

WOOD BAT CHAMPIONSHIP HIGHLIGHTS BUSY WEEKEND AT 'THE NATION'

By Bob Behre

Sixty teams and many of the more prestigious baseball programs in the tri-state area will descend upon Diamond Nation this weekend for the 17/18U Wood Bat Championship.

In fact, many programs are sending multiple teams to compete in what has become one of the top area showcases of the fall season. Aside from the four fields at Diamond Nation and the one at nearby Jack Cust Baseball Academy, the tournament will utilize such off-site locations as Mercer County Community College in West Windsor, Raritan Valley Community College in Branchburg, Railroad Field in Readington and JFK Memorial High School in Iselin.

The 17/18U Wood Bat Championship opens with a quartet of games at 6:30 p.m. on Friday at Diamond Nation. A couple of neat openers includes games pitting Lehigh Valley Baseball Academy and Wladyka Baseball on Field 3 and the Diamond Jacks Super 17 against Full Count Prospects 2021 on Field 1.

The high level programs competing at the **17/18U Wood Bat Championship** include three ASBA Futures squads, five Baseball U. teams, five Diamond Jacks squads, a trio of teams from Evoshield Canes North Atlantic, and two clubs apiece from powerhouses Sportika Gallagher, Time to Sign and Prospects Baseball Academy. The talented 9ers Baseball Club is in the fold, too.

While the big boys are playing on the big fields, Diamond Nation will also be host to the 10U and 12U Slugfest tournament on the two small diamonds at Diamond Nation this weekend.

The **10U Slugfest** opens with an interesting matchup pairing the Manalapan Reds and the Richmond County Nationals at 10 a.m. on Saturday on Field 2. The two-day 10U tournament will be capped off by the championship game at 6:30 p.m. on Sunday on Field 2.

Whalen Baseball, M Squad, the Freehold Twp. Mudcats and the Chester City Bobcats help round out the formidable 10U Slugfest field.

The **12U Slugfest** kicks off action with a pair of openers at 8 a.m. on Saturday. A game on Field 2 that brings together Millburn Blue and NJ Axemen should fill the stands. The 12U tournament caps off its weekend with the championship game at 2:15 p.m. on Sunday on Field 2.

It will be a difficult chore to grind through a deep field that boasts the SKD Aces, the Minutemen, Long Island Titans, West Chester Bulldogs, Millburn White and ASBA Warrington.



GLOUCESTER CATHOLIC'S SHAWARYN BACK THROWING FOR RED SOX

By Bob Behre

They called him "The Unicorn" at the University of Maryland and that came after four years at Gloucester Catholic in which his teams won four straight NJSIAA Non-Public A state championships.

Mike Shawaryn earned that nickname for his unusual and instant success at the collegiate level. His remarkable high school and college careers garnered the 6-3, 210-pound righthander selections in the 2013 and 2016 Major League Baseball Draft. Shawaryn then shot through the Boston Red Sox's minor league system in three years before earning his first call up to major leagues on May 30.

Shawaryn pitched in relief for the Red Sox on Monday night against the Yankees, surrendering one run on two hits and walking two in two-thirds of an inning. He entered in the ninth inning of a 5-0 Red Sox loss. Shawaryn has pitched just 15.1 innings this season in 10 relief appearances and sports an 8.22 ERA that is a bit disjointed courtesy of a rough outing against the Yankees in London when he gave up eight runs on six hits in 1.1 innings of relief.

That 17-13 Yankees victory in the first-ever game at the Wembley Stadium shooting gallery on June 29 also did a number on the ERA of Shawaryn's fellow New Jersey native Rick Porcello.

Shawaryn was sent back down to Triple-A Pawtucket on July 1 but returned to Boston when rosters expanded on Sept. 1. He has since pitched twice against the Yankees. He pitched the last two innings of a 5-1 Red Sox loss, last Saturday, permitting one run on three hits, striking out two and walking one.

Shawaryn possesses a low 90s fastball that he ratchets up to 94-95 while boasting a big slider that was been murder on both his collegiate and professional opponents. His third pitch is a changeup scouts say needs development. Nonetheless, Shawaryn appears in the Red Sox plans for 2020 as the 2018 World Series champs' season spirals to a disappointing finish.

Shawaryn was the subject of a Big Ten Network feature on May 16, 2016 touting his amazing collegiate career. The video includes a clip of Shawaryn pitching at Diamond Nation.



