



World Series Journal



AMERICAN LEGION BASEBALL

ALWS Game 9: Overtaken call helps Louisiana advance

Even as he collided with teammate Jordan Badame, Gonzales (La.) Post 81 centerfielder Zane Zeppuhar was catching a ball hit deep to left center by Wil Courtney of Dubuque County (Iowa) Post 137. The problem, as Zeppuhar lay on the field dazed by a shoulder to the jaw, was that was just the second out. Dubuque County's Sam Link and T.J. Deardorff scored to tie the game. One problem: Deardorff apparently hadn't tagged up at second. Gonzales coach Martin Luquet appealed, the officials ruled Deardorff out, and the Louisiana team held on for a 3-2 victory Sunday in The American Legion World Series at Keeter Stadium in Shelby, N.C.

Gonzales finished pool play with a 3-0 record in the Stripes Division. "It was a great catch, first," Luquet said of the controversial play. "One of our bench guys saw that the guy on second had never gone back, so that's where we got the appeal from. Obviously they saw the same thing."

Gonzales scored three runs in the top of the first inning despite notching just one hit, Brayden Caskey's leadoff single. Zeppuhar drew a walk and Jack Merrifield reached on a fielder's choice to score Caskey, and both later scored on sacrifice flies to make it 3-0. But despite opportunities, Gonzales couldn't add to their lead. Dubuque County (1-2) got on the board in the bottom of the third when Courtney's sac fly drove in Dylan Gotto. But over the last two innings, the Iowa team managed just one base runner and couldn't make the comeback.

Semifinal Monday

American Legion Family Day

Michigan 4:00
Delaware

Louisiana 7:00
Nevada

Stars:

Midland (MI) 3-0
Las Vegas (NV) 1-2
Meridian (ID) 1-2
Randolph Co. (NC) 1-2

Stripes:

Gonzales (LA) 3-0
Wilmington (DE) 2-1
Dubuque Co. (IA) 1-2
Braintree (MA) 0-3

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ALWS Game 10: Delaware holds off Massachusetts to advance to semifinals

The scenario was a simple one for Wilmington (Del.) Post 1—win their final game of pool play and they would advance to the semifinals of The American Legion World Series. Their matchup Sunday against Braintree (Mass.) Post 86 ended in a bit more dramatic fashion than they may have liked, but the Delaware team held on for a 4-3 victory to keep their season alive.

Wilmington finished pool play with a 2-1 record, second in the Stripes Division to Gonzales (La.) Post 81 (3-0). Wilmington will face the Stars Division winner in Monday's semifinals; the final pool play games in the Stars Division were scheduled for Sunday night. Braintree (0-3) was already assured of elimination heading into Game 10, but could have forced a three-way tiebreaker with a victory. Dubuque Co. (Iowa) Post 137 also finished pool play with a 1-2 record; a three-way tie would have gone to the tiebreaker of fewest runs allowed. For most of Game 10, it didn't look like that would be a concern. Wilmington took a 1-0 lead in the top of the first inning when Jack Dubecq's sacrifice fly drove in Austin Colmery. Wilmington added two runs in the third with Dubecq's double scoring Eric Ludman and Dubecq scoring on Matt Poma's sac fly.

Wilmington went up 4-0 in the fourth when Nate Thomas' sac fly scored Michael Cautillo. But Braintree answered in the bottom of the inning, with Joseph Vanelli scoring on a single by Nolan Freeman. The score stayed 4-1 into the seventh. But Braintree wouldn't go away quietly. Aiden Carrey scored on Jackson Duffy's fielder's choice, and Alex Kennedy singled to score Adam Berthelot. But Matt Danz induced a flyout for the final out to clinch the win.

ALWS Game 11: Unbeaten Michigan advances to semifinals

There would be no relying on tiebreaker formulas for Midland (Mich.) Post 165 to ensure they would advance to the semifinals of The American Legion World Series. Meridian (Idaho) Post 113 took an early lead in Sunday's final game of pool play, but Midland bounced back for a 5-2 victory at Keeter Stadium in Shelby, N.C.

