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Friday Jul 20



Rachel Altmaier / Daily News

Hillsborough 11-year-old all-stars (from front to back) Brock Cozad, Henry Caruso and Frankie Ferrari check out the competition.

Gumataotao to win it for San Lorenzo National.

"I expect a good tournament," Cozad said. "It was tough for us to even get to this tournament."

Tonight, Cozad sees Tracy National (District 67) and Pleasanton American (District 57) battle at 5:30 p.m. Hillsborough plays free-swinging San Lorenzo National Saturday at 9 a.m. Newark National plays tonight's loser Saturday at noon in an elimination game.

Hillsborough lost its first game of the D-52 tournament to the Highlanders 6-5, then won eight straight games to capture the district banner.

"Our team never gave up," Hillsborough CF/P Henry Caruso said. "We just played one game at a time."

"We play with a lot of heart," Hillsborough SS/P Brock Cozad said. "We're motivated this year from what happened last year in Division."

At the Division II Tournament in Rocklin last year, Hillsborough was stung by a ruling on abstract birth certificates that disqualified two key players for the opener. Hillsborough lost that game to Alameda, eventually finishing fourth in the tournament. This year, the team has had to dance around the health of Austin Marcus, a fine pitcher and hitter, who is on limited duty due to a tender arm. Marcus didn't pitch in the district tournament, but swung the bat and swung it well.

"Austin's health is day-to-day," Jeff Cozad said. "I hope he can play some in this tournament, but we'll see."

Grant Goodman is the ace of the staff. However, Cozad feels he can rely on son Brock,

Section tourney ready to heat up

By John Reid / Daily News Staff Writer

Hillsborough 10-11-year-old All-Star manager Jeff Cozad has the luxury of seeing all four teams play in the Section 3 Tournament at Palo Alto Little League Field before his stars, who have a bye, play their first game. Add the fact Hillsborough won the district and section championships a year ago as 9-10-year-olds, one might consider this year's District 52 champion the prohibitive favorite to win this year's Section 3 tourney.

Cozad was in the stands Thursday evening watching San Lorenzo National (District 45) and Newark National (District 14) tangle in a wild game, won by San Lorenzo National 7-6. D.J. Souto's single to right in the bottom of the sixth scored pinch-runner Kyle

Brenden Barrows, Caruso and Ferrari as well to get batters out.

"We have a lot of balance," Cozad said. "This team is deep. Every kid can hit up and down the lineup."

Tracy National manager Robin Vaughn was scouting the two teams Thursday night, also. Tracy National, which went 4-0 in its district tourney, has three top hurlers in Jeremy Vaughn, Joshua Brakkee and Tim Warta.

"If we hit the ball and keep doing what we're doing, we should be all right," Robin said. "We're ready to go."

The fans of San Lorenzo National and Newark National were ready to go in the tournament lidlifter, each sporting noisemakers and using them profusely. Yvette Loza, mother of San Lorenzo National catcher Niko Loza, created decorated T-shirts for all the moms of the players.

"We wear baseball bracelets, too," Yvette said. "They're are lucky charms."

Zachary Soto, 7, held tight to a wooden stick tied up in blue ribbons that he calls his "rally stick." All the San Lorenzo National players have mohawk haircuts, as does Soto.

Newark National got on the board in the top of the first with a two-run homer by Sammy Sood. Niko Loza's double later in the game gave San Lorenzo National a 5-2 lead. Trailing 6-2 in the top of the fifth, Newark National rallied to tie the game. Josh Roman doubled, then scored on an RBI single by Patrick Taylor. Donovan Mosier's RBI double tied the game 6-all. Newark National loaded the bases in the top of the sixth, but couldn't score.

Both teams had boisterous fans who staged a contest as to who could out-yell the other.

"SLZ! SLZ!" the San Lorenzo National fans yelled.

"Newark! Newark!" countered the Newark National fans.

Should be one lively Section 3 10-11-year-old all-star tournament at Palo Alto Little League Ball Park.

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