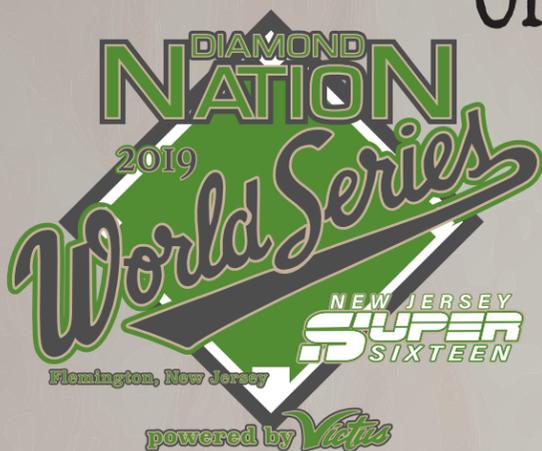


SUPER 16 WORLD SERIES, 9/12U INVITATIONAL ON DECK AT 'THE NATION'



By Bob Behre

For eight consecutive days, the Super 17 Invitational took complete hold of the Diamond Nation complex and kept dozens of college scouts honed in on the action. Now it is the Super 16 World Series' turn to wrest control of the Flemington, N.J. facility this weekend.

The 68-team Super 16 World Series will share the Diamond Nation complex with the Super 9U and 12U Invitational beginning Friday and carrying through the weekend until champions are crowned in the three separate tournaments on Sunday evening.

The **Super 16 World Series** opens at 10 a.m. on Friday with a pair of games pitting Baseball Performance Center against Baseball U. of Pa., and the Whiz Kids 16U Elite against Stars Baseball 16U Red.

The Super 16 World Series features three playoff brackets; Red, White and Blue. The playoffs get under way with the first round games at 4:30 p.m. on Sunday. The second round games are set for 6:30 p.m. before the three brackets contest their championship games at 8:30 p.m. The Red final is on Field 1. The White final is on Field 3 and the Blue final is on Field 4.

The deep Super 16 World Series field has drawn a wide array of teams geographically and boasts such dynamic programs at the RCBC Nationals, East Coast Eagles, Team Steel Blue, All-Out Baseball, Wladyka National, the Diamond Jacks Super 15U, N.J. Giants and the N.J. Rising Rebels.

The two-pronged **Super 9U and Super 12U** Invitational will comfortably share the Diamond Nation complex with the big boys as the little guys take over the two small diamonds for the weekend.

The South Brunswick Vikings, NJ Axemen, Full Count Baseball and the Encarnacion 12U League are a few of the talented teams competing in the Super 12U Invitational.

The Super 9U Invitational opens at 10 a.m. on Saturday when Grit 9U tangles with the Mt. Laurel Indians. The tournament begins its playoffs at 4:30 p.m. on Sunday when the Nos. 2 and 3 seeds square off in what is essentially a one-game semifinal. That winner will then compete for the Super 9U championship against the top seed at 6:30 p.m.

The SFX Huskies is also another strong team in the Super 9U field.

The 12-team **Super 12U Invitational** opens at 8 a.m. on Sunday when the CB Raiders oppose Gains Rawlings. The Super 12U field plays down to a playoff which begins at 4:30 p.m. on Sunday. The Nos. 2 and 3 seeds will face each other for the right to play the top seed for the championship at 6:30 p.m.



DIAMOND NATION'S UNDERCLASS GAMES REMAIN AT THE HEAD OF THE CLASS



By Bob Behre

Whether you are a fan on the outside looking in or a player on the inside embracing the experience, the Garden State Underclass Games is an outstanding event to behold.

We love to hear from the players and coaches to get their take on what has certainly become a must stop each June for the top underclassmen in New Jersey. The seventh annual powerhouse showcase has truly been Diamond Nation's gift to the Garden State's baseball community.

"This year's event was exceptionally well organized and the level of talent compiled on each team was the best I've seen in the four years I've coached in it," said South Brunswick coach C.J. Hendricks, who coached the Central Jersey team.

The Garden State Underclass Games, clearly one of the favorite showcases for scouts in the Northeast, is a four-team, 100-player event sponsored and hosted by Diamond Nation in Flemington, N.J. The four high school all-star teams represent geographic areas -- Northeast, Northwest, Central and South -- in New Jersey and compete in 10-inning games, played simultaneously at the premier baseball facility in New Jersey.

