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## Chinese Taipei, Italy, Venezuela, Puerto Rico qualify for 2011 Junior League World Series

TAYLOR, MICHIGAN – Four international champions have qualified for the 2011 Junior League World Series of Baseball, scheduled for August 14-20 at Taylor's Heritage Park.

Six more teams – including five regional champions from the United States – will earn their way to Taylor during tournaments in the coming weeks.

The World Series features the best teams of 13- and 14-year-old ballplayers that compete to become world champions of the 31st annual weeklong international tournament.

The Junior League World Series in Taylor is the older brother of the Little League World Series, a tournament for 12-year-olds held annually in South Williamsport, Pennsylvania. Both are sanctioned by Little League International.

The four qualifying champions to date are teams from Chinese Taipei, Italy, Venezuela and Puerto Rico.

Opening ceremonies at Taylor's Heritage Park, 12111 Pardee Road, will take place Saturday, August 13. Festivities will include a parade of champions, speeches by dignitaries, a special first-pitch ceremony and fireworks.

Teams compete in round-robin games in either the USA Pool or the International Pool.

The opening day of games is Sunday, August 14. Four games will be played at noon, 2:45 p.m., 5:30 p.m. and 8:15 p.m. Games start a bit earlier August 15-18: 11 a.m., 2 p.m. 5 p.m. and 8 p.m.

The top two teams in the International Pool standings play at 5 p.m. Friday, August 19. The top two teams in the USA Pool play at 8 o'clock the same night.

Like last year, the world championship game will be televised live on ESPN2, but the starting time for the August 20 game has been moved to 11 a.m. – the first time a JLWS title game will begin in the morning. The new time was established at the request of the ESPN Network.

Tickets to World Series games are just \$5 per day per car – or \$10 per car for the entire series. Both fees include parking.

### The 2011 Teams

**Asia-Pacific Region:** The boys from Taoyuan, Chinese Taipei, will attempt to win a second straight world championship. A team from Taipei City won the title for the first time last year, defeating USA champion Tyler, Texas, 9-1, in the finals.

The Shing-Ming Junior Little League from Taoyuan qualified for the 2011 World Series by winning the Asia-Pacific region championship in Solo City, Indonesia. Taoyuan outscored rivals from the Philippines, Hong Kong and Indonesia by a combined 96-2 over four games.

**EMEA Region:** Italy also will make its second appearance in the Junior League World Series after a team from Emilia won the eight-nation Europe/Middle East/Africa (EMEA) region played in Kutno, Poland.

Italy defeated the national champions of The Netherlands, 9-2, in the EMEA title game. Team Italy also beat Netherlands and South Africa in pool play and Lithuania and South Africa, again, in the semifinals. Its only loss was to an American military base team in Ramstein, Germany. The national champs from the Czech Republic, Great Britain and Poland were also in the tournament.

In 2009, Friuli Venezia Giulia gave Italy its debut in Taylor, going 1-3 in the World Series.

**Latin America Region:** For the third time, a team from Maracaibo, Venezuela, won the Latin American championship to qualify for the Junior League World Series. This year, Venezuela won a 10-team regional tournament played in Abaco, Bahamas, defeating Chitre, Panama, for the title, 5-4. The win avenged a 6-2 loss to Panama on the opening day of the tournament. Chitre played in the 2010 Little League World Series.

In the Bahamas, Venezuela also defeated national champions from Nassau, Aruba, the U.S. Virgin Islands and Curacao. Also playing in the Latin America regions were champions from Freeport, Bahamas, St. Maaren, Mexico and Ecuador.

Venezuela has done well in Taylor. Maracaibo all-stars went 4-1 in both 2001 and 2006. A team from Punto Fijo, Venezuela, went 5-1 in 2004. In both 2001 and 2004, the Venezuela teams lost in the World Series championship game.

**Puerto Rican National Champion:** In odd-numbered years of the Junior League World Series, the national champion of Puerto Rico receives an automatic berth. In even-numbered years, the national champion of Mexico qualifies automatically. Little League baseball is very popular in both nations.

This year, the Juan A. Bibiloni Little League of Yabucoa, Puerto Rico, will play in Taylor. The same league has been represented in the Junior League series seven previous years – most recently in 2009. Yabucoa won the World Series in 1990. This will be the 22nd year that a team from Puerto Rico will play in the JLWS.

**Canadian National Champion:** Provincial champions of Canada will converge on Lethbridge, Alberta, for the Canadian national championships August 4-10. Teams from Canada have played in Taylor since 1988.

**USA Central Region:** The regional tournament is set for August 5-11 in Fort Wayne, Indiana. The Michigan state champion will compete in Fort Wayne.

**USA Southwest Region:** The regional tournament is set for August 5-10 in Midland, Texas. Last year's USA champion and World Series finalist was Tyler, Texas, the Southwest region champion.

**USA East Region:** The regional tournament is set for August 5-11 in Freehold Township, New Jersey.

**USA West Region:** The regional tournament is set for August 2-9 in Laguna Niguel, California.

**USA Southeast Region:** The regional tournament is set for August 5-11 in Greenville, South Carolina.

For more information, visit the website [www.cityoftaylor.com/worldseries](http://www.cityoftaylor.com/worldseries). To sponsor the World Series, call Director Greg Bzura at (734) 306-3113.

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