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## Hillsborough All-Stars advance to sectional play

July 13, 2009, 12:00 AM By Emanuel Lee

Hillsborough All-Star coach Gary Goodman wasn't worried one bit.

After all, he had Justin Moore on the mound. In a ragged but thrilling District 52 9-10-year-old tournament championship game Saturday at Palo Alto's Middlefield Ballpark, Hillsborough edged Foster City, 8-7. Hillsborough advances to sectional play against Danville next week in San Lorenzo. Foster City and Hillsborough had quite a duel in the tournament. Foster City won the first game between the teams in a winner's bracket semifinal.

That knocked Hillsborough to the loser's bracket, where it had to win three straight to get back to the championship round Friday. Hillsborough then beat Foster City to force Saturday's winner-take-all title game. Of course, things came down to the wire. Foster City had the tying and winning runs on base with one out in the bottom of the sixth inning before Moore — who tossed 3 1/3 innings of solid relief — recorded back-to-back outs to clinch the victory.

"I have a lot of faith in Justin Moore," Goodman said. "For some reason when he's on the mound, I don't get nervous. He gets mad and focuses, and I don't really have to say anything to him. I knew he would settle down and not once did I think of taking him out. He carries a demeanor and presence well beyond his 9 years. The kids call him The Marine because he's real serious and centered."

Moore also hit leadoff doubles in the fourth and sixth innings, coming around to score both times. In a seesaw and wild contest that featured 10 walks — nine of which came issued from Hillsborough's Dylan Goldman and Moore — Hillsborough took the lead for good with a three-run fourth, highlighted by a run-scoring double from Hayden Pegley.

Hillsborough added two more in the sixth to take an 8-5 lead, but Foster City was far from done. R.J. Teijeiro hit a one-out, two-run single to cut its deficit to one run. But after an intentional walk to James Halpin, Moore recorded consecutive fielder's choice outs at third base to get out of the jam and preserve the victory. Foster City scored four times in the third to take its only lead, 5-3.

Taiki Matsuda, Joe Veglak and Alex Laubscher all drew walks from Moore to force in three of the four runs in the inning. Moore could've easily got rattled, but instead came back strong to lead his team to victory. Goodman said Little League is all about which team can capitalize on the other squad's mistakes, and Hillsborough was able to make Foster City pay for its errors, wild pitches and passed balls.

Even though Hillsborough committed two errors — something it rarely does — it still made tremendous plays defensively. Third baseman Gray Goodman made two outstanding fielding plays to lead Hillsborough with the glove.

"We were able to prevent them from taking an extra base for the most part, while also scoring three or four runs on mistake-type plays," Gary Goodman said. "It's a great feeling when you see how happy the kids are just to be playing this game. And when they win something like this, it's the ultimate joy."

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