

This Week in Travel Baseball

Good morning, Cougar travel baseball fam!

A quick reminder regarding 2024 travel tryouts. 9U/11U/13U tryouts are TODAY (7/10), 5:30-7:30. Tryouts for 10U/12U/14U tryouts are 7/16, 5:30-7:30. There is an alternate tryout date for all ages on July 22nd, 5:30-7:30. If you have not registered, please do so here:

<https://vhcbs.sportngin.com/register/form/057080734>

We also want to send our best to 12U Blue, who are in Cooperstown. Have a great time! We look forward to hearing all about it when you get back.

Here are the TWICTB notes for the week of July 3.

8U

Busy week for your 8-U Cougars!

7/3/23 - @ Libertyville Black 8U

Result: 10-17 (L)

Our 8-U Cougars jumped out early on Libertyville with a 5-0 lead going into the bottom of the 2nd before the offense stalled for a few innings in a row. 5 runs in the 6th made things feel a bit better, but Libertyville had the bats going in what resulted in a 17-10 loss for the Cougars.

Andrew Albin had an impressive 1st inning for the Cougars before Libertyville started to roll in the 2nd. Cal Bitto came in relief, putting up some impressive numbers with 3 strikeouts in his only inning of work. Parker Fernandez and Jordan Siegel finished the game off on the mound for the Cougars.

Fernandez, Bitto, Elijah Sellers and Bradley Stern all had hits against Libertyville - Fernandez, Bitto and Sellers each having a multi-hit game. Fernandez and Bitto lead the way with 3 RBI's each!

7/6/23 – vs. Glenview Scrappers

Result: 11-15 (W)

Picking up in the bottom of the 1st inning (previously suspended due to rain), the Cougars battled a familiar opponent in the Scrappers - each team putting up runs and battling until the end.

Bradley Stern started on the mound for the Cougars but struggled to find the zone, walking 4 in his 2 innings of work. Big time relief pitching from Aaryav Mehta and Andrew Albin got the Cougars back on track. Mehta and Albin combined for 8 strikeouts and only allowed 3 runs once they entered the game. Albin closed it out allowing zero hits and shutting the door on any chance of a comeback by the Scrappers.

The Cougars offense was thriving as they did a great job of getting on base and putting the ball in play when given the opportunity. Cal Bitto, again lead the way with 3 RBI's and Andrew Albin had a multi-hit game to lead the Cougars.

The 8-U Cougars did a great job of rallying as a team and made sure that a comeback by the Scrappers was not in the cards.

7/7/23

Tournament Game 1 -- @ NW Travelers

Result: 1-16 (L)

MVP: Bradley Stern

Best Pitcher: Cal Bitto

Sportsmanship: Jordan Siegel

The 8-U Cougars drew a tough first round match up in pool play going against the future tournament champs in the NW Travelers out of Palatine.

The Cougars played with toughness and made some great plays in the field all game. Even held a 1-0 lead going into the 2nd inning before the Travelers really got their bats going.

Cal Bitto started on the mound for the Cougars and had an impressive 3 up 3 down 1st inning, striking out 2. A dismal 2nd and 3rd inning for the Cougars really told the story. The Travelers put up 7 runs in the 2nd and 8 in the 3rd as they simply found their stride and put the bat on the ball. Although the Cougars made some great defensive plays and allowed 0 walks from the 3rd inning on, the Travelers simply hit it where the Cougars weren't.

The Cougars struggled to get the bats going against a team that was deep with great pitchers. Bradley Stern tallied the teams only RBI and had the lonely 2 hits for the Cougars.

7/8/23

Tournament Game 2 -- @ Geneva Vikings

Result: 6-19 (L)

MVP: Hudson Eagle

Best Pitcher : Bradley Stern

Sportsmanship: Angelo Watts

In game 2 of the tournament the Cougars faced the Geneva Vikings.

Bradley Stern started on the mound for the Cougars and pitched well considering the Vikings were ready to hit. Stern allowed 5 hits and gave up 4 runs in the first two innings of work. In relief Andrew Albin, Parker Fernandez and Aaryav Mehta had similar outings. Everyone threw stikes but the Vikings were making great contact and spraying the ball to all fields making it tough on the Cougars defense.

The Cougars scored in all but 1 inning against the Vikings but only tallied multiple runs in the 5th. Cal Bitto led the way with 3 hits and 2 RBI's on the day for yet another impressive outing at the plate. Hudson Eagle had a big double, driving in a run in the top of the 3rd inning. Parker Fernandez, Bradley Stern, and Aaryav Mehta also racked up hits for the Cougars.