The Underclass Games drew more than 150 scouts and Prep Baseball Report provided on-site, in-depth analysis of every player. Jersey Sports Zone also reported and shot excellent video of the event that has become a statewide must-see.

"I thought the pitchers stood out as the top performers, collectively, this year," said T.J. Hunt, PBR's New Jersey scouting director. "There were nearly 20 arms that were 88 miles per hour or better and a sophomore who hit 92 was incredible to watch."

That sophomore was Chase Petty of Mainland in Atlantic County. Petty is a 6-1, 175-pound righty who also plays shortstop. Junior righty Robert Ready of St. Augustine Prep also topped out at 92. Both pitched for the South team, which played the Northeast team to a 4-4 tie. RHP Tommy Delaney (90) of Princeton, RHP Drew Conovor (90) of Voorhees, LHP Patrick Montfort (90) of Morristown, RHP Shane Panzini (90) of Red Bank Catholic and Braedin Hunt (90) of Christian Brothers Academy all zapped the radar gun at 90.



Delaney, also a Diamond Jack, committed to Penn shortly after the Underclass Games.

"I thought the talent brought a great level of intensity and competition," said Andrew McDermott, a speedy 5-8, 165-pound outfielder from St. Joseph (Mont.). "An All-Star game guarantees great competition while a tournament doesn't always pair up equivalent teams."

No one was McDermott's equivalent when it came to the 60-yard dash. The junior stamped himself head of the field when he ran a 6.56 60-yard dash. Fellow junior outfielders Zach Bernard (6.66) of Cherokee and Jared Zimbaro (6.71) of Middlesex were close behind. First baseman Jayden Hilton, just a freshman, registered a 6.77 60-yard dash good for a fourth best time.

"I thought the competitive game format and the exposure to scouts was the best part of the event," said McDermott. "I also enjoyed being able to play with kids I usually play against in high school."

Prep Baseball Report's Hunt pointed out, "There were some position players that stood out, like Josh Kuroda-Gauer (Franklin) and Jared Zimbaro (Middlesex). All-in-all, Diamond Nation and the powers that be put on yet another display of top talent in the state. I was happy to be there covering it once again."

Morristown High School coach Ed Collins has coached in the Underclass Games since the first year of the event in 2013 and saw immediate dividends paid at the 2019 games.

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UNDERCLASS GAMES (continued from front page)



"The event keeps getting better," said Collins, who coached the Northwest team and also coaches Locked In Expos in the summer. "We had a player commit to a school within 48 hours of the event and others received offers and follow-ups."

Collins' Morristown and Locked In pitcher Montfort committed to Villanova and Mark Hindy, a 6-5,

"The best part of the showcase was seeing how talent-filled the future of New Jersey baseball is going to be," said Boucher, a junior. "Each team had a roster full of impactful players. Being committed, I don't normally notice the number of scouts at an event but I've never seen so many organizations represented."

Millburn coach Brian Chapman has been a frequent coach of the Northeast team and a big promoter of the event since its inception



"If you are a fan of youth baseball, it is the single greatest event of the year," said Chapman. "To assemble all that talent in one place is quite an undertaking. I am honored to be a small part of it."

Mike Bello, an outstanding sophomore outfielder from Pope John in Sparta, had a single and drew a walk for the Northwest team.

"Playing in the game with some of the top players in New Jersey was great," said the Auburn commit. "Competing alongside players with that skill level was a great experience. The intensity and competitiveness of the game was extremely high. Being surrounded by top tier talent is rare so it was an awesome opportunity to showcase myself in that kind of environment."

"And the amount of scouts in attendance at the Garden State Underclass Games is always impressive. I did my best to stay focused on the game and play with the same intensity even though there were a lot of scouts present."

Brian Skettini, the junior catcher for NJSIAA Group 4 champion Ridgewood, said, "It was a great experience being able to play in such a competitive environment. I enjoyed being able to not only catch but also hit against the best pitchers in the state. I thought the Underclass Games was an incredibly unique experience."

