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Arizona wins USA baseball championship with win over Indiana

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Western Region champion Scottsdale, Arizona, completed its unimpeded journey to the JLWS championship with another no-nonsense victory over the scrappy team from Middlebury, Indiana, 6-2, in the USA title game Saturday morning.

The game was rescheduled from Friday night when the International title game between Aruba and Puerto Rico lasted 4 hours and 5 minutes, not including a rain delay of more than an hour.

The victory was the 23rd in a row by the team from the Mountain View Little League in Scottsdale, although the Central Region champs from Indian scored first in the game and made it interesting.

Freeman Fry doubled, reached base on a fielder's choice and scored on a well-executed suicide squeeze single by Caleb Slayton to give Middlebury a 1-0 first-inning lead.

Arizona starting pitcher Dylan Cozens started the second with a sharp single over the outstretched glove of leaping Indiana second baseman James Alan Grusy. Two four-pitch walks to Ryan Riggs and Duncan Morfitt loaded the bases and catcher Luc Trotta hit a sacrifice fly to center to tie the game.

Dozens was on the other end of Arizona's third-inning run. His second single drove in Jimmy DiTroia, who doubled two batters earlier.

In the fifth inning, Cozens got his second RBI of the game on his third hit after DiTroia and Cody Erickson walked. Erickson scored from third on an ill-advised overthrow of second by the Indiana catcher, making it 4-1.

In the fifth and sixth innings, Arizona pitchers Cozens and Erickson walked the bases loaded, but escaped without allowing Middlebury to score.

Arizona added two in the seventh. Erickson walked and was replaced by pinch runner DiTroia. After Riggs doubled, both scored when Grant Martinez was safe on an error.

Indiana's Shannon Baker hit a solo home run to start the seventh. Slayton singled, Judah Zickafoose walked and Austin Moniot singled to load the bases for the third straight inning, but Erickson got Grusy on a comeback ground ball to preserve the 6-2 win. Indiana wound up with 12 runners left on base.

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