive games.

Back Mountain's only scare came July 14 against a tough Bob Horlacher team. After taking an 8-0 lead after four innings, the game almost slipped away under a streak of wild pitching. Horlacher scored six runs in the bottom of the fourth on five walks and some errors, but Back Mountain scored once more in the fifth and hung on for a 9-8 win. Horlacher was held hitless throughout the contest.

"We made some mental errors against Horlacher, but the girls kept their heads on straight and

went on to win," Beisel said.

In the final game against Nanticoke, Back Mountain gave up three runs in the top of the first inning, but winning pitcher Marisa Michaels settled down to hold the visitors hitless the rest of the way.

Back Mountain scored once in the first inning, then added three in the second and two in the third before pushing five runs in the fifth to put the game away. Michaels aided her own cause with two of her team's nine hits. Maureen Paley went 2-for-3 with one double.

Beisel says the team will try to do more of the same as sectional playoffs begin. "We have to count on our defense and pitching," he said. "That's what got us this far. We seem to get runs when we need them."

Back Mountain will face the winner of District 15 playoffs July 28 at the W.W. Kubis field. If they win, they'll enter sectional play for two road games and a third at home. Last year, the team won its section and went on to be runner-up in the Eastern Pennsylvania playoffs.

Screenprinting USA wins state softball title

The Screenprinting USA softball team from Dallas captured the National Softball Association Pennsylvania Class D state title July 18 and 19 at the Drifton Softball Complex.

The Printers went 7-1 with five straight wins on Sunday to win the 14-team tourney and advance to the NSA World Series, September 18-20 in Drifton.

After two wins on Saturday, Screenprinting USA lost to Beacon Container of Reading, 13-11 in eight innings. However, the Printers rebounded and defeated Beacon twice, 10-8 and 17-12, to win the title.

Kevin Ball led the offense with 19 hits and a .704 average. Don Spencer was next at .600. Other top hitters included J.J. Mieczynski, .583; Scott Crispell, .567; Gary Gavrish, .548; Dave Parsnik, .500; Rick Crispell, .500;

and Ron Swingle, .500. Ernie Slocum hit .410.

Walt Konopke, Parsnik, Ball and Rick Crispell excelled defensively in the outfield. Other team members include Dwight Barbacci and Bill Vivian who did not play due to injuries.

Before heading to the championship, Screenprinting USA improved to 7-2 in the Back Mountain Slow-pitch Softball League with a 22-8 win over Bittner's. Scott Shafer paced the attack with a 5-for-5 effort followed by Marty Brennan who had went 4-for-5 and hit for the cycle with a single, double, triple and homer.

Jim Chamberlain, Scott Crispell, Dave Martin, John Belles and Jack Barbacci all added three hits each while Donnie Spencer had two hits.

13-year-old boys one win from district title

It's two down, one to go for the Back Mountain 13-year-olds baseball team. The final game of a best-of-five series between Back Mountain and Avoca/Dupont will be played this Saturday at 4 p.m. at Dallas High School.

Back Mountain stayed alive with two wins last weekend. On Saturday, Justin Jumper claimed the win when the local team beat Avoca/Dupont 18-9. John Martin and Chris Lohin banged out three hits each, while Fran Brown and

Shawn Love had two apiece.

On Sunday, Back Mountain won again, this time by a 17-8 score. Brian Pietracchini was the winning pitcher as Jumper had four doubles and Brown and Brad Kohli chipped in two hits each.

Coach Steve Withers' team hopes to win the coin toss and be declared the home team for the first time in the series. If Back Mountain wins the District 16 title Saturday, they will enter regional play.

Senior girls crush M'top

The Back Mountain Senior Girls' Little League team blew out unbeaten Mountaintop in a District 16 playoff game Saturday, July 18.

After scoring four runs in the first inning, Back Mountain exploded for 10 runs in the second, on the way to a 21-4 victory. Mountaintop could manage only one score in the second inning and three more in the fourth against

Nicole Naugle, who went the distance and gave up eight hits while striking out two.

The local team banged out 18 hits in the contest, with Amy Rogers and Suzanne Fisher getting four each. Naugle drove in four runs on two hits to help her own cause.

The two teams were scheduled to meet again Tuesday, July 21 for the District 16 title.

