

Community News

JUNE 16, 2006

CERRITOS GIRLS SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION

8-Under All-Stars Continue Hot Streak, Bring Home Third Summer Championship

By Loren Kopff

At this rate, the city of Cerritos could be showcasing some of the top softball players in about six years or so when they get to high school. For the third straight weekend, the 8-Under All-Stars of the Cerritos Girls Softball Association hoisted another championship trophy, this time in the 8th annual CGSA Tournament, after defeating La Mirada's gold team 5-0 this past Sunday. In addition, the team made history as it became the first Cerritos team to win its own tournament.

Before this summer, no Cerritos 8-Under All-Star team had won any tournament anywhere but after going 5-0-1 in the Rancho Penasquitos Summer Classic, followed by a 6-0 record the next weekend in the Laguna Niguel Sea County Classic, the team was poised to make its best showing at the Cerritos Sports Complex. Last season, the 8-Under All-Stars went undefeated before falling in the championship game and two years ago, the team came up short in the semifinals.

"It's really a credit to the girls, the parents and the league because these girls have tried and practiced very, very hard," said manager Ron Lejano. "It's not only the girls but it's the parents who dedicate themselves to making this program a good program."

Cerritos hooked up against La Mirada for the second time last weekend and got out of the gates early when it pushed across two runs in the top of the first inning. Melanie Okazaki began with a single and one, out later, moved to third on a base hit from Morgan Nelson. Both runners would eventually score on an error. Two innings later, Kaitlyn Tolmosoff and Sabrina Quarles had consecutive singles before Okazaki and Brianna Tautalafua had run-scoring plays to make it 4-0. Nelson's groundout in the sixth brought home Tautalafua for the final run of the game.

Nelson also got the job done in the circle, pitching into the fourth inning and

allowing only one hit while striking out seven. She was replaced by Jennifer Iseri who wrapped up the championship with five strikeouts.

"La Mirada is a great organization and over the years they've always come to our tournament and we've played them in the past," Lejano said. "We appreciate them coming here because they're such a good team and we want to face good opponents because that's how we get bet-

ter. I look forward to meeting them again, hopefully in Districts and possibly in [the state tournament]."

Cerritos already had a victory before taking the field as its opening game last Friday night against Redondo Sunset was a forfeit. The next morning, the team blasted Canyon Hills 20-3 behind a nine-run first inning. All 13 players went to the plate in the frame and collected six hits with the biggest blow coming in the form

of a three-run home run from Vanessa Montanez. After Canyon Hills answered back with three runs, Cerritos added six more in the second, half of the production coming when Amanda Lejano blasted a three-run shot. Nelson also had a two-run double in the inning. Cerritos finished the scoring with five runs in the third as Montanez added a two-run triple while Nelson, Tautalafua and Janelle Gutierrez each had run-scoring plays.

Later in the day, Cerritos met La
CONTINUED ON PAGE 26

26 • THE COMMUNITY NEWS • JUNE 16, 2006

CGSA

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 25

Mirada for the first time and posted a 4-0 victory as Montanez went the distance striking out 13 and allowing one hit. Nelson had a two-run double in the third while Tautalafua had a pair of hits. Cerritos then opened up the single-elimination format of the tournament with a 9-0 whitewash against La Mirada's silver team. Gutierrez had a two-run home run in the top of the second but Cerritos put the game out of reach in the fourth when six runs crossed home plate. With one out, Nelson had a run-scoring single and would come home on a base hit from Gutierrez. Heather Cameron then drove in a pair with a single and, two batters later, Madison Lee added a two-run double. In the semifinals, Cerritos faced Canyon Hills again and had another easy win, 11-0 despite getting just six hits. Two Canyon Hills pitchers combined to walk 10 Cerritos batters as the champions scored twice in the first, once in the second and four times in the third and fourth. Okazaki had a pair of triples and drove in three runs while Iseri pitched a one-hitter and fanned 10. For the tournament, the 8-Under All-Stars, which also includes McKenna Pisciotta and Katie Valladao, outscored its opponents 49-3 and had 42

hits while the pitching staff allowed four hits and struck out 49 batters.