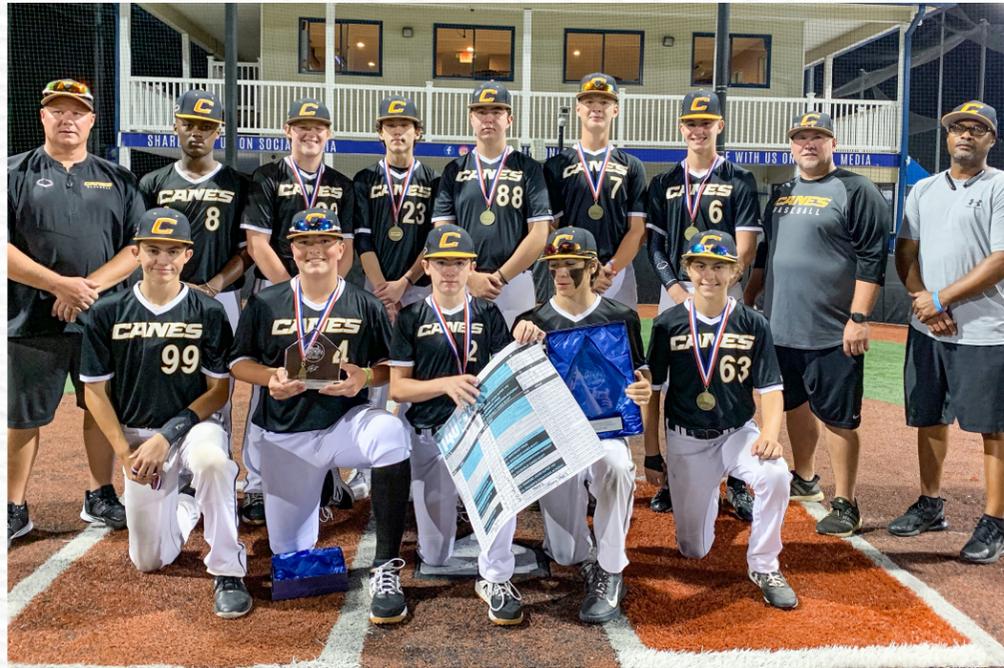
SHAWARYN (continued from front page)

Shawaryn set Maryland career records for wins (30), strikeouts (307) and innings pitched (307.1) during his three years (2014-'16) playing for the Terrapins. He also owns the school's single season wins (13) and strikeouts (138) records, setting both in 2015. He was named a Perfect Game First Team All-American in 2015 when he was also tabbed a First Team All-Big Ten honoree. Shawaryn earned First Team Freshman All-American in 2014 and was named to the Big Ten All-Tournament Team in 2016.

In 84 minor league games -- 71 starts -- Shawaryn went 18-20 with a 3.79 ERA, striking out 399 and walking 142 in 387 innings. He average 9.22 strikeouts per-nine innings, 3.28 walks per-nine and 0.95 home runs per-nine innings in his minor league career.

Shawaryn was drafted in the 32nd round by the Kansas City Royals out of Gloucester Catholic in 2013 before choosing to honor his commitment to Maryland. He did not commit to the Terrapins program until February of his senior year of high school. He was then drafted in the 5th round by the Red Sox in 2016, inking a \$637,000 signing bonus.

PAINO, MCINTYRE COSTELLO GUIDE CANES TO GRAND SLAM TITLE



By Bob Behre

Gavin McIntyre ripped a single to left field with one out in the bottom of the sixth inning to deliver the decisive run as the Evoshield Canes edged Rising Stars Gold, 2-1, in the 14U Grand Slam championship game on Sunday night at Diamond Nation.

McIntyre actually drove in both Canes runs to support an outstanding pitching performance by teammates Owen Paino and Koy Swanson, who combined to three-hit the Rising Stars. Luke Costello triggered both rallies with singles and scored both runs.

Costello was named the 14U Grand Slam tournament Most Valuable Player.

"Gavin had both big hits for us in the final," said Canes coach Brad Scott. "He really came up big."

This Maryland version of the excellent Canes' program has won eight of its 10 tournaments this summer and early fall and reached the final in all 10 of those events.

"We expect to be ranked in the Top 30 in the country when the Perfect Game's rankings came out soon," said Scott. "We put a brand new team together, so to develop to the point we are ranked nationally is pretty impressive."

Paino, a righthander, and Swanson, a lefty, were pretty impressive in the Grand Slam final, too. Paino started and permitted the lone run on three hits over five innings. He struck out four and walked three. He turned a 1-1 game over to Swanson, who got the win thanks to McIntyre's clutch single and his own fastball and nasty curveball. Swanson struck out four and walked two in two hitless innings of work.

When asked what was working best for him, Paino said, "My defense, mostly. I couldn't find the strike zone at first. My curveball did work well, thankfully, since my fastball wasn't going well."

Paino's early wildness with his fastball actually helped him get three early strikeouts with his curveball, a pitch that often tailed out of the reach of swinging Rising Stars batters.

Paino was able to get ahead of hitters in his last three innings when he permitted just a single base runner. "When you get ahead in the count you can get in hitters' heads and, at that point, any pitch will work."

"Owen threw a well-pitched game," said coach Scott. "He mixes his pitches well and really competes."

The Rising Stars struck first, breaking through with a run in the top of the second on Jacoby Sauer's RBI fielder's choice grounder to first base. Chris Olah led off the inning with a single to left field, moved to second on Aidan Almeyda's single to left, advanced to third on Ray Shiavo's fielder's choice grounder and scored on Sauer's grounder.