Bayo's Ice takes third at state softball championship

Bayo's Ice finished in third place at the Pennsylvania State Co-ed Softball Championships in New Castle on July 11 and 12.

Player/manager Dave May (Noxen) guided Bayo's to a 5-2 record in the 15-team field. After an opening round win, Bayo's dropped a heartbreaking 10-6 extra-inning contest to eventual champ Wofford's Inn of Beaver Falls, Pa.

Bayo's rebounded with a four-game winning streak before losing

to runner-up Pleasant Oil of Sunbury, 3-2.

Dave Ritz and Scott Crispell (Noxen) led the offense at .591 followed by Chris Howell at .550. Kevin Ball (Noxen) hit .462 and Larry Baker (Noxen) was next at .458.

Patti Reed (Dallas) hit .362 and Diane Malemus (Noxen) hit .350. Debbie Cox excelled defensively at third base while Ball, Howell, Ann Faulls (Kunkle) and Nikki Dibble starred in the outfield.

Humphrey's tied for first with Fitch & Sons in Rec. Basketball

Humphrey's led by Frank Debona's 25 points ripped Jim-Jon Tomatoes 89-63 in the Fieldhouse/Dallas Rec. Adult Basketball League on Thursday, July 16. Jim Jaster (16) Nafty Hage (14) and Mike Hosey (14) all chipped in with solid games for the winners. Jim-Jon was led by Tom Shalata's 14. The loss drops the tomato men to second place with a 2-2 mark. Humphrey's remains on top at 3-1.

Fitch and Son's kept their share of first place with a hard fought 64-60 win over the Fieldhouse. Ray Russin led the victors with 15, while Clark Van Orden and Jay Straigs had 14 and 12 respectively. Paul Darling had 19 for the Fieldhouse while newcomer Charlie Mulhurn added 15 including three 3-pointers. The loss drops the Fieldhouse to 1-3.

The Lion Inc. won their second

straight by besting Payne Printery, 69-62. Bill Cuff and Dennis Dacusin each had 19 for The Lion while Joe Flaherty was a one man show for Payne with 32 points. Action continues on Wednesday, July 22 with three games beginning at 5:15 at the Dallas Borough Rec Center on Burdale Road in Dallas.

| Standings: | W | L |
|----------------|---|---|
| Fitch & Sons | 3 | 1 |
| Humphrey's | 3 | 1 |
| The Lion Inc. | 2 | 2 |
| Jim-Jon2 | 2 | |
| Payne Printery | 1 | 3 |
| The Fieldhouse | 1 | 3 |

July 22 Schedule:
5:15 - Fieldhouse vs. Jim-Jon
6:15 - Humphrey's vs. The Lion Inc.
7:15 - Fieldhouse vs. Payne Printery

Lake-Lehman fall sports physicals July 27-Aug. 11

Rodger Bearde, Athletic Director, announced the following schedule for Fall sports physicals for Lake-Lehman High School:

| | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| Varsity Field Hockey | Mon., July 27 9 a.m. |
| Varsity Soccer (Boys) | Tues., July 28 1 p.m. |
| Girls Volleyball | Wed., July 29 9 a.m. |
| Cross Country & Golf | Thurs., July 30 1 p.m. |
| Varsity Football | Fri., July 31 9 a.m. |
| Junior High Field Hockey | Tues., Aug. 4 9 a.m. |
| Junior High Soccer | Wed., Aug. 5 1 p.m. |
| Sr. & Jr. High Cheerleading | Fri., Aug. 7 9 a.m. |
| Junior High Football | Tues., Aug. 11 9 a.m. |

Physicals will be held in the Senior High Nurse's Suite. Student athletes may obtain a parent permission slip in the high school office prior to day of physical exam.

Soccer Traveling team tryouts

Soccer U-11 Girls Travel Team

The final tryouts for the 1992/93 U-11 Girls Travel Team will be held Thursday, July 30, 6 p.m. at Neuman Field. All interested girls born from August 1, 1981 to July 31, 1982 should wear a shirt with a number and shin guards.

Final U-13 Boys Travel Team

The 1992/93 U-13 Boys Travel Soccer Team will hold its final tryout on Thursday, July 23. The tryouts will be at Neuman Field at 6 p.m. All boys should wear a shirt with a number on it and shin guards.