7/8/23

Tournament Game 3 -- @ Batavia Bulldogs

Result: 0-15 (L)

MVP: Cal Bitto

Best Pitcher: Andrew Albin

Sportsmanship: Aaryav Mehta

The Cougars ran into some tough pitching when they faced off against the Batavia Bulldogs Saturday afternoon. The Cougars struggled to get things going offensively and only put 3 runners on base the entire game. Cal Bitto led the way with the Cougars only hit to continue his hit streak.

The Cougars were in the game until late, due to some great pitching from Andrew Albin and Cal Bitto allowing just 2 runs through 3 innings. Things could have gotten out of hand in the 1st inning as the Bulldogs had runners on the corners with just 1 out. Albin and Hudson Eagle teamed up for a great play at home off of a dribbler back to the pitcher. The Bulldogs were playing aggressive and tried to sneak one in but Albin was ready and Hudson Eagle did a great job of getting out in front of the plate and applying a tag at the last minute to swing the momentum!

Batavia got the bats rolling in the 4th and 5th innings scoring 6 and 7 runs in each, taking the wind out of the Cougars sails. The boys played hard but just couldn't put the bat on the ball against the Bulldogs.

7/9/23

Tournament Game 4 -- @ FCA Impact

Result: 8-16 (L)

MVP: Bradley Stern

Best Pitcher: Andrew Albin

Sportsmanship: Hudson Eagle

The Cougars took the field in the finale against FCA Impact, a team that played very aggressive from the beginning.

Andrew Albin took the mound for the Cougars and struck out 2 in his 1.1 innings of work. Impact put the bat on the ball and had some real power hitters as they put up 7 runs in the first 2 innings.

Bradley Stern and Aaryav Mehta came in relief for the Cougars. All of the Cougar pitchers did a great job throwing strikes and battling each and every at bat. The FCA Impact simply put the ball in play.

The Cougars offense got rolling late as they put up 8 runs in the last 2 innings to make things interesting. Bradley Stern led the way going 3-4 and driving in 3 runs on the day. Aaryav Mehta had the only other base hit for the Cougars driving in 1 on the day.

All in all, the Cougars had fun and learned a lot from our tournament in Batavia. They were super excited once they learned about the individual accolades that would be awarded at the end of each game and had a ton of fun at the hotel pool. 3 more league games and then playoffs for your 8-U Cougars.

9U

This past week the 9u Cougars had one league game.

On Thursday, 9u hosted Mundelein. Despite seeing their 7-run lead dwindle, 9u held on for an 11-9 victory!

Anthony opened the game for 9u. The starting pitcher gave up zero hits and zero runs over one inning, striking out one and walking two. Chase, Eli G, Ian, and Jaxson each came on in relief for the Cougars and shut down Mundelein.

9u jumped out to the lead in the bottom of the first inning after Chase B singled, scoring one run, Jaxson S grounded out, scoring one run, and Kaiden P singled, scoring two runs. 9u added to their early lead in the bottom of the third inning after Chase grounded out, Max B singled, and Jaxson singled, each scoring one run. The Cougars jumped back into the lead in the bottom of the fifth inning after Donald N doubled, Ian singled, Chase singled, and Jaxson singled, each scoring one run.

The Cougars tallied 12 hits in the game compared to just one for Mundelein. Donald led the team with three hits in three at bats from the leadoff position. Chase and Jaxson each drove in three runs for 9u. Donald, Chase, Ian, Kaiden, and Jaxson each stole multiple bases for 9u, and the Cougars ran wild on the base paths, piling up 17 stolen bases for the game.

Next week the 9u Cougars play their final two league games – both at home before the year end playoffs.

10U

The 10U Cougars entered play this week with a league game against the Buffalo Grove Bear Cats. The Cougars, needing a win to get back on track struggled in the first inning against the Cats giving up seven runs building a lead the Cougars couldn't come back from. The team offense scored three runs on nine walks, but the lack of timely hits prevented the team from mounting a comeback.

