

This Week in Travel Baseball

Good afternoon, Cougar travel baseball fam!

I hope everyone had a wonderful weekend. The Vernon Hills Community Baseball & Softball organization is proud to unveil our new sign at the indoor facility, located at 901 E Orchard St. We're very excited, as this further makes it feel like our home.



Please remember to follow us on Facebook ([@VHCBScougars](#)) Instagram ([@VHCBS](#)) and Twitter ([@VHCBScougars](#)). As always, TWICTB write ups can be found on our website in the [travel baseball section](#), so don't worry if you miss an email.

Here are the TWICTB notes for the week of June 5th.

8U

Buffalo Grove vs. Vernon Hills

The 8U Cougars played Thursday night, welcoming Buffalo Grove to VHAC. Although the boys put forth a good effort, it was tough sledding all night for the Cougars.

Buffalo Grove jumped out to a big 9-0 lead in the first 2 innings. Andrew Albin started on the bump for the Cougars and as always, threw heat! Bradley Stern, Cal Bitto and Hudson Eagle all pitched in relief. It really comes down to throwing strikes for the Cougars' pitching staff - something I'm sure they'll work on in practice after this one.

Big takeaways from tonight's game came from the defensive side of the ball. Eagle is always solid behind the plate and nearly had a runner at home, stemming from the best relay throw of the season. Several other defensive plays caught the crowd's eye.

The Cougars will look to build off of tonight's game with some good coaching opportunities.

Vernon Hills vs. Lincolnshire

The 8U Cougars visited Lincolnshire to wrap up their week.

The Cougars were challenged in the field all day as Lincolnshire came out swinging; racking 20 hits on the day. One of the most notable plays on the day was a deep fly ball to Left caught by Nicholas Lippert. The catch ended any momentum that Lincolnshire had.

Bradley Stern started on the mound vs. Lincolnshire walking 0 and striking out 3 on the day. Aaryav Mehta and Parker Fernandez pitched in relief on this rainy day.

The Cougars put up 7 runs vs. Lincolnshire led by Nicholas Lippert and Jordan Siegel. Lippert did his best to rally the troops with a big line drive in the top of the 4th, driving in 2 on the hit. Additional RBIs from Albin, Mehta, Watts, Sellers and Olbur weren't enough for the victory.

No games next week for the 8U Cougars.

9U

The 9u Cougars had a lighter game week as the Lincolnshire Summer Slam tournament approaches the week of June 12th. 9u had one league game and worked on sharpening their skills at practice.

On Thursday June 8th, 9u played its first home game of the season as they hosted Buffalo Grove. Scorekeepers were kept busy during a high-scoring contest against Buffalo Grove as 9u fell 13-7. 9u put up four runs in the second inning. Kaiden P, Keegan A, Anthony D, and Chase B powered the big inning with RBIs.

Chase was on the hill for 9u. The hurler performed great and allowed four hits and six runs over three innings, striking out three. Ian H and Max B entered the game as relief, throwing two innings and one inning respectively. Eli, Max, Chase, Kaiden, and Ian all had one hit to lead 9u. Ian led 9u with three stolen bases, as they ran wild on the base paths with ten stolen bases.

The 9u league record now stands at 2-3-1 with 8 games remaining. Next week will be busy as 9u plays their second home game of the season at 5:30pm on Tuesday June 13th as they host Lake Bluff at VHAC Field 2. On Wednesday June 14th, the Lincolnshire Summer Slam tournament begins as 9u play against host Lincolnshire at 4pm. Pool play concludes with a game at 6pm on Friday June 16th against the Central Park Storm.

10U

The 10U Cougars had a busy week of baseball, starting with a league game rematch against the Phantoms of Prospect Heights. Following the 22-18 slugfest of the first game the Cougars bats were quiet as the Cougars were shut out for the first time this year. The game featured great catching from Ben Dahl and a strong pitching effort from Avery Hall. Matthew Gitzinger and David Morvig led the hitting for the Cougars in the loss.

