

https://www.smdailyjournal.com/sports/local/hillsborough-10s-fall-in-first-round-of-section-3-finals/article\_63c2eeb2-2604-11ee-b905-b35a893bc50f.html

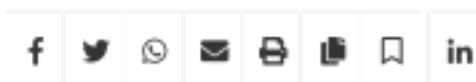
FEATURED

## Hillsborough 10s fall in first round of Section 3 finals

One more shot in Wednesday’s winner-take-all if-necessary game

Terry Bernal Daily Journal staff

Jul 19, 2023



DUBLIN — It was the ending a wild back-and-forth game deserved, but it didn’t go Hillsborough’s way.

Hillsborough will have one more chance to win the Section 3 Little League All-Stars 10s title after Tuesday’s 9-7 loss in the championship-round opener to Dublin. Hills advanced to the title round through the winners’ bracket and need

be defeated twice to be denied the crowd. Wednesday's if-necessary game, a winner-take-all showdown with Dublin, is scheduled for 5 p.m. at Fallon Sports Park.

Tuesday's thrilling end saw Hillsborough base runner Will Duffell get thrown out at home plate on an epic cannon bolt by Dublin left fielder Brenton Light. Hills had already scored twice in the inning and, with the bases loaded, cleanup hitter Will Cantwell lined out to left, with Light gunning home as Duffell attempted to score — and in a cloud of dust and a stunning out call at the plate, the game was over.

Hillsborough manager Chase Rowbotham, who also serves as the team's third-base coach, said he sent Duffell home on the play.

“He made such a great throw,” Rowbotham said. “You’ve got to tip your cap sometimes. A lot of times they bounce that (throw), and suddenly two runs score. So, that’s what I was trying to go for, was trying to force a throw. It was a bang-bang play. I knew we were down two ... but eight times out of 10, that’s a bad throw, it gets away, and suddenly two runs score.”

The game saw some wild swings, with Dublin jumping out to a 3-1 lead in the third, highlighted by RBI singles from Dom Palano and Aki Lee. Then the two teams traded four-run innings in the fourth, with Hillsborough taking the lead on Finn Rowbotham's RBI single, and Dublin firing back to jump ahead on when Tyler Kamimura scored on a passed ball.

Dublin added two runs in the fifth on a two-run double by Petie Toler to up its lead to 9-5. Then Hillsborough mounted a comeback bid, that ultimately fell short, in the sixth.

“I told our kids: ‘Keep your heads held high, we’ve got all our pitchers, they don’t.’” Chase Rowbotham said. “I feel good about tomorrow. Obviously, the kids have got to execute though.”

Hills was cruising early behind Duffell, the starting pitcher, who held Dublin scoreless through two innings.

“It was good early,” Chase Rowbotham said. “The top of our lineup, we just didn’t put enough pressure on them early.”

In the top of the first, Hillsborough scratched out an unearned run on an RBI single from Colton Kung. But Hills left one runner on base in the first, stranded the bases loaded in the second, and left on two more in the third, to go into the bottom of the inning with a 1-0 lead.

Duffell departed after 2  $\frac{2}{3}$  innings of work, making way for Kung in relief. Kung battled through crooked numbers in the fourth and fifth inning, but soldiered through to give his team 3  $\frac{1}{3}$  innings of work.

“We stuck with him because, one, he’s a battler; and, two, we were down three or four (runs), and we were like: ‘We want to save our pitchers for tomorrow,’” Chase Rowbotham said. “That was kind of the thinking there. And sometimes you have to have a pitcher eat it, and took one for the team, and he battled through it.”

But in the sixth, Hills almost made some magic.

“First we were worried, and once we got runners on base we started to get excited,” Hillsborough’s Mico DeMartini said.

The bottom of the order started the rally, as No. 10 batter Colton Kreuzkamp led off with a walk. Mico DeMartini reached on catcher’s interference. No. 12 hitter Jack Veach then reached on a fielder’s choice for the first out of the inning.

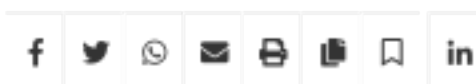
“We have done very good,” Mico DeMartini said of the bottom of the batting order, “and we have gotten on base a lot.”

Then with one out, Duffell reached on an infield single to load the bases. Finn Rowbotham and DeMartini followed with back-to-back RBI walks, and Cantwell got ahead in the count 3-1 before sending a fateful line out to Light in left.

Light pitched in relief earlier in the game, but didn’t record any outs during Hillsborough’s four-run fourth inning.

“I know he was in there pitching, and know he kind of was having a little bit of a hard time,” Dublin manager Nick Ferraro said. “For him to go into the outfield like that, then catch the ball and gun that guy at the plate, was amazing.”

The loss snaps a seven-game winning streak for Hillsborough, going back to the third game of the team’s 6-1 run in the District 52 tournament.



---

**Terry Bernal, Daily Journal staff**