The weekend saw the Cougars travel to Elgin to play in the "Bringing The Heat Tournament". First up for the Cougars was eventual tourney champion Wasco Navy. The Cougars had trouble keeping up with Wasco's strong hitting as they fell behind early. Cougar hitting was led by Jake Mann, Ben Dahl, Calvin Magsino, and David Morvig collecting one hit apiece, Declan Bomkamp and J.Mann provided clutch hitting as they each collected one RBI. Game two of the Tournament saw a different Cougar team on the field, determined to get a win the Cougars took on Greenfield Farms, right from the start the Cougars demonstrated they came to play, scoring six runs in the first. Declan Bomkamp doubled to knock in two runs and Ian Osterman-Pastilla added a single. The Cougars continued to build on their lead adding 11 runs over the next three innings. Matthew Gitzinger and Declan Bomkamp led the way with four hits, Ben Dahl, and Christian Blasco each added one hit. Pitching for Cougars was outstanding, M.Gitzinger started the game holding Greenfield to two hits and one run striking out four, Aadi Khatod closed the game pitching two innings striking out one and giving up no hits in the win. The Cougars entered Sunday seeded sixth in the twelve-team tournament with a game against the Bulldogs. The team continued their good play, scoring three in the first, and coming right back to score six in the second inning. D. Avila, D.Morvig and J.Mann provided the hitting with Christian Blasco adding three walks in the 14-9 win. The Cougar win can be largely attributed to excellent defense as they played with confidence and didn't commit a single error. Cougar pitching stayed strong as D.Bomkamp, A.Khatod, M.Gitzinger, and Jake Mann combined for the win. Game Four saw the Cougars take on the third seed KTB Knights. The Cougars got on the board first scoring two in the second, but the lead was short lived as the Knights scored twelve.

The Cougars who were down to just nine players could have called it a day but this Cougar team turned in a gutty performance coming back to score six in the third, two hits by Christian Blasco and D.Morvig, led the way, D.Avila., J.Mann, C.Magsino each added one, and Ben Dahl, and D.Morvig each added two RBI. The Knights came back to win the game only after they exhausted Cougar pitching, Matthew Gitzinger, Aadi Khatod, Declan Bomkamp, Jake Mann, and their catcher Ben Dahl all gave it everything they had. It was great to see the Cougars really come together as a team, winning two out of four. Great effort!

11U Blue

Home Game vs Buffalo Grove Bearcats

VH: 10 BG: 6

After suffering a 10-3 loss back on June 9, the Cougars were looking to get some payback. The Cougars came out a little cold and gave up 3 runs in the top of the first, one in the top of the 3 rd , and 1 in the top of the 5 th .

In the bottom of the 3 rd , the Cougars put their first run on the board when Evan Torres drew a walk, stole second and was allowed to score on an error by the Short Stop.

The tide began to turn in the bottom of the 5 th , when Jayce Jost laid down a perfect bunt single, scoring Thillin Kaveti. Billy Hicks singled, scoring Garrett Wade, who had also drawn a walk. Hicks winds up also scoring on a wild pitch, tying the game at 5.

The Cougars added 5 more in the bottom of the 6 th , sealing the win. Singles were contributed by Ian Draper and Max Bloomer. Walks by Will Thunga and Jost helped, and both Evan Torres and Will Davenport were hit by pitches.

Pitching responsibilities were handled by Bloomer, Torres and Charlie Olson. Each pitcher recorded multiple strikeouts, while allowing 6 runs (3 earned) on 9 hits and 6 walks combined.

Jim Christ Tournament- Glenview

Friday July 7th and Saturday July 8th

River Forest: Loss 5-16

Highland Park: Loss 7-8

GBN Feeder White: L 11-15

The Cougars went into the weekend a little undermanned. Looking forward to the last week of League play that was to begin Monday the 10 th , the boys needed to conserve their pitching. A decision was made to save their energy for league play and give their players opportunities to get reps at non-typical positions.

River Forest: The Cougars were only able to put up 3 hits against this House League All Star Team. Combined with 8 walks, the boys were able to put up 5 runs. Jayce Jost, Max Bloomer and Charlie Olson all had singles in this lopsided affair.

Highland Park: On a rainy Saturday morning, the boys took the field against League opponent Highland Park. It was a close game the whole way through and the Cougars came up just a little short. Max Bloomer (3 for 3) and Charlie Olson (2 for 3 with a double) led the offense, with Ian Draper and Will Thunga also adding base hits.

Pitching responsibilities were handled by Evan Torres (2 innings), with Will Davenport, Olson and Bloomer each contributing an inning apiece.

GBN Feeder White: In a late game that had been postponed by 2 hours, the Cougars took the field against League opponent GBN Feed in a game under the lights. Opportunities on the mound were given to Ian Draper, Will Thunga and Garrett Wade. With no chance of playing in bracket play on Sunday, and a league game against Lake Bluff on Monday, the Cougars opted to conserve their strength.

8 hits and 9 walks kept the game within reach. Draper and Charlie Olson each contributed doubles, with Draper also adding a single. Will Davenport went 3 for 3, and Bloomer and Evan Torres also contributing.

The last week of League play begins tonight!