Friday saw the Cougars hit the road for the team's first out of town tournament in Freeport, IL. The Cougars drew the Dixon Rebels for the first game on Saturday. Dixon got on the board first with three runs in the first inning, Cougar pitcher Declan Bomkamp kept the game close until the Cougars could tie up the score with three runs in the third inning. Four walks and hits from M. Gitzinger and D. Bomkamp led to the scoring. Good catching by Aadi Khatod and relief

pitching from A. Hall and M. Gitzinger kept the game close, but the Dixon Rebels out hit the Cougars and held on for the win. Game two of the tournament had the Cougars playing the CDBL Rockets. The Cougars got off to a fast start by scoring 6 runs in the first inning, Gabe Keats accounted for 4 of the runs with an inside the park grand slam. Ben Dahl and Ian Osterman-Pastilla led the team with two hits and M.Gitzinger, D.Bomkamp, D.Avila, added to the 8 hit attack with one each. Unfortunately for the Cougars, shaky team defense opened the door for the Rockets to comeback and get the win. Game three found the Cougars in a rematch with CDBL Rockets, great defense by the Rockets and lack of hitting by the Cougars led to a one-sided victory for CDBL. G.Keats, B.Dahl, and M.Gitzinger led the hitting for the Cougars in the loss.

In the column of wins and losses, the teams' appearance in the Freeport tournament did not go the way the Cougars had hoped, but wins and losses are not the only measure of a successful team tournament. The weekend in Freeport found the players and their parents enjoying quality time together with team breakfasts and dinners and a private event at the Freeport Aquatic center. A spirited parents vs players wiffle ball game at the site of the "Little Cubs Mini Wrigley Field" was a weekend highlight. It's safe to say the 10U Cougars tournament weekend was a winning weekend for the team, its players, and their families!

11U Blue

Monday June 5 th - Away Game at Highland Park Giants

Loss (5-6)

Our boys played a tight game on the road against our league opponents, ultimately losing the game late. Highland Park scored 3 in the first and 2 in the second to take a 5-0 lead. VH chipped back with 8 total hits. Max Bloomer and Charlie Olson had 2 hits each, with Ian Draper, Will Thunga, Evan Torres and Garrett Wade all adding hits.

Ultimately, we let the game get away from us, in big part to the 12 strikeouts. Olson and Torres did a great job on the mound to keep us in the game, but we just didn't have enough gas in the tank to get the job done.

Friday June 9 th - Away at Buffalo Grove Bearcats

Loss (3-10)

It was a late dusty Friday night on the BG Goat Track they call a field. VH started out cold and pretty much stayed there. Max Bloomer, Billy Hicks and Will Davenport all put time in on the mound today, collectively allowing 10 runs on 10 hits.

Defense in the first inning was very loose, and we allowed 4 runs, which we were unable to come back from. Hits by Evan Torres, Bloomer and Davenport just couldn't spark the rest of the team. Ultimately errors and strikeouts kept us from being the team we know we can be.

Sunday June 11- Home Game vs. GBN Feeder White

Loss (8-20)

VH played GBN pretty tightly the first 2 innings, but an unusual amount of errors and a lack of warmth and sunshine kept us from getting it done.

We were able to put up 8 runs on 5 hits and 7 walks. Billy Hicks led the offense

going 3 for 3 and driving in 2 runs. Evan Torres had a big triple in the bottom of the 2nd, driving in 1 of his 2 RBI's on the day. Ian Draper also added a single to the offense today.

The highlight of the day was the 12 stolen bases. The boys, if they did get on, were speedy on the basepaths. Max Bloomer, Hicks, Draper and Jayce Jost all had multiple stolen bases, with Thillin Kaveti and Charlie Olson also adding to the total.

All in all it was a tough week. We have a League game on Tuesday against undefeated Prospect Heights, then we step into the Lincolnshire Summerslam Tournament on Wednesday. Plenty of time and baseball left to get back on track.

