



Luke Levitt #9 at the Plate for Hillsborough in the Second-Round Sectional game vs. Mt Eden of Hayward

Baseball

FEATURED

Smooth Sailing For Hillsborough 11's In Second Round

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By Rick Chandler

Witnessing the birth of a new nickname is a miracle of nature — like watching a hummingbird, or discovering a new type of flowering plant.

So behold Friday's Section 3 Little League 10-11 All-Star game in Union City, where Hillsborough pitcher Devin Saltzgaber picked up a glorious new moniker. As he was coming to the plate in the first inning, the announcer called his name as "Diva" Saltzgaber.

His teammates immediately jumped on for the ride — and so Devin was "Diva" for the rest of the game. It didn't seem to bother him much, however. Not only did Saltzgaber smile every time someone used his new nickname, he proceeded to throw a three-inning shutout, striking out six, in Hillsborough's 17-0 four-inning mercy-rule win over Mt. Eden in the winner's-bracket final.

Smooth Sailing For Hillsborough 11's In Second Round (Continued)

Hillsborough will play on Sunday at 1 p.m. in the championship game against the winner of Saturday's loser's-bracket final between Mt. Eden and Danville. Hillsborough beat Danville in the first round, 11-1.

The winners collected 21 hits on Friday, led by Anakin Manuel (4-for-4 with two doubles), Nate Coughlin (3-for-4, two runs scored), Bo Schaffer (2-for-3, three RBI), Quinn Folk (2-for-2 with a double) and Will Hirsch (2-for-2, three RBI).

Hillsborough has outscored its Section opponents 28-1, and has needed only eight innings to win two games due to the mercy rule.

"We've been saying to them throughout the playoffs to just go play to play, base to base," manager Ben Coughlin said. "That's our motto. At this age it can be easy to lose concentration, especially if you're winning by a lot. But this group has remained focused."

This is basically the same team that won the Section 3 title last season as 10-year-olds, and made it to the NorCal (Division) Tournament — the highest one can go in Little League in that age bracket — before losing in the championship game.

On Friday Hillsborough scored three in the first and 11 in the second — with two-run singles by Schaffer and Hirsch being the big hits. Saltzgaber kept Mt. Eden off balance with a crisp fastball and, yes, a knuckleball — a pitch that seems to be all the rage in Little League lately.

Schaffer struck out the side in the fourth in relief to end the game.

"Devin stays on an even keel when he's on the mound," Coughlin said. "He's pretty composed out there." In other words, not a diva at all. But one can bet the name will stick, for a while anyway.

Source Link

<http://peninsulayouthsports.com/2018/07/14/smooth-sailing-for-hillsborough-11s-in-section-3-second-round/>

HLL Editor's Note: Pitcher Devin Saltzgaber's name was spelled "Devon" in the original online version. Mt. Eden Little League was referred to as Eden Valley. The typos were corrected in this version.