



# World Series Journal



AMERICAN LEGION BASEBALL

## Game 9: Indiana advances

Rockport, Ind., Post 254 became the first team to clinch a spot in Monday's American Legion World Series semifinals. And they did so in very impressive fashion. Bolting out to a 3-0 lead in the first inning and 6-0 by the end of the third, Rockport topped Omaha, Neb., Post 1 8-3 Saturday night. Rockport finished pool play 3-0 and improved to 35-1 overall.

Indiana got started with a textbook first inning. Kobe Stephens opened with a walk, Trever Zink singled and Spencer Deom bunted both runners over. Jakob Shuler followed with a two-run double down the left-field line and then moved to third on Sammy Rowan's single. Shuler came home on a wild pitch, and Post 254 led 3-0 just six at-bats into the game. Two innings later Indiana was back in business. Two walks and a fielder's choice put runners on first and second with one out. Caleb Helms singled to score Rowan, Zach Hopewell followed with an RBI single to score Gant Miller, and Matthew Embry's double brought home Helms, extending Post 254's lead to 6-0.

Post 254 added a run in the bottom of the fourth when Zink singled, moved to third on a walk and hit, and then came home on Rowan's sacrifice fly. After being shut out by Indiana's Hunter Rowe through the first six innings, Omaha (59-5, 1-2 pool play) finally broke through in the top of the seventh. A hit batter and two walks loaded the bases, and two wild pitches brought home a pair.

After a sacrifice fly by Evan Bergman scored Andrew Morrow to bring Omaha within 7-3, Brett Vosick and Brandon Bena each singled. Brenden Lewis came in in relief and got a groundout to end the threat. Indiana answered with a security run in the bottom of the eighth, taking advantage of three Omaha errors and a wild pitch to bring Deom around.

Rowe (1-0) wound up pitching 6.2 innings, allowing six hits and three earned runs while striking out four.

## PNC Comer: I just love the game

American Legion Past National Commander Jake Comer rarely is emptyhanded at an American Legion World Series game. Find him in the stands or in the Lowes Center at Keeter Stadium and you'll see the Massachusetts Legionnaire with a scoresheet in hand. He tracks every at-bat in every inning. He looks up averages of batters coming to bat. He checks pitchers' ERA. And at the end of every game, when his scoresheet is full, he promptly throws it away.

"People ask, 'What do you with your (scoresheets)?' I say, 'I throw them away,'" said Comer, the national commander from 1987-1988. "I just love keeping (a scoresheet) each game because I like to get into the game. I know who's coming up next, did they get a hit last time, rather than just sitting there watching the game."

"I guess it goes back to my love of the Boston Braves," he said. "I just love the game."

Comer first came to the ALWS in 1975 when he was Department of Massachusetts commander and hasn't missed the ALWS since it moved to Shelby, N.C. Comer and former Department of North Carolina National Executive Committeeman Jerry Hedrick were instrumental in bring the series to Shelby on a permanent basis.

Before moving the Series to Shelby, Comer said he remembered games being played in front of 200 fans. But at the first World Series game he attended in Shelby "they had 9,000 people in the stands," he said. "To have 117,000 last year ... and when the average would be maybe 20,000-25,000 for another World Series (site), it tells us we were right in naming a permanent site." The way the people have embraced the World Series means a great deal to Comer.

"You drive into the town and there's a 'Welcome to Shelby' sign," he said. "Right underneath it – 'Home of American Legion Baseball.' You go on the main street downtown, wow, to see those signs."

*This is an abbreviated story. Read more at [legion.org/baseball](http://legion.org/baseball)*

## Game 7: California cruises past Virginia, 8-0

One day after rallying to beat Arkansas, San Mateo, Calif., Post 82 needed no such late-game heroics. The Shockers (34-5) scored four runs in the first three innings and never looked back, downing Leesburg, Va., Post 34 8-0. San Mateo takes a 2-0 record into Sunday's final day of pool play.



