

[Home](#) | [News](#) | [Events](#) | [Elected Officials](#) | [Departments](#) | [Online Services](#) | [About Taylor](#) | [Contact](#)

Storms cause havoc with Junior League World Series schedule; games shuffled next 3 days

TAYLOR, MICHIGAN – A daylong rain delay and a massive nighttime storm allowed just one game to be played Monday in the Junior League baseball World Series at Taylor's Heritage Park.

More significant, the game schedule has been readjusted from four games a day to five games a day – for the next three days.

The 33rd annual world tournament for 13- and 14-year-old ballplayers saw Lafayette, Louisiana, win its second game in a row, this time with a 5-0 shutout over the debuting Massapequa Park, New York.

The game had been scheduled for 11 a.m., but didn't get started until 6 p.m. due to the weather. The day's second scheduled game – between Taoyuan, Chinese Taipei and Brno, Czech Republic – was postponed when thunder, lightning, 60-mph winds and rain deluged the park and much of the region.

To make up for the postponed games – and two others that had been scheduled for Monday – World Series organizers added a game to the schedule for each of the next three days. The games follow in the original order, with the opening game starting at 9 a.m. each day.

Tuesday's revised schedule

Brno, Czech Republic vs. Taoyuan, Chinese Taipei, 9 a.m.
 Calgary, Alberta, Canada vs. Manati, Puerto Rico, Noon
 Goodlettsville, Tennessee vs. Bedford, Indiana, 2:45 p.m.
 Willemstad, Curacao vs. Calgary, Alberta, Canada, 5:30 p.m.
 Goodlettsville, Tennessee vs. Lafayette, Louisiana, 8:15 p.m.

Wednesday's revised schedule

Manati, Puerto Rico vs. Taoyuan, Chinese Taipei, 9 a.m.
 Rio Rico, Arizona vs. Massapequa Park, New York, Noon
 Manati, Puerto Rico vs. Brno, Czech Republic, 2:45 p.m.
 Rio Rico, Arizona vs. Bedford, Indiana, 5:30 p.m.
 Goodlettsville, Tennessee vs. Massapequa Park, New York, 8:15 p.m.

Thursday's revised schedule

Taoyuan, Chinese Taipei vs. Willemstad, Curacao, 9 a.m.
 Massapequa, New York vs. Bedford, Indiana, Noon
 Brno, Czech Republic vs. Willemstad, Curacao, 2:45 p.m.
 Calgary, Alberta vs. Taoyuan, Chinese Taipei, 5:30 p.m.
 Lafayette, Louisiana vs. Rio Rico, Arizona, 8:15 p.m.

Friday's schedule

International Championship Game, 4 p.m.
 USA Championship Game, 7 p.m.

Saturday's schedule

World Championship Game, 2 p.m.

After two days of the World Series, only five games have been played – and only Louisiana has played in two of them, earning a 2-0 record in the five-team USA Pool. The USA Southwest champions scored solo runs in the first and second innings and then added to the lead with a three-run homer by Miguel Reyes Jr. in the fifth inning. Cain Castille had two hits for the winners, including a run-scoring single. Pitchers Colin Thibodeaux, Emile Lege and Brandon Duhon combined on the five-hit shutout. The game also featured the debut of New York's Kristen Moldovan, just the sixth girl to play in the 33-year-old World Series. This marks the first time that two girls have played in the same World Series as Samantha Day played in the opener for the Canadian national champions from Calgary, Alberta against European champion Brno, Czech Republic on Sunday.

The Junior League World Series is the "older brother" of the more famous Little League World Series for 12-year-olds played in South Williamsport, Pennsylvania. When players turn 13 and 14, they can compete in Taylor.

The 10 teams are divided into two pools of five teams for round-robin play: the International Pool and the USA Pool. Four games are played each day, Sunday through Thursday. The International championship game is set for 4 p.m. Friday, August 16, followed by the USA title game at 7 p.m.

The pool champions play for the world title Saturday afternoon, August 17. The World Series finale will be broadcast live by ESPN on its website www.ESPN3.com. The game will be replayed on television on ESPN2 at 2 p.m. Wednesday, August 21.

The USA Pool includes teams from Bedford, Indiana, champion of the USA Central Regional Tournament; Massapequa Park, New York (East); Goodlettsville, Tennessee (Southeast); Lafayette, Louisiana (Southwest); and Rio Rico, Arizona (West).

All of the USA qualifiers were state champions before winning regional titles. Last year, the Goodlettsville all-stars were runners-up in the Little League World Series.

Teams in the International Pool are national champions from Calgary, Alberta, Canada, and Manati, Puerto Rico; the Asia-Pacific regional champions from Taoyuan, Chinese Taipei; the Europe and Africa regional champions from Brno, Czech Republic; and the Latin America regional champions from Willemstad, Curacao.

Admission is \$5 per day per carload – or \$10 for a weeklong pass. Both prices include parking. Heritage Park is located at 12111 Pardee Road in Taylor.

To date, World Series teams have come from 29 states and 24 international locations. The 2012 Junior League world champion was Rockledge, Florida.

Midland, the 2013 state champion from Michigan, competed in the Central Region tournament, making it to the final four.

Current or past Major Leaguers who played in Taylor as teen-agers include former brothers Jose and Javier Valentin, whose father Jose has returned to manage his grandson with this year's Puerto Rico national championship team from Manati. A coach with the Puerto Rico team said the younger Jose Valentin was expected in Taylor on Tuesday to support his hometown team.

For more information on the Junior League World Series, visit the website www.cityoftaylor.com/worldseries or follow all year long on Facebook at www.facebook.com/juniorleagueworldseries. Games are streamed on the Internet at www.justin.tv/jlws_mi.

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