11U Gray

After a rain shortened one inning affair against the Lake County Stars, the Cougars traveled to Park Ridge on Friday. Park Ridge jumped on the Cougars early and the boys in blue just couldn't recover. The game will be remembered as the Sid Vicious Coming Out Party, as Sid straight raked with a mammoth double down the right field line and a screaming grounder for a single. He took the mound for the first time this season and threw a strong 1.2 innings in relief. Hunter, Evan and Ryan also collected hits in the loss.

Sunday evening we headed to Wilmette to take on New Trier White. Evan pitched strong 3.2 innings striking out 7 and walking only one. Unfortunately NT White scattered hits where we weren't. Strong offensive outings for Bijee with a double and a single, and Ryan with massive triple and single. Hunter led the way with 4 stolen bases in the 9-6 loss.

12U Blue

Currently in Cooperstown. No write-up.

12U Gray

A light week for us, with only 1 scheduled league game. Going into yesterday, we had 3 games left on our season schedule, with all 3 being against Lake Forest who started their season late and are playing some catch-up in regards to games played. They got their season off to a hot start and became a team we were keeping an eye on as they started moving up the standings pretty quickly. These last three games against them were becoming important ones.

Our boys came ready to play yesterday, and put together one of the more complete all-around games we've played. Absolutely stepped up when it mattered most and were focused and lively. We put

together quality at bats, played solid defense and had great mound presence. The boys looked like they were in post-season shape. We didn't have the 18 run/20 hit type of game we're used to seeing, but we won the innings we needed to lock up the victory. The offense featured center-field homers by Braden Hayes and Chase Bautista.

Sunday July 9th @ Lake Forest Scouts (Won 7-4)

At the Plate:

Chase Bautista 2-3 (HR, 2B), 3 Runs, 1 RBI.

Brady Engle 2-4, 1 Run, 1 RBI.

Braden Hayes 2-4 (HR, 2B), 2 Runs, 1 RBI.

On the Mound:

Evan Park got the start (3.0 IP, 0 ER, 2 H, 5 SO)

Liam Hilts made a middle relief appearance (3.0 IP, 2 ER, 4 H, 5 SO)

Brady Engle closed things out (1.0 IP, 0 ER, 1 H, 2 SO)

12U Gray improved their record to 14-2 on the season, and sit in first place atop the 12 National North division. We close out the regular season next Saturday (7/15) with a doubleheader against Lake Forest at home. Games are 1:00pm and 3:00pm. Hope to see you there! 😊

13U

The 13U team started the week with a rainout against Lake Villa before heading to Glenview for the Jim Christ Tournament. While our first game of the tournament against Mundelein didn't go as planned, the team sure turned things around on Saturday.

The 13U Cougars played a double header on Saturday. During the first game against Glenview White, the team played a great game in the field en route to a 4-1 win. Graham and Cooper combined to allow 1 run during 7 innings. The defensive highlight came during the first inning, when Austin made a diving catch in center with the bases loaded and ran the ball to tag second for an unassisted double play to get us out of the inning. It took a little while for the bats to get going, but Brady, Cooper, and Julian had RBI hits in the top of the 5th to take the lead. The game was still close into the 7th when Graham was on the mound. With 2 on and 2 out, Graham picked off the runner at 1st to seal the game.

The second game of the day saw the team take on the Glenview Patriots Blue Team. The Cougars came to play and may have played their best game of the season. The team won in a 4 inning slaughter 15-3. Brady was 3 for 3 with another home run, while Julian also had a 3 hit game. Julian and Dylan combined to allow only 3 runs, and Dylan's curve was looking great! It buckled many a hitter on the Patriots.

The team ended the weekend playing in the semi-finals against the Chicago Warriors. The boys played hard, but ultimately ended up losing 6-1. Dylan and Graham combined to only allow 3 earned runs. The highlights of the game included another home run from Brady and an unassisted double play by Elliot. Also, a big shout out to Seth for catching every inning of the 3 day, 4 game tournament. He was a rock behind the plate!

Next week, the team finishes league play with two games. Go Cougars!

14U

We had a tournament this past weekend in Glenview. We played some of our best baseball of the year during pool play, going 3-0 and out scoring our opponents 31-9. 9 different guys pitched for us in those 3 games. Unfortunately we lost in the semifinal game on Sunday 6-5 as we just kept hitting it right at their outfielders and couldn't string enough hits together to push across another run or 2. We ended the game with the tying run on third base, which is always frustrating. As we head into the final week of the season we have 4 games remaining that will prove very important for our playoff seeding as we could finish anywhere from 2-6. We are very much looking to finish strong and secure a first round bye and at least 1 home playoff game.