11U Gray

11u Gray - After a seven day break the Cougars returned to action on Saturday versus Wilmette Grey. Rust was apparent, as we struggled to get the bats going in the 10-0 loss. Ryan toed the rubber, and although threw very well, Wilmette smoked a couple of big hits to give them a lead they never relinquished. Evan came in relief. Not much to say about this game, as we came out flat (somewhat expected after the break). We don't complain about umpiring, but this one didn't help the cause. Evan, Hunter and Parker each collected hits.

Sunday we came back ready to go against Lake Bluff Blue. The boys showed up ready to play, even if the weather said no thanks. A cold, rainy afternoon, watched Parker take the bump, and keep Lake Bluff guessing all afternoon. He threw 2 innings, giving up 4 runs, and forced Lake Bluff into a lot of easy pop ups, and grounders. Jordan jumped in for an inning of relief. The big news after the previous day's batting woes, was the thunder the boys brought. Two inside the park home runs! A three run homer from Peter that rolled all the way to the fence, and two run homer from Dominic that pretty much sealed the game. Everyone got on base, and scored at least one run. It was a total team effort in the 19-5 final.

12U Blue

12U Blue had 3 games this week and finished 2-1. First up was a 15-0 win against the Mt. Prospect Wolverines. Jai Beniwal came back from injury and went 2-3 at the plate with 4 RBIs. Paul Heintz was 3 for 3 with 3 RBIs, including an inside the park HR. Nolan Allen started on the bump and pitched 2 scoreless innings allowing 1 hit and striking out 3. David Tesnow completed the shutout with 2 innings of 1 hit ball, collecting 3 strikeouts as well. This was the first shutout of the year in the LSFBL 12u North Division.

The second game was against the division leading, 9-0 Prospect Heights Phantoms. We got out to a fast start with Luke Churak's first inning Grand Slam. The boys battled hard in this back-and-forth game, but the Phantoms scored 3 in the bottom of the 6th for the 14-15 win. Churak finished the game going 3 for 4 with 3 HRs and 8 RBIs. Tesnow, Kyler Kolbe, Jake Blair, Charlie McRae each added 2 hits, including McRae's first ever out of the park HR.

The final game of the week was the second of the season against the Buffalo Grove Bearcats. We started hot with 5 runs in the first and never looked back winning 23-9. It was our second mercy rule win of the week. Beniwal and Heintz were both 4-5 including and out of the park HR for Heintz. Patrick Hubbard, Tesnow, Kolbe and Blair each collected multiple hits. One of Tesnow's 2 hits was his first out of the park HR. Allen pitched 3 innings allowing only 2 runs and striking out 3 while Churak closed the game with 1 inning, 0 runs and 1 strikeout.

This week the team faces 2nd place Mundelein, Lake Bluff and Libertyville.

12U Gray

It was a busy week for 12U Gray, which included a doubleheader, a makeup game and a continuation of a suspended game. Mixed bag of division action. Even so, not much seems to throw this white-hot squad off-guard.

Wednesday June 7th vs Lake County Stars (Won 17-14)

We struggled a bit out of the gate, only winning 1 out of the first 5 innings. One thing that's become evident with this team is that they never feel like they are out of a game. Down 14-9 heading into the bottom of the 6th, we managed to put up an 8 spot to take the lead 17-14, which ended up being the final. The bats were alive and well, putting up 16 hits.

At the Plate: Zach Herod 3-4 (homerun), 5 RBI, 2 Runs, 2 SB. Brady Engle 3-4 (triple), 1 RBI, 3 Runs, 2 SB. Leo Cicchello 2-3, 3 Runs, 3 SB. Evan Park 2-3 (triple), 1 RBI, 2 Runs, 1 SB. James Jost 1-3 (triple), 1 RBI, 1 Run.

