

World Series: 4 win on opening day; 4 more games Monday

Curacao made a memorable debut in the Junior League World Series in Taylor, Michigan, defeating British Columbia, 10-0.

The 28th annual World Series for the best teams of 13- and 14-year-old baseball players from around the world continues with four more games Monday at Heritage Park, 12111 Pardee Road.

Monday's schedule:

- Hilo, Hawaii (0-1) vs. Mechanicsville, Virginia (0-1), 11 a.m.
- Coquitlam, British Columbia (0-1) vs. Makati City, Philippines (0-0), 2 p.m.
- Alvin, Texas (1-0) vs. Canton, Massachusetts (0-0), 5 p.m.
- Boca Del Rio, Veracruz, Mexico (1-0) vs. Willemstad, Curacao, Netherlands Antilles (1-0), 8 p.m.

The Latin America champions from Willemstad, Curacao, had 10 hits in their series-opening victory over Coquitlam, BC, the Canadian national champions. Denjerick Virginie and Phildrick Llewellyn had two hits apiece, scored two runs each and combined for five runs batted in. Teammates Vincent Anthonia and Mirangelo Muller combined on a one-hitter (a single by BC center fielder Shelton Vannerus). The game ended after the fifth inning on a mercy rule.

Alvin, Texas, drew first blood in the USA Pool, defeating Hilo, Hawaii, in a key game. Texas, the USA Southwest champions, scored four times in the fifth inning to go ahead to stay, 6-4. Center fielder Gavin Peltier went 3-for-4 and scored three runs, helping starting pitcher Raymond Williams get the victory. Hawaii lead-off hitter Ridge Hoopii-Haslam had two hits and scored twice.

Boca Del Rio, Veracruz, Mexico, scored five runs in the bottom of the sixth inning en route to a 6-3 victory over London, England. The London all-stars, who led 2-1 up to that point, left the bases loaded three times during the game. The game marked the debut in the series for England, champions of the region that includes Europe, the Middle East and Africa (EMEA). Boca Del Rio is the national champion of Mexico. Even Zuriel Torres, Antoni Cazarin and Jose Mora combined for seven of their team's 11 hits. Aurelia Chaparro gave up four hits in 5 2/3 innings to earn the victory. England's Jacob Hudson made two dramatic catches in center field.

Jeffrey Pavalka hit a walk-off home run in the bottom of the fifth inning to give Johnston, Iowa, a 13-0 mercy-game victory over Mechanicsville, Virginia. Pavalka, who plays third base, went 2-for-3, scored twice and knocked in six runs. The homer was the last hit of the day and the first home run of the 2008 series. First baseman Ben Larpenter went 2-for-2, scored twice and knocked in two. Catcher Kale Singleton also had two hits and second baseman Tyler Neumann and Cody Brenner also scored two runs apiece. Pitcher Shane Chafa gave up just two hits to earn the win.

The other two teams in the series – Canton, Massachusetts, and the defending runners-up from Manila, Philippines – begin play on Monday.

Standings after Sunday's games

USA Pool

Johnston, Iowa (Central) 1-0
 Alvin, Texas (Southwest) 1-0
 Canton, Massachusetts (East) 0-0
 Hilo, Hawaii (West) 0-1
 Mechanicsville, Virginia (South) 0-1

International Pool

Willemstad, Curacao (Latin America) 1-0
 Boca Del Rio, Veracruz (Mexico) 1-0
 Manila, Philippines (Asia-Pacific) 0-0
 London, England (Europe) 0-1
 Coquitlam, British Columbia (Canada) 0-1

All games are played on World Series Field in Taylor's Heritage Park. Admission is \$5 per carload per day or \$10 per car for the entire series. Both fees include parking. For updates, visit www.cityoftaylor.com/worldseries.

The Junior League World Series is considered the older brother of the Little League World Series in Williamsport, Pennsylvania. In fact, some of the boys who played in Williamsport as 12-year-olds will play this year in Taylor as 13- or 14-year-olds.

The teams in Taylor are divided into two pools: USA and International. Teams play in a round-robin format the first five days of the World Series.

On Friday, August 15, the top two teams in the International Pool play at 5 p.m. Friday, August 15; the two leaders in the USA Pool play at 8 p.m.

The two winners play for the world championship at 5 p.m. Saturday, August 16. The championship game will be broadcast live on ESPN2 and shown on tape delay by ESPN2.

All games will be broadcast via streaming audio on the Internet at www.cityoftaylor.com/listen.

To date, 27 different USA states have been represented in the JLWS. Curacao and England – which made their Taylor debut on Sunday – brought to 20 the total of international nations to play in the World Series.

Umpires, who volunteer to call balls and strikes during the series, have come from 32 states and 12 international nations.

The 2008 series is dedicated to the memory of Andy Gerick, the official statistician of the series since its inception. Gerick, considered the only person to see every pitch of the World Series, died in January.

During Saturday night's opening ceremonies, special tribute was paid to Morgan O'Brien and Dave Harris, two longtime World Series volunteers who died in the

last week.

Special recognition also was given to the 20-year anniversary of the world championship won by Mexico in 1988.

This year's teams and spectators are benefiting from a new \$120,000 lighting system installed at World Series Field just weeks before the tournament. The state-of-the-art system uses half of the lights of the old system and yet makes the field brighter than ever.

Commemorative collectors coins are being sold during the series to help pay for the lights. They are among the many souvenirs available throughout series week.

For more information on the tournament visit the World Series Web site: www.cityoftaylor.com/worldseries.

NOTEWORTHY: While the 13- and 14-year-olds play for the love of the game, some past Junior League World Series players have gone on to stardom in the professional ranks. Current Detroit Tiger Gary Sheffield and retired pro Derek Bell were teammates on the 1982 world championship team from Tampa, Florida.

Other present and former pro ballplayers that have competed in Taylor include Erik Bedard, Brett Myers, Jose and Javier Valentin, Erubial Durazo, Delino DeShields, Chad Hermansen, Shannon Withem and Adam Loewen.

Mark "Bo" Pelini, who played for the first world champions from Boardman, Ohio, in 1981, is head football coach at the University of Nebraska. Matt Cassel is a backup quarterback to Tom Brady for the New England Patriots of the National Football League. Pro hockey players that have been in the World Series include Chris Dingman and Steve Reinprecht.

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