205 lefty from Seton Hall Prep appears close to a decision. "Zimbaro is also entertaining offers from the evening," said Collins. "The amount of exposure the players receive at the Underclass Games is second to none. It's a first class event where the best of the best get to showcase and have some fun."

The Underclass Games has grown since its inception in 2013 to include two younger level all-star teams. The top 7th and 8th graders were added in 2017 and the top 5th and 6th graders were brought in this year and both of those age levels have proved to be very popular and extremely competitive.

There were 155 scouts present representing 90 colleges and five Major League organizations, according to Steve DiTrollo, Garden State Underclass Games director.

"I'm not surprised by that number at all," said Hendricks. "Steve does a great job getting every top school out to this event. Kudos to the job that he and his staff do to get as much exposure as possible for our players in New Jersey. The kids all came there to prove why they belonged. They were excited to compete and showed a tremendous level of camaraderie in the dugout."

Spotswood coach Mike Korneski coached the Central team with Hendricks, Immaculata's Kevin Cust and Trenton Catholic's Keith Naylor.

"My two favorite moments were watching Jared Zimbaro strike out the side and then go back to center field and throw out a runner at the plate trying to tag at third," said Korneski, "and getting to see Walker Zampella of Edison turn a double play and play well." Korneski said the first year he helped coach the Central team, "We had Luca Dalatri starting on the mound and Brandon Martorano behind the plate." Both former CBA players are playing for North Carolina.

"The type of talent on display consistently, year- after-year, does seem to bring out more and more scouts every year," said Korneski. "Hats off to Diamond Nation, Steve DiTrollo and coaches like Chris Banos and many others who work hard to showcase New Jersey's best underclassmen."

Adam Boucher, a 6-5, 205-pound righthander from St. Joseph (Met.), has already committed to Duke but was, nonetheless, amazed by the gathering of scouts and the level of competition.



SUPER 15U's MCCOY THROWS GEM IN SUPER 17 INVITATIONAL

By Bob Behre

Kyle McCoy is a 15-year-old trying to make his way in a 17 year-old world. At least that was the case last weekend when the long lefty tossed a one-hit shutout in the Super 17 Invitational at Diamond Nation.

The Super 17 Invitational set up shop at Diamond Nation the past eight days, intriguing dozens of college scouts from New Jersey and beyond. McCoy is one of many of those talented young athletes to turn the heads of discerning baseball minds.

McCoy worked a near sterling seven innings against Grind Baseball Carolina last Saturday in guiding the Diamond Jacks Super 15 team to a 4-0 victory. The 6-3, 155-pound lefthander permitted just one hit, struck out 10, walked one and hit a batter while throwing a paltry 78 pitches.

"I was locating real well and getting ahead in counts," said McCoy, interviewed on Thursday during a throwing session at Diamond Nation. "My off-speed stuff was working, my slider was working. I was throwing it in any count and working up and down in the zone."

It was McCoy's second start of the summer season, having scattered six hits in a victory over the Morris County Cubs two weekends earlier. McCoy permitted two runs in that one, striking out seven and walking none. "I've been trying to keep my walks down," he said.

Diamond Jacks Super 15U coach Travis Anderson has been extremely pleased with McCoy's development.

"Kyle's fastball tops out at 81-83 but his fastball jumps on you and it really feels like mid-80s," said Anderson, not one to be enamored with the radar gun. The former professional catcher always seems to break it down to brass tacks. "Kyle hides the ball real well. You don't see the ball until it's too late. He is going to have a good chance to win a lot of games for his team."

And isn't that what matters?

McCoy is also building a reputation for a strong work ethic and a desire to be a strident student of the game.

"One college coach saw Kyle picking our brains between innings," said Anderson, and he said, "That's what that kid is all about."

Of course, the physical length will always play well and once the young man's body fills out, the numbers the scouts desire will naturally follow. "He really works the hitter well," said Anderson. "He gets after it, uses his length to his advantage and he's very coachable."

McCoy, coming off a 6-1 season with the Hunterdon Central junior varsity, pitches again at 10 a.m. on Sunday in the Super 16 Invitational.

McCoy said the game against Grind Baseball "was one of my strongest performances, especially considering it was seven innings. I don't think I've been more dominating in a game."



Diamond Jacks Super 15 pitcher Kyle McCoy.