

Hillsborough staying alive in D52 9-10s

By Terry Bernal Daily Journal Staff Jun 27, 2018 Updated 11 hrs ago



Hillsborough's Archer Horn slides home in the third inning in Tuesday's 10-0 win over Foster City in the District 52 9-10s All-Star Tournament at Burgess Park Field.

Terry Bernal/Daily Journal

It took a while for Hillsborough's bats to get going in the District 52 9-10s All-Star Tournament. Two mercy-rule wins later, the 'Borough boys have hit their stride.

After opening the tourney with a 1-0 walk-off loss to Pacifica American, Hillsborough has stormed through the elimination bracket with wins of 17-1 over Redwood City-West and 10-0 over Foster City.

Tuesday's five-inning victory over Foster City was fueled by leadoff hitter Archer Horn, who set the table all night long. Hillsborough totaled 14 hits as a team with the left-handed hitting Horn reaching base in all four of his plate appearances, going 2 for 2 with two walks, two doubles, an RBI and three runs scored.

Horn is now hitting .444 (4 for 9) in the tournament.

"I like leading off because I set the tone for the team," said Horn, who only started hitting leadoff this season for his regular-season Hillsborough Little League Cardinals.

Starting pitcher Brody Smith was the beneficiary of the mighty run support, and made it count. The right-hander worked three shutout innings, and along with reliever Ian McMahon combined on a one-hit shutout.

During one stretch spanning through the second to the fifth innings, Smith and McMahon combined to set down 10 straight batters. During the streak, they didn't allow a ball out of the infield, totaling three strikeouts, six groundouts and a foul infield popup.

"I felt very comfortable," Smith said. "And my catcher (McMahon), he got the good frames when they were out of the box."

Smith was informed earlier in the day he'd be starting Tuesday, and said he was immediately nervous. The nerves subsided by game time, probably because he is accustomed to pitching in big games.

With his Hillsborough Little League Yankees, Smith started the league championship game, earning the win in a 10-5 triumph over the Red Sox. It was the last official game Smith pitched until Tuesday's outing.

"I was happy I was pitching because I like to pitch," Smith said. "I like to start."

Hillsborough jumped out to an early lead courtesy of a pair of doubles. Horn led off by powering the second pitch of the game for a two-bagger. No. 3 hitter Jack Callen followed with a one-out double to give Hillsborough a 1-0 lead.

Foster City starting pitcher Christian Louie settled in though, keeping it at 1-0 through two innings. The left-handed Louie pitched in two games in the tournament. He also worked three innings in Saturday's tourney opener, an 11-1 win over Palo Alto National.

"Christian is solid," Foster City manager Mark Copus said. "He's solid every time. He's the rock in our lineup. And we're always going to get good pitching from him."

In the third inning, Hillsborough chipped away for two more runs. Horn led off the frame with a crisp double up the right-center gap. Then after a one-out walk to Callen, cleanup hitter Ben Salama drilled an RBI single to center. Drew Gall followed with an RBI grounder on the infield that resulted in a Foster City error.

Then Hillsborough broke through in the fourth, sending 12 batters to the plate. Leo Rhein and Horn led off with back-to-back walks, followed by a McMahon single to load the bases. With one out, Salama lifted a sacrifice fly, which saw both the back runners move up. Then came the ground attack, with Gall and Adam Zimmer tabbing consecutive RBI infield singles. Jack O'Connor and Tyler Crawford followed with RBI singles. A bases-loaded walk to Horn forced home the final run of the inning.

In the fifth, Hillsborough produced the 10th run to invoke the mercy-rule on an RBI double by Zimmer to drive home Salama.

Foster City's only hit came in the first inning on a single through the middle by Parker Jessup, another regular-season champion as his Foster City Little League Muckdogs won the league title. Jessup said he was upset with himself for letting a good pitch go by in the at-bat. When he got another one, though, he did not miss it.

"I was looking for a strike," Jessup said. "I saw that first one go low. Then I saw another one go by, it was a strike, and I got mad. Then I saw another one and I hit it."

Hillsborough opened the tournament Saturday with a tough 1- 0 loss to Pacifica American. The two teams took a scoreless tie into the sixth before Pacifica won on a walk-off sacrifice fly by Kagan Plumb to score Jason Balmy. On the mound for Pacifica, Balmy, A.J. Delaney and Alex Winegar combined for the shutout.

In Sunday's elimination game against RWC-West, Hillsborough rallied for a 10-run third while Salama dominated on the mound. The right-hander fired a three-inning complete game while striking out eight.

With four more rounds in the elimination bracket remaining to reach the championship round, Hillsborough advances to play San Carlos Thursday at Burgess Park Field at 5:30 p.m.

Despite the uphill climb ahead of them, the Hillsborough boys remain confident.

"We're gonna win this," said Brody Regan, Hillsborough's Center Fielder.

Source Link

www.smdailyjournal.com/sports/hillsborough-staying-alive-in-d---s/article_24da757e-79d1-11e8-8a99-2f93ec1f3ffa.html

(Editors Note: Misspelled names were corrected from the San Mateo Daily Journal online version. The final quote was also incorrectly attributed to Leo Rhein.)