

This Week in Travel Baseball

Good afternoon, Cougar travel baseball fam!

Here are the TWICTB notes for the week of June 19th.

8U

6/21

Cougars @ Highland Park

Even though Cougars managed to put up 7 runs on 5 hits vs. Highland Park it wasn't enough. Nickolas Lippert and Parker Fernandez both had 2 hits on the day to lead the Cougars.

6/22

Cougars @ Lake Bluff

The Cougars visited Lake Bluff in a very competitive game Thursday. Parker Fernandez and Cal Bitto led the way with 2 RBI's each. Andrew Albin came in relief for the Cougars and hurled 2.2 innings of work allowing 0 runs.

Even though the Cougars missed on some key opportunities the game was tied going into the bottom of the 5th inning. Lake Bluff put together a few key hits which ended up being the difference.

6/25

8U Phantoms vs. Cougars

Andrew Albin followed by Aaryav Mehta took the mound to start for the Cougars. The Cougars ended up falling behind after giving up 7 in the 3rd inning.

Hudson Eagle, Jordan Siegel, Bradley Stern and Nickolas Lippert all tallied hits for the Cougars but it wasn't enough.

The game was called in the 5th due to rain.

The 8U Cougars travel to Deerfield on Tuesday then host Lake Bluff and the Glenview Scrappers later in the week.

9U

This past week was busy as the 9u Cougars had three league games.

On Tuesday, 9u played in its first night home game against the Lake County Stars. 9u watched the game slip away early and couldn't recover in a 15-9 loss. 9u did out hit Lake County with 13 hits while the Stars had eight in the high-scoring affair. 9u scored five runs in the sixth inning. Charlie L, Chase B, Anthony D,

Eli G, and Donald N all contributed in the big inning with RBIs. Blake W started the game for 9u. The hurler lasted two innings, allowing two hits and four runs while striking out four and walking one. Jaxson S, Donald, and Ian H each contributed in relief for 9u. Kaiden P, Anthony, Chase, Donald, and Blake all had multiple hits for 9u. The Cougars stole 12 bases during the game as five players stole more than one. Ian led the way with two.

On Wednesday, 9u played at Lake Bluff. 9u fell behind early and couldn't come back in a 17-5 loss. The 9u Cougars struggled to contain the high-powered offense of Lake Bluff, giving up 17 runs. 9u put up five runs in the fourth inning. The offensive onslaught came from singles by Ian H and Kaiden P, a groundout by Eli G, and a double by Donald N. Eli led things off on the mound for 9u. The pitcher went two innings, allowing ten runs on five hits and striking out three. Chase B threw two innings in relief out of the bullpen. 9u tallied seven hits on the day. Ian and Kaiden all collected multiple hits for 9u. The 9u Cougars tore up the base paths, as two players stole at least two bases. Anthony D led the way with four.

On Saturday, 9u hosted the first place All in Athletics. The game was a heartbreaker for the 9u Cougars, as they lost the lead late in a 15-11 defeat. The 9u Cougars lost despite out-hitting All In Athletics 12 to six. 9u notched three runs in the third inning. Keegan A and Donald N each had RBIs in the frame. Ian H was on the mound for 9u Vernon Hills Cougars 9U. The pitcher surrendered two runs on two hits over two innings, striking out five. Anthony, Keegan, and Donald each contributed in relief for 9u. The 9u Cougars racked up 12 hits. Donald, Chase B, and Jaxson S each managed multiple hits for 9u. Donald went 3-for-4 at the plate to lead the Cougars. 9u tore up the base paths, as three players stole at least two bases. Ian led the way with four.

Next week the 9u Cougars play two league games – one at home and one on the road. On Tuesday, they host rival Libertyville at 7:30pm at VHAC field 2. On Thursday, they travel to Lincolnshire to play the Lightning Red at 6pm.

10U

The 10U Cougars continued league play with two games for the week. The first game against the Lk. County Stars was an opportunity for the Cougars to sweep the season series. The game started with both teams scoreless in the first inning, the second inning saw the Cougars score first and get up by one, only to see the Stars come back and score eight in the bottom half of the inning giving them a lead the Cougars could not overcome. Cougar pitching kept the Stars in check for the rest of the game, but Cougar hitters fell short in their efforts to come back. Ben Dahl, Dereck Avila, and David Morvig each collected one hit, David added two RBI while Jake Mann drew two walks, Declan Bomkamp and Avery Hall each stole multiple bases for the Cougar offense.

Game two of the week saw the Cougars travel across town to play the first place Libertyville Wildcats. The first inning saw the Cougars get off to a quick lead scoring two runs only to see the Wildcats come back and score eight runs in the bottom half of the inning. Declan Bomkamp came into pitch for the Cougars in the second inning and held the Wildcats hitters close over the next three innings. The Cougar offense battled back, Ben Dahl, Calvin Magsino, Avery Hall added one hit a piece, with Ben adding two RBI, Cougar hitters worked the Wildcat pitching for six walks in the game, but it wasn't enough as the Cougars rally fell short, and the team suffered the loss. In the past few weeks one bad inning continues to be the story behind the losses the team has suffered. Defensively the Cougar team played well, led by strong play at catcher by Ben Dahl.

