

Little League suspends Curacao manager, but lets team compete in International championship game tonight in Taylor

The manager of the Willemstad, Curacao, baseball team has been suspended from leading his team in the Junior League World Series in Taylor for using an ineligible pitcher in Thursday night's 7-5 victory over Manila, Philippines.

However, the Curacao team of 13- and 14-year-olds will be allowed to compete against Boca Del Rio, Veracruz, Mexico, in Friday's International championship game at Heritage Park.

Two games are scheduled: The International Pool title game is set for 5 p.m. In the USA Pool, Hilo, Hawaii, takes on Johnston, Iowa, at 8 p.m.

The winners play for the Junior League world championship at 5 p.m. Saturday.

The Little League Baseball and Softball Tournament Committee, based in Williamsport, Pennsylvania, was contacted for a ruling after the Philippines team filed a protest in last night's game.

Curacao was leading, 7-1, when Manager Johannes Gregorius inserted a relief pitcher in the seventh inning to pitch to a Philippines batter who was facing a count of one ball and two strikes with two outs in the inning. The pitcher threw one pitch and the Philippines batter flew out.

At that point, the protest was lodged and the game was halted temporarily. World Series officials ruled that the pitcher had to be removed from the game and allowed the batter to hit again.

Philippines rallied in the inning behind a grand slam by Julian Habana, but the game ended 7-5.

The Tournament Committee in Williamsport, which has the authority to rule on all matters involving Little League international tournaments, voted unanimously to suspend Gregorius for two games and ruled that the ineligible pitcher who entered the game would be ineligible to pitch in Curacao's game tonight against Mexico.

Decisions by the Tournament Committee in Williamsport are final and binding.