

HMB comes up short for district title

Hillsborough's offense too much for locals to overcome

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The only good news the Half Moon Bay 11- and 12-year-old Little League All-Star baseball team got Sunday came from an Antonio Lopez home run.

The swing ended Hillsborough pitcher Blake Marcus' bid for a no-hitter.

The rest of the final game of the District 52 Little League All-Star Tournament was about as forgettable as could be.

Hillsborough battled back from the loser's bracket, sent there by Half Moon Bay, to win 14-1. Hillsborough forced the extra game by winning a wild slugfest Saturday, 15-14. Half Moon Bay won the first meeting of the two teams Thursday, 10-9.

While Hillsborough maintained its offensive explosiveness Sunday, Half Moon Bay was limited to Lopez's home run. Half Moon Bay got three runners on base, thanks to walks.

"I knew what pitches they liked to hit," said Marcus, regularly a catcher for Hillsborough. "I had to keep the ball down."

Lopez's drive cut the Hillsborough lead to 4-1.

"He made me look bad on a curve ball," Lopez said. "I decided not to let that happen again."

Lopez's home run was the only thing Half Moon Bay fans could celebrate Sunday. It was much different the previous two games. Half Moon Bay's offense was up to the task Saturday, nearly matching Hillsborough hit for hit and home run for home run. Nine home runs were hit in the game, with Half Moon Bay batters cranking out four.

The final three came in the sixth on back-to-back-to-back shots by Devon Canty, Lopez and Tommy Nuño. Nuño's shot culminated Half Moon Bay's six-run rally in the sixth, tying the score.

"I knew I was going to come up in the sixth," Nuño said. "I knew everyone was going to get a hit. I was nervous. I didn't want to strikeout."

Riley Krook's lead-off homer in the bottom of the sixth ended the game.

Half Moon Bay won the first meeting of the two teams Thursday with Joaquin Preciado providing some of the heroics. His grand slam in the fourth gave Half Moon Bay the lead. After Hillsborough tied the score in the sixth, he ended the game in the bottom of the sixth with a bases-loaded single to center.

That would be the final win Half Moon Bay would get for the tournament.

Half Moon Bay had its chances Saturday, jumping out to a 6-2 lead heading in the bottom of the second when it all started to unravel.

Hillsborough scored six runs in the bottom of the second, and added two more in the third.

Abby Donovan knocked in a run in the fourth with a double. Kevin Welch hit a solo home run in the fifth.

Hillsborough scored four runs in the bottom of the fifth. Half Moon Bay tied the score in the sixth.

Krook's lead-off homer in the sixth set the stage for Sunday's game, which ended in four innings.

Hillsborough will represent the district at the sectional tournament. Only district winners can participate in that tournament.

"Both teams deserved to win it," said J.T. Snow, Hillsborough's coach and the former first baseman for the San Francisco Giants. "They are a first-class organization. We have played them for a few years and they have always been good games."

Marcus thinks, that if the sectionals allowed the top two finishers in the district, Half Moon Bay would have made a good showing.

"They are a good hitting team," Marcus said. "They have good pitching and play good defense."

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