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Hillsborough captures title

June 30, 2005, 12:00 AM By Nathan Mollat, Daily Journal Staff

The game of baseball is a simple one, no matter how old the players are. Good pitching, clean defense and clutch hitting are the name of the game and the team that excels at those facets of the game usually wins.

*Nathan Mollat / Daily Journal
Hillsborough pitcher Trent Friedlander pitched five strong innings in his team's 12-2 win over San Mateo National. Friedlander allowed two runs while scattering six hits. He twice worked out of bases loaded jams without giving up a run.*

The Hillsborough 9- through 12-year-old all stars had all three as it beat San Mateo National 12-2 in the District 52 Minors' Super Bowl championship game at Belmont's Marina Field Wednesday night.

"They don't make a lot of mistakes," Hillsborough manager Jeff Cozad said of his team. "It's a real simple game when you don't make errors or walk batters."

Hillsborough was a little shaky at the start, committing an error in each of the first two innings, but it settled down and was flawless the rest of the way. Hillsborough made several nice plays in the field — third baseman Kevin Marren picked off a hot shot in the fourth inning off the bat of San Mateo's Michael Nakamura was one of the defensive highlights of the game.

"They knew how to play baseball," said San Mateo manager Don Miguel. "Unfortunately, we didn't play our best."

San Mateo had a tough time on defense, committing a number of errors and its pitching staff didn't help its cause by walking seven batters. Offensively, San Mateo got off to a quick start, scoring two runs in the top of the first. Tyler Laebelt reached on an error and scored on a Nick Miguel double. Two batters later, a Cole Stillman groundout drove Miguel home with the second run of the inning.

San Mateo had a chance to break the game open in the bottom of the second when it loaded the bases with no outs against Hillsborough pitcher Trent Friedlander.

But Friedlander and the Hillsborough defense got out of the inning without any damage. Friedlander induced a grounder to short and Brock Cozad forced the lead runner at home for the first out. Friedlander struck out the next batter and a groundout to Cozad at third ended the inning.

Bases-loaded situations proved to be the difference in the game. San Mateo loaded the bases again in the fourth with one out on back-to-back-to-back singles from Stillman, Sean McDonald and Nick Newman. But a strikeout and a groundout ended the inning.

"That really pumped them up," Cozad said.

Hillsborough, on the other hand, did most of its damage with the bases loaded. Hillsborough loaded the bases in the bottom of the second and by the time San Mateo recorded the final out, eight runners had crossed the plate for Hillsborough, all on only five hits.

Will Reilly, Alec Gouttas, Gordon Barrows, Colin Richards, Gregory Pratt and Brandon Barrows each had an RBI in the inning.

Hillsborough added three more in the fourth. Brock Cozad put down a safety-squeeze bunt to score Gordon Barrows and Marren drove in another with bases-loaded walk. Richards also scored in the inning on an error.

Hillsborough ended the game in the bottom of the fifth when Richards earned a bases-loaded walk. The game was stopped because of the 10-run rule.

Despite the loss, San Mateo held their collective heads high. And it wasn't all bad news for San Mateo. Center fielder Chris Mourison made the play of the game with a head-long, diving catch of a Brock Cozad dying fly ball on the first play of the game.

"I know the kids are down now, but in a few weeks they'll be looking at all the swag they got and remember all the good times," Don Miguel said.

What do you think of the Board of Supervisors' decision to not place a measure on the ballot allowing voters to decide between district and county-wide elections for supervisors?

- The current county-wide system is working fine
- There should be district elections to allow for more competitive races
- Either way, it should be up to the voters

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