After a scoreless first inning, Kaleb Keelean bunted his way on base to start the second inning, moved to second on Kaleb Keelean's single and came home on Nick Knecht's single. Brandenburg scored on an error to give the Shockers a 2-0 lead.

That lead doubled with one swing of the bat in the third. Felix Aberouette walked, and Ramon Enriquez followed with a shot that easily cleared the left-field fence. An error and wild pitch in the bottom of the fourth led to Brandenburg scoring, upping the lead to 5-0.

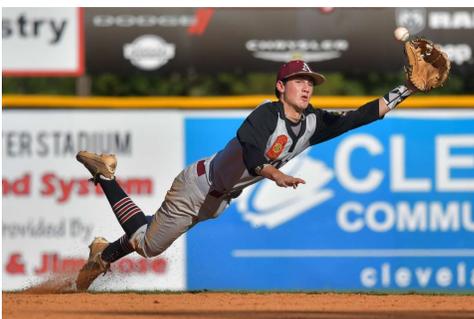
In the bottom of the sixth, Knecht singled and Ricardo Barraza reached on a fielder's choice. Tyler Villaroman followed with a single, and Aberouette then doubled into left field, clearing the bases and extending the advantage to 8-0.

John Besse (2-0) pitched an efficient 7.2 innings, scattering eight hits and walking just one batter. Leesburg (20-10 overall, 0-2 in pool play) did manage 10 hits but left 12 runners on.

## Game 8: Arkansas over Rhode Island, 8-3

One day after a disappointing loss to California, Texarkana, Ark., Post 58 almost immediately found itself down 2-0 in the first inning to Cumberland, R.I., Post 86/14 Saturday afternoon. Four innings later, things completely turned around for Arkansas.

A six-run fourth inning set up Post 58's 8-3 win that left both teams 1-1 in pool play. Texarkana (39-5) shook off a 4-2 loss to California that included two late-game base-running errors with runners in scoring position.



But things didn't look to be going Post 58's way early. Cumberland's Tyler Calabro reached on a fielder's choice in the first inning, and Tyler Walsh followed with a single. Chris Wright then drilled a line drive into center field that just got past diving Texarkana centerfielder Blake Hall's mitt, bringing home both baserunners.

Neither team could muster any more major threats until Texarkana's big fourth inning. With one out, Parker Ribble and Beau Burson hit consecutive singles. One batter later, Riley Orr reached on a fielder's choice and error, bringing Ribble home from second. Matt Goodheart followed with a triple to right-center field, scoring Burson and Orr, and then came home himself on a wild pitch. A single and error put Cole Boyd and Blake Hall on base, and Will Smith then delivered a two-run single that put Texarkana on top 6-2.

Cumberland (34-5) came back with a run in the top of the fifth on singles from Josh Brodeur and Calabro, and a Texarkana wild pitch. But two innings later Post 58 responded with a two-run rally of its own. After Orr and Goodheart each singled, Hall brought Orr home on a bunt and Goodheart scored on a fielding error on the same play, pushing the advantage to 8-3.

Texarkana's Tanner Vaught (1-0) pitched a complete game, scattering 12 hits. Post 58's defense didn't commit an error, while Cumberland was charged with four. Cumberland pitcher Ryan O'Neill allowed all eight runs – none earned.

### SCORES

Leesburg, VA -	0
San Mateo, CA -	8
Cumberland, RI -	3
Texarkana, AR -	8
Rockport, IN -	8
Omaha, NE -	3

### STANDINGS

San Mateo, CA	2-0
Cumberland, RI	1-1
Texarkana, AR	1-1
Leesburg, VA	0-1
<b>STRIPES</b>	
Rockport, IN	3-0
Rowan Co., NC	1-1
Omaha, NE	1-2
Kennewick, WA	0-2

### SCHEDULE

Game 10: 12:30 pm, ESPNU  
Rowan County, NC  
Kennewick, WA

Game 11: 4:30 pm, ESPNU  
Leesburg, VA  
Texarkana, AR

Game 12: 7:30 pm, ESPNU  
Cumberland, RI  
San Mateo, CA

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