11U Blue

Monday June 19th vs Mundelein Win 22-6

The Cougars began their week on the road against a seriously overmatched Mundelein squad. The boys amassed 14 hits and 9 walks in this lopsided affair.

Max Bloomer and Charlie Olson each contributed 3 hits apiece, Thillin Kaveti and Will Thunga both contributed 2 hits each. Garrett Wade, Ian Draper, Will Davenport and Billy Hicks also added singles to the tally. Kaveti and Draper had back to back doubles that added RBI's in the 2nd inning.

Davenport pitched 3 solid innings, giving up 2 hits and 5 runs, 4 of them earned. Evan Torres came in to close the game out, allowing only 1 run on 1 hit. Handling the workload behind the plate was Jayce Jost.

Wednesday June 21st vs Lake County Stars Win 10-0

On the road again for the 2nd time this week, the Cougars faced the Stars in the 2nd matchup in their league series. Taking the first game at home 14-10, the boys were looking to improve their record again tonight.

Max Bloomer and Evan Torres handled the pitching, each going a full 3 innings. Each pitcher allowed a total of 1 hit a piece, while Bloomer struck out 3 and Torres struck out 4.

The offense did its part with 7 hits, but the real boost was the 11 walks offered up by Stars pitching. Bloomer and Thillin Kaveti each had multiple hits tonight, with each and every player reaching base safely.

The Cougars were off to Wakesha, WI for their annual out of town tournament. The weekend forecast was hot and humid and it really took its toll.

Game 1 vs Franklin Crew Saturday 24th 9:00am Loss 3-13

Game 2 vs Park Ridge Warriors Red 1:00 pm Loss 8-22

Game 3 vs Silver Sluggers Madison 6:00 pm Win 5-4

****Bad weather forced the cancellation of the 8:00am game on Sunday**

The Cougars came ill prepared to do battle in the tournament opener against Franklin Crew. Only able to muster 3 runs on 5 hits and 3 walks, the boys just couldn't get the offense in gear. Emotions ran high in this shocking defeat as our players hoped to regroup for game 2

Playing local program Park Ridge Warriors, one has to wonder why we travel so far away to play teams in our own backyard??

After the lack of offense and the emotional strain of the first game, the Cougars didn't get off to a much better start in game 2. While able to score 8 runs on 9 hits, the Warriors came to hit. Cougars pitching gave up 18 hits and 5 walks in this shortened affair.

Based on the 0-2 record, we were slotted to play again at 6:00 pm Vernon Hills came into the game as the Visitor and got right to work,

putting up 4 runs in the top of the 1st . 2 walks, a single by Max Bloomer, a double by Will Thunga, and a single by Billy Hicks got us off on the right foot. We gave the Sluggers opportunities to score in the half of the 1st and 2nd , finishing the 2nd tied at 4.

The Cougars had a run on the board in the top of the 3rd inning and runner son 1st and 3rd , when the game was forfeited by the Silver Sluggers.

Things got out of hand with a player and the coaching staff of the Sluggers, resulting in ejections. It quickly turned into the most disgusting display of poor behavior and sportsmanship that I have ever witnessed in almost 15 years of coaching.

With a win in hand, we advanced to the 8:00am Sunday game. The overnight forecast called for rain, and that is what we got. We awoke to a 5:30 am notification that the remainder of the tournament was cancelled due to the fields being unplayable.

After the ups and downs of Saturday, we packed our gear and headed home to rest up and regroup before the next League game against Mundelein on Friday.

11U Gray

An exciting week kicked off with a come back win against Libertyville White on Wednesday evening. The Cougars and Libertyville fought back and forth for the first four innings, when Libertyville grabbed the lead in the top of the 5th inning, when the Cougars got a little shook up after Hubter took a rocket grounder on a bad hop to the face. Ryan kept his composure after a strong start from Bijee on the mound.

In the bottom of the 5th, with two outs, down six the Cougars mounted a comeback on a total team effort scoring seven, with Jordan scoring the winning run on a wild pitch.

Saturday we headed up to Lake Geneva for the Cooler by the Lake Tournament.

Game one the Cougars came out flat, and spotted the K Cancer Panthers 10 runs in the first inning, bit continued to crawl back into the game with an impressive 2 for 2 outing for Hunter, and a strong outing from Ryan from the bullpen only giving up one run the next two innings to give the Cougars a shot at keeping it close. In the end we couldn't keep up and lost 4-16.

Game two the Cougars ran themselves into outs on the basepaths. Hayden and Peter had strong outings on the mound but the bats couldn't keep up with the St. Charles Knights and lost 12-8. Parker, Sid, Hayden, Evan and Brendan each knocked in a RBI.

Unfortunately, the tournament was canceled due to field conditions Sunday.