Lefthander Logan Higgins pitched a heck of a game himself in, albeit, a losing effort. Higgins would grind through a bit of an adventurous outing, gamely stranding 10 Canes runners. He permitted two runs on seven hits over six innings, striking out eight and walking five. But Higgins kept the Rising Stars in the game right to the last out.

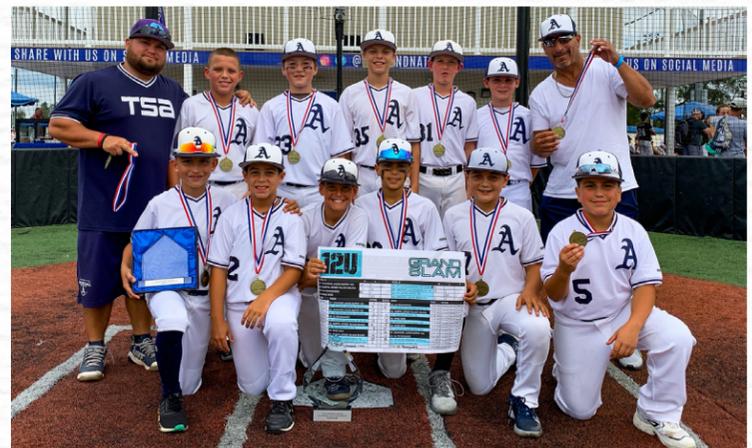
The Rising Stars got the tying run aboard in the top of the seventh courtesy of Almeyda's one-out walk. Swanson, however, struck out the next two batters to end the game. He, in fact, struck out the side in the seventh.

It was an extremely well played final with excellent defense to complement the nice job done by all three pitchers.

Olah led off the fourth with what appeared to be a laser of a single to center field. But Brian Scott, already playing shallow, charged in, fielded the shot on one hop and fired to first to just nip Olah. Shiavo made a nice play in the fourth, charging in on a shallow fly to right field by the Canes' Cory Allman. But the play of the night may have been pulled off by Rising Stars third baseman Matt Merced. Merced made a flat out diving catch to his left on a shot by Irv Fisher leading off the fifth.

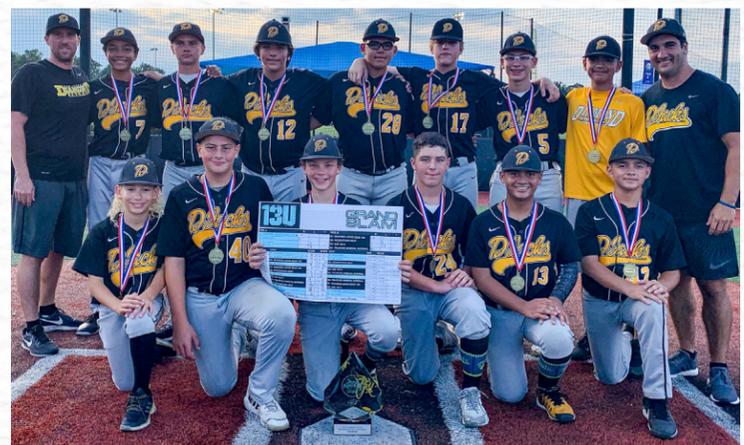
Evoshield Canes (4-0) outscored their tournament opponents 24-4. The Rising Stars Gold (4-1) held a 32-11 runs advantage on its opponents.

GRAND SLAM RECAPS



12U - Tri-State Arsenal 17, NJ Renegades 7

Tri-State Arsenal defeated the NJ Renegades, 17-7, in the 12U Grand Slam championship game. Eddie Rosado of Tri-State Arsenal was named the 12U tournament's Most Valuable Player. Tri-State Arsenal (4-0) outscored its opponents 47-9. The NJ Renegades (3-1) held a 34-29 runs advantage on its opponents.



13U - Diamond Jacks Super 13U 8, Tri-State Arsenal National 7

The Diamond Jacks Super 13U squad defeated Tri-State Arsenal National, 8-7, in the 13U Grand Slam championship game. Jaden Capindica of Super 13U was named the 13U tournament's Most Valuable Player. The Diamond Jacks Super 13U (4-0) outscored its opponents 43-11. Tri-State Arsenal National (2-1-1) held a 26-20 runs advantage on its opponents.



16U - Bronx Bombers 16U 9, Bronx Bombers 15U 2

The Bronx Bombers 16U defeated its sister club, the Bronx Bombers 15U, 9-2, in the 16U Grand Slam championship game. Stanley Cedeno of the Bronx Bombers 16U was named the 16U tournament's Most Valuable Player. The Bronx Bombers 16U (5-0) outscored their opponents 37-8. The Bronx Bombers 15U (4-1) held a 24-14 runs advantage on its opponents.