

Trio of pitchers deal as Hillsborough 9-10s roll past Los Gatos

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Over three hours of travel and an unprecedented 8 p.m. start time — with a game-time temperature of 97, no less — did not detour the Hillsborough 9-10s from their march toward destiny.

The kids from the hills put up three runs in the first and three pitchers combined on a three-hitter to lift Hillsborough to a 7-3 victory over Los Gatos in the Northern California 9-10 State Championships Saturday night in Sutter.

Hillsborough starting pitcher Anakin Manuel got dinged for two runs in the bottom of the first, but made up for it at the plate in the top of the second with a clutch two-out single to drive home Jack Callen and Nate Coughlin to up the lead to 5-2. Los Gatos rallied for one more run, charged to Manuel, in the third. But Hillsborough added two insurance runs in the top of the sixth, scoring on an RBI single from Beau Schaffer; Ryan Drake later scored on an infield error to cap the game's scoring.

Manuel battled through 2 1/3 innings of to earn the win. Devin Saltzgaber entered in relief in the third, working 2 1/3 innings while striking out three. Schaffer closed it out with 1 1/3 innings of work, striking out three.

Hillsborough got it started in the first with a leadoff single from Coughlin, followed by walks from Drake and Schaffer. Two passed balls and an infield error led to three unearned runs.

Hillsborough advances through the winners' bracket to take on the winner of Sunday's matchup between Turlock American and Maidu-Roseville. Monday's first pitch is scheduled for 6 p.m.