12U Blue

No update this week

12U Gray

After months of planning and organizing, our squad made its trip to Cooperstown All-Star Village June 15th-June 21st. We may have gone 0-7 (new territory for a team that was 13-1 in league play prior to Cooperstown), but we played the cards we dealt. Some really tough teams, and some REALLY talented kids. Rather than being deflated at the losses, our boys were resilient, continued to have fun and played their best while remaining fans of the game and admiring the abilities of the teams we faced and watched. Our Cougars represented the program well and showed class and grace at all times, to the point where our coaches were receiving compliments from other coaches on how great our boys are (our infielders would congratulate/high-five opposing players after home runs etc). During one of the days, a team in the bunk house next to ours had all of their pins stolen from their bunks. Our Cougars took up a collection of their own pins, and personally delivered them to this other team. The coaches and players thanked us, shaking hands with each-and-every one of us. Loved seeing this selfless act of generosity which goes so far beyond baseball. Proud coaches!

It would prove too difficult to recap each of the 7 games here, but to give an idea of what we faced right out of the gate...our first game was against Storm Baseball, which is a tournament team from Miami. Currently ranked #2 in their state, and #17 in the country. They tossed a perfect game against us in a 17-0 win behind 6 (majestic) home runs. That team went on to win the entire tournament. Fun team to watch, and a great group of kids. Our kids loved watching the Storms other games when schedule allowed.

For us, the big gameplay highlights came in our second to last game while playing Texas Mizuno. Down 20-2 in the bottom of the 3rd, Chase Bautista hit an opposite field solo homer. In the bottom of the 4th mounting a slight comeback, Zach Herod hit a grand slam on a ball crushed to center (pretty sure it was still rising when it cleared the fence) to make it 21-9. So exciting, as these homers were their first career over-the-fence homers. What a venue to do it! Congrats to Chase and Zach!

When not playing, our boys could be found taking in a Lake County Captains minor league game, playing wiffle ball, downing Monster Shakes, touring the Baseball Hall of Fame, touring the Baseballism store, baseball card shopping and pin trading. LOTS of pin trading. Fun fact...our Pink limited edition Cougars pin became the #1 sought after pin (we still receive messages on Facebook asking if any of our boys have any left to trade by mail).

I would be remiss to not take a moment to thank EVERYONE who made this trip possible. Thank you to our 12U Gray families who tirelessly fundraised and organized. Thank you to our sponsors for their support and backing. Thank you to all of our extended family members, community members, friends, neighbors, co-workers etc who supported us through our fundraisers. Thank you to VHCBs for their support. All of you played such a huge part in giving us an experience we'll never forget.

A team pic and an image of our 4 Cooperstown pins follow.

If you want to see more pics or follow our season, feel free to follow our team Facebook page, here: [Vernon Hills Cougars 12U Gray](#)



13U

Only one game for the 13U Cougars this week, a 10-7 win against Lincolnshire. Graham went 4+ innings on the mound, and the defense made some great plays. For the first time in a while, the team played a perfect game in the field with 0 errors. The highlight was a double play to end the game, with Peyton making a catch in right and throwing to Cooper at 1st to complete the double play.

The bats were also alive on Wednesday. Julian had 3 hits, while Seth and Brady had 2 hits each. Oh, and Brady cranked his 2nd home run of the season en route to the win!

Next week, the team has a game on Wednesday before heading to Grand Rapids for a tournament. We're very excited for the trip next weekend!

14U

We split 2 league games this week and then headed up to Waukesha, WI for a tournament. We were in 4th place out of 9 after pool play and were set up nicely in the Championship bracket but the storm overnight Saturday/Sunday rendered the fields unplayable so we were unable to finish the tourney.

Michael Derby and Jake Jost combined to pitch a 1 hitter in our league win over Lake Villa on Tuesday. Nic Packee and Lucas Cosentino pitched well in our loss to GBN on Wednesday. They did their best to keep us in the game but the offense sputtered on us. Zach Nitz and Nathan Dugan combined to pitch a 3 hitter in our 2nd tourney game over the weekend. Zach pitched 3 1/3 after closing the final inning in game 1. Riley Cline came in and righted the ship early in the first game, pitching well after our defense got away from us in the first inning. Jake Jost also added an effective inning on the mound in that game as well. Zach, Nic, and Riley Cline were hot at the plate this week, combining for 15 hits, 7 of them for extra bases. Riley had 4 doubles to go along with 2 singles. Our catchers (Ryan Glassman and Zach Nitz) had a nice week as well. Ryan gunned down 3 runners and Zach gunned down 1 in the only attempt against him. Due to Zach's pitching on Saturday at our tourney, Ryan took care of business for 11 out of 12 innings behind the plate in back to back games in some serious heat on Saturday. Nathan Dugan and Wesley Deheck dominated the offensive stats for the week, hitting .750 and .600 respectively with on base percentages of .875 and .750. Grant Torres had 3 big hits this week while Drew Kaiser added 2 more to go along with 3 RBI and some nice plays defensively. Lucas Harrinton, who had been one of our hottest hitters all year, was in a self reported 3 game slump (we should all be so fortunate) and broke out of it with a huge 2 RBI triple on Saturday in Waukesha.

This week we have 3 league games before we get some practice time over the weekend to clean up some things. Things are starting to heat up in our division for seeding near the top and every game counts. It should be a pretty exciting final month!