On the Mound: Zach Herod got the start, going 3.0 innings, giving up 5 ER on 6 hits and striking out 3. Braden Hayes came on in middle relief, going 2.1 innings, giving up 3 ER on 2 Hits, striking out 4. Chase Bautista closed things out going 1.2 innings, giving up 1 ER on 2 Hits and striking out 3.

Friday June 9th @ HPBA (Won 21-6)

A rematch we were looking forward to, as HPBA is the only team we have a league play loss against, back on April 23. HPBA jumped out to an early 4-0 lead through 2 innings, but we bounced back with a 4 spot in the top of the third, 2 runs in the 4th thanks to back-to-back homers by Elijah Wickman and Braden Hayes, 7 runs in the 5th inning and 8 runs in the 6th. We managed 17 hits in the game.

At the Plate: Sam Rubenstein 3-4, 3 RBI, 2 Runs, 1 SB. Zach Herod 3-3 (double), 2 RBI, 3 Runs, 2 SB. Elijah Wickman 2-2 (homerun), 2 RBI, 2 Runs, 1 SB. Leo Cicchello 2-3, 2 RBI, 2 Runs, 2 SB. Brady Engle 2-5 (double), 1 RBI, 2 Runs, 2 SB. Braden Hayes 1-4 (homerun), 1 RBI, 2 Runs, 1 SB.

On the Mound: Liam Hilts got the start, going 3.1 innings, giving up 1 ER on 4 hits and striking out 2. Evan Park came on in relief going 2.2 innings, giving up 4 ER on 4 Hits, striking out 3.

Friday June 9th vs Lake Bluff Blue (Won 22-12)

We let Lake Bluff get on us early, and we found ourselves down 7-2 heading into the bottom of the 2nd, before putting up 7 in the bottom of the inning and taking a 9-7 lead. From there, we managed 13 more runs including 8 in the fifth to take home the 22-12 win behind 16 hits.

At the Plate: Braden Hayes 3-3, 4 Runs, 3 SB. Elijah Wickman 2-3, 1 RBI, 3 Runs, 1 SB. James Jost 2-2, 3 Runs, 1 SB. Evan Park 2-4, 1 RBI, 1 Run, 1 SB. Dylan Tomlinson 2-3, 3 RBI, 1 Run, 1 SB. Brady Engle 2-4 (double), 2 RBI, 2 Runs. Chase Bautista 1-2 (triple), 2 RBI, 2 Runs, 1 SB.

On the Mound: James Jost made his 2023 pitching debut and did not disappoint, going 2.2 innings, giving up 3 ER on 6 hits and striking out 5. Sam Rubenstein closed things out, going 2.0 innings, giving up 7 ER on 7 Hits and striking out 2.

Saturday June 10th @ Buffalo Grove Coyotes (Won 11-9)

This game was far from one of our better outings with too many fielding and baserunning errors to mention. Originally played on May 22nd, this game was suspended due to the field having a hard cut-off time and we resumed play on Saturday. At the time of the game being called, we were batting in the top of the 7th with an 11-9 lead. We had runners on 2nd and 3rd with one out, and Braden Hayes at bat. When we resumed, Braden walked. Brady Engle was up and smoked a line drive right at the 1st baseman who was able to double Braden off at first to send things to the bottom of 7. Brady Engle pitched the bottom of the 7th and shut down BG for the 11-9 winner.

At the Plate: Braden Hayes 3-3, 2 Runs, 2 SB. Sam Rubenstein 2-3, 2 RBI. Chase Bautista 2-3 (2 doubles), 1 RBI, 3 Runs. Liam Hiltz 2-2, 1 RBI, 2 Runs, 3 SB. Zach Herod 2-4, 3 RBI, 1 Run, 1 SB. Brady Engle 2-5, 1 RBI, 1 Run.

