

Giants earn Series crown; Rattlers fare well in CABA

The South Farmington Giants continued their dominance in tournament play when they were crowned champions of the Pinto World Series July 29 in Garden City.

The 8-and-under Giants, who combined strong hitting and solid defense to win their second consecutive tournament, posted a 6-1 record against the top teams from Westland, Mason, Novi and Garden City.

After three straight victories, the Giants teetered on the brink of elimination following a loss to the Novi Heat on July 28.

The Giants responded the next day by defeating Westland No. 2 and earning a rematch with Novi in the finale.

In the first game, the Giants trailed much of the time before claiming a two-run victory and forcing a second game.

In the rain-delayed finale, the Giants exploded for 27 runs to extinguish the Heat and take the title.

The Giants' roster includes Blake Burnett, Devin Duran, Joel Fisher, Mitchell Gatt, Ryan Keller, Jack Komos, Michael Kozara, Austin LeGault, Collin Morrison, Bennett Orsini, Michael Samyn, Gavin Sullivan and Dallas Sutton.

BASEBALL

They are managed by Steve Sutton, who is assisted by coaches Mike Duran, John Komos, Dave Kozara and Jim Sullivan.

The Pinto championship follows the Giants' first-place finish in the Blissfield Little League tournament July 15 and their second-place showing in the South Farmington All-Star Classic on July 8.

Rattlers in CABA Series

The 12-and-under Michigan Rattlers finished in sixth place with a 6-3 record in the Continental Amateur Baseball Association World Series July 27-Aug. 2 in Marion, Ohio.

Key victories in the series included a dramatic, 6-5 win over Columbus (Ohio) and a 13-12, slugfest triumph over the tournament host Marion Merchants.

The Columbus game provided many exciting moments for the Rattlers, who faced a 6-1 deficit after just one inning.

But starting pitcher Zak Kozuchowski settled down and saw the Rattlers through five innings before Toby Matchulat shut the

door in the sixth and seventh.

The Rattlers tied the score with two runs in the bottom of the seventh, and the bases were loaded when Aaron Hakola sealed the win with a two-out, line drive down the third-base line.

The Rattlers, led by loadoff batter Harvey Martin, displayed a potent hitting lineup throughout the tournament.

Martin started the first five games with a base hit and finished the tournament with 12. Second baseman Matt Chidester also had a dozen hits, and outfielder Paul Greenwood racked up a .550 average.

Catcher James Kudalski slammed three home runs and knocked in 12 runs, and first baseman Phillip Sentag produced 12 RBI as well.

Additional home run punch was provided by Tim Collins, Matchulat, Sentag and Kozuchowski with one each.

Kozuchowski's dinger was something special — a grand slam in Game 9 as the Rattlers fought to avoid elimination against Glenview (Ill.).

Following Kozuchowski's four-run shot in the fifth inning, the Rattlers pushed across six more runs as they battled from behind



Rattlers sixth in Series: The members of the 12-and-under Michigan Rattlers travel baseball team are (front row, left to right) Matt Chidester, Phillip Sentag, James Kudalski, Chris Holcomb and A.J. Saleh; (second row) Paul Greenwood, Andy Lentz, Zak Kozuchowski, Tim Collins, Chase Dehne, Toby Matchulat, Aaron Hakola and Harvey Martin; (third row) coach Steve Hakola, coach Dave Kozuchowski, manager Jim Martin and coach Mark Matchulat.

the entire game.

But the Rattlers ended up falling short as Glenview eked out a 14-13 victory.

The tournament roster included Andy Lentz, A.J. Saleh, Chase Dehne and Chris Hol-

comb. Mike Garbarz, Dan Schultz, Brian Noble and Grant Lawrence were regular-season contributors.

The Rattlers, who are coached by Jim Martin, Dave Kozuchowski, Steve Hakola and Mark

Matchulat, closed their inaugural season with a 41-19 record.

Tryouts for next year's 13-and-under team will take place in August and September. Interested players should call Martin at (248) 477-9830.

Collegiate champion stays alive in All-American tournament

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BASEBALL

Decision Consultants, Inc. got off to a rocky start Monday in the All-American Amateur Baseball Association Tournament in Johnstown, Pa.

Following a 10-0 loss to the Arlington Senators of Washington, D.C., in which DCI had just one hit, the Livonia Collegiate Baseball League champions rebounded Tuesday with a 4-1 triumph over the Maryland State Bombers.

Action continued Wednesday in the 16-team 30-and-under tournament as DCI was slated to face the Baltimore (Md.) Orioles.

Pitching, a summer-long staple for DCI, righted itself Tuesday when right-hander Derrick Peterson (Eastern Michigan) tossed a nine-inning, complete game.

Peterson threw a three-hitter, striking out six and walking only one.

"Obviously, his control was excellent and all three of his pitches were working — fastball, changeup and curve," DCI manager Mike George said. "We also swung the bat better today and played great defense."

Plymouth Canton graduate Bryan Kay (Sierra Heights) delivered a key blow in the game when he belted a two-out, opposite field two-run homer in the fourth inning to give DCI a 2-1 lead. Kay went 2-for-4.

Maryland State jumped out to a 1-0 lead in the opening inning

when Aaron Thomas, who had two of the Bombers' three hits, scored on a DCI infield error.

In the fifth, DCI took a 3-1 lead when Mark Cole walked with the bases loaded to score, Spencer Hynes.

Hynes, who went 3-for-4 to lead DCI's eight-hit attack, singled and scored on John Sullivan's double to provide the LCBL champions with a three-run cushion.

Losing pitcher Michael Rehman (Kutztown State) lasted 5½ innings before giving way to

Jason Seger followed by Anthony Watkins.

DCI's opener on Monday was a disappointment.

It was scoreless through three innings before the Senators struck for three runs in the fourth off DCI ace Randy Ford, who slipped to 10-2.

Dave Harriman (Armstrong Atlantic), who went 3-for-4, had a two-run triple in the fourth, a shot to right which handcuffed DCI outfielder Tim Andrzejak. Right fielder Caleb Stewart, who plays for the University of Kentucky, went 2-for-2 with two runs scored.

Meanwhile, Ford, the left-hander from Eastern Michigan, did not survive the fifth as he was charged with five runs.

Reliever Brad McCloskey then

gave up two runs in 1½ innings and Arlington got three more in the seventh to build a 10-run lead. Mark Cole and Jason Lukasik also pitched for DCI.

"Washington is a good squad, but we just didn't play," George said. "We knew our offense would struggle and we knew we had to play a perfect game."

Winning pitcher Kurt Isenburgh, a left-hander from James Madison (Va.), allowed just one hit. Using offspeed pitches and breaking balls, Isenburgh fanned four and walked just one over the first six innings.

Peterson had the lone hit for DCI in the fourth when the LCBL champs had runners at first and third and one out, but Isenburgh got out of the jam with a strikeout and groundout.

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