Midland finished pool play with a 3-0 record in the Stars Division and will face Stripes Division runner-up Wilmington (Del.) Post 1 at 4 p.m. Monday in the ALWS semifinals. Midland likely would have advanced even with a loss, but the Michigan squad wanted the win.

"You never want to play to not lose, so it's a tough situation, but we got enough runs, pitching was good, we got a few guys in. That makes a big difference too, knowing that if you can just keep them to a certain amount of runs, you have a good chance of being there," Midland coach Steve Cronkright said.

Needing a victory and some help, Meridian (1-2 in pool play) struck first. Carson Smith scored on a double by Riley Harrison in the top of the first, one of three hits Meridian notched in the inning. Meanwhile, Midland had just one hit in the first two innings before opening things up in the bottom of the third. With two out, Tyler David, Martin Money and Seth Gower hit consecutive singles, with Gower's hit driving in David to tie the game. Then Brandon Smith doubled to score Money and Gower for a 3-1 lead.

Midland extended the lead to 5-1 in the fifth on Logan LaCourse's two-run home run, just the second homer so far this year in Shelby. Meridian would pull within 5-2 when Smith singled to drive in Braxton Mills, but reliever Jeff Allen threw a strikeout and induced a double play to close out the win. While an undefeated record so far in Shelby is nice, Cronkright conceded it means nothing once the series goes to single-elimination.

"Yeah, it's some pressure, but to be honest with you, this is a young team. We don't have any kids that went to college and come back ... it's a young team. There's times when we wondered if we were going to win our state, and we were happy to win our state. We were happy to win our regional, you're damn sure we're happy to be where we're at right now!" he said.

ALWS Game 12: North Carolina wins but Nevada completes the final four

A five-run fifth inning that saw Randolph County (N.C.) Post 45 draw four straight walks with the bases loaded was enough for Randolph County to pick up their first win of the 2018 American Legion World Series. The 10-6 victory over Las Vegas Post 40 in the early hours of Monday wasn't enough, however, to extend Randolph County's season. Randolph County's win left them, Las Vegas and Meridian (Idaho) Post 113 all with 1-2 records in the Stars Division at the end of pool play. The first tiebreaker for such a three-way tie is fewest runs allowed, which eliminated Meridian (19 runs allowed) first. But Randolph County needed to outscore Las Vegas by 11 runs or more to win the tiebreaker in that category. Instead, it will be Las Vegas advancing to the semifinals against Stripes Division winner Gonzales (La.) Post 81.

Randolph County's big fifth inning started off inauspiciously as the first two batters struck out. But Trevor Marsh hit a two-out double, Austin Curry drew a walk, and Spencer Lanier singled to score Marsh. Braxton Davis walked to load the bases, then Blake Marsh drew a walk to score Curry to cut Las Vegas' lead to 6-5. That, and the pitch count limit, ended the night on the mound for Chaison Miklich. Reliever Zach Czerniawski then walked all three batters he faced to put Randolph County ahead 8-6. Colby Smith came on in relief to get the final out. Randolph County took a 1-0 lead in the top of the first inning when Tristan Marsh scored on as Landon Smith reached on a fielder's choice. The game was delayed after one out in the bottom of the first by lightning and rain, with the game finally resuming at 10 p.m. Las Vegas tied the game 1-1 in the bottom of the first. Chaison Miklich singled to drive in Edarian Williams. Las Vegas would load the bases after that but fail to score. In the bottom of the second, Williams — who had tripled in his first at-bat — doubled to drive in Colby Smith and Jason Sharman to make it 3-1. Randolph County tied the game 3-3 in the top of the third, when Landon Smith's double drove in Tristan Marsh and Dawson Painter. Las Vegas took the lead again in the bottom of the fourth. Williams' sac fly scored Jordan DeMarce, then Aaron Roberts doubled with two out to score Sharman and Parker Schmidt. Randolph County added insurance runs in the top of the sixth and seventh.