On the Mound: Chase Bautista got the start, going 3.0 innings, giving up 3 ER on 4 hits and striking out 7. Liam Hiltz made a middle relief appearance, going 3.0 innings, giving up 3 ER on 2 Hits, striking out 3. Brady Engle closed things out going 1.0 inning, giving up 1 BB and striking out 1.

With the 4 wins this week, our win streak extends to 12. We are currently in 1st place in the 12 National North division with a 13-1 record, and 3.5 game lead.

See everyone after Cooperstown! (June 15th-June 21st)

13U

The 13U Cougars started the week strong with a hard fought victory over Highland Park. The game went back and forth until the very end. Graham and Peyton came through with clutch relief pitching, giving up 0 earned runs over the final 4 innings. Julian had 2 hits and offense did just enough to hold onto a 7-6 win.

Saturday's double header against the Stars didn't go as hoped, as the Cougars dropped both games. While the bats were mostly quiet, the first game did include triples by Brady and Logan. After cutting the deficit to 5-3 in the 4th, the Cougars couldn't get much else going and lost 11-5.

The second game of the doubleheader was a very exciting game. The Cougars jumped out to a 7-2 lead, thanks in big part to Brady's first home run of the season! After some back and forth, the team found themselves down 1 run heading into the 7th. Graham led off with a double and moved to 3rd on a ground out. Austin came up to the plate and, after a 9 pitch at bat, drove Graham in with a ground ball to the left side of the infield. Two batters later, Elliot came up to the plate and drove Austin home with a double. During the bottom of the 7th, Cooper came into pitch with 2 players on base. He quickly struck out the first 2 batters he faced and very nearly struck out the 3rd, before the Stars tied it with a single. The teams headed to extra innings, ultimately, the Stars walked it off 12-11 in the bottom of the 8th inning.

We'll be back at it again with 3 more games this week.

14U

14U had two league games this week and then we went to Grand Rapids for a tournament over the weekend. In the two league games, we continued our dominance at the plate, racking up another 28 hits, 11 of which were for extra bases. In our game at Warren on Monday, it was our third game in three days and we were thin on pitching. Nic Packee stepped up and pitched a complete game as we went on to win 13-2. On Wednesday, we faced the Chicago Bruins, who were looking for revenge after we beat them handedly last month. We fell behind early but rallied back to win behind the strength of our bats

and some gutsy pitching by Michael Derby and Riley Cline. Nathan Dugan had three extra base hits including a home run. Jake Jost had two extra base hits while Ryan Glassman, Drew Kaiser, Lucas Harrington and Grant Torres also added extra base hits.

On Friday we headed to Grand Rapids, MI for a tournament. We did well in pool play managing to get into the championship bracket in a 15-team tournament where only eight teams advanced. We made things hard on ourselves Friday night, giving up a 3-run lead in the final inning and losing to the eventual number one seed. Nic Packee pitched very well again, dominating through 3 innings, throwing only 34 pitches. We took care of business Saturday morning as Riley Cline and Nathan Dugan cruised on the mound giving up only 2 combined earned runs over 6 innings. Nathan struck out 10 batters over his 4 innings on our way to an 11-4 victory. Zach Nitz and Lucas Harrington both hit RBI doubles and Ryan Glassman crushed an RBI triple to deep Left field. Wesley Deheck and Drew Kaiser also has RBI base hits and Michael Derby drove in a run as well. The rest of Saturday was filled with lots of team bonding as we went out to lunch, came back and played in the pool and played wiffleball in the pool. We then went back to the baseball facility and used a small special field to play blitz ball for the next three hours with the players and coaches and some parents and some random kids that happened to be there. It was a fulfilled day. Our tournament ended Sunday as we lost a 5-2 game to the eventual tournament champion. Our bats went cold but Nic Packee and Michael Derby kept us in the game, giving up a combined three earned runs on the mound. Grant Torres was our most consistent hitter at the tournament going 4-5 with 3 walks.

We've got league games this week on Tuesday and Wednesday and then some much-needed practice time over the weekend to clean up a few things.