

32nd annual Junior League Baseball World Series games start Sunday in Taylor



TAYLOR, MICHIGAN – The best teams of 13- and 14-year-old baseball players from around the globe will compete for the world championship starting today at the 2012 Junior League World Series at Taylor's Heritage Park.

All 10 teams arrived in Taylor over the weekend after achieving state, national and regional championships in the United States and other nations.

Four World Series games will be played each day Sunday through Thursday, August 12-16, leading into the International and USA title games on Friday and the world championship game on Saturday.

Sunday's Schedule:

Noon – Franklin Square, New York (USA East champion) vs. Manhattan Beach, California (USA West)

2:45 PM – Oranjestad, Aruba (Latin America) vs. Tainan City, Chinese Taipei (Asia-Pacific)

5:30 PM – Rockledge, Florida (USA Southeast) vs. Corpus Christi, Texas (USA Southwest)

8:15 PM – San Nicholas de Los Garza, Nuevo Leon (Mexico national champions) vs. Calgary, Alberta (Canada national champions)

Two teams – North Canton, Ohio (USA Central), and Lazio, Italy (regional champion of Europe, the Middle East and Africa) – have the day off and will play their opening games on Monday.

This is the 32nd straight year that the Junior League World Series is being played in Taylor, where it was founded in 1981. The World Series is considered the "older brother" of the more famous Little League World Series for 12-year-olds played in Williamsport, Pennsylvania.

Five regional champions from the United States will compete in one pool. Five international teams will compete in a second pool.

The 10 teams will attempt to succeed the 2011 world champions from Palma Ceia/Bayshore Little League from Tampa, Florida – one of the rare leagues to win the World Series more than once.

The 2012 world championship game of Junior League baseball is scheduled for 11 a.m. Saturday, August 18. The game will be televised live on ESPN2.

Tickets on game days are \$5 per carload per day or \$10 for a weeklong pass. Both fees include parking. Heritage Park is located at 12111 Pardee Road between Goddard and Northline roads.

Those who can't attend the games can watch them on streaming video with play by play at www.justin.tv/jlws2012.

Teams checked in and received their uniforms on Saturday. Colorful and often moving opening ceremonies of the World Series were held Saturday night. Teams paraded before cheering crowds while national anthems and patriotic songs played. The volunteer umpires were introduced. Dignitaries welcomed the teams and fans to World Series Field. Detroit Tigers mascot Paws delighted the spectators and mingled with everybody. A special ceremonial first pitch features players from each team, former Major League player Steve Avery of Taylor and Taylor Mayor Jeffrey Lamarand. The night ended with a fireworks display courtesy of Taylor Ford.

For more information on the Junior League World Series, visit the website www.cityoftaylor.com/worldseries. To sponsor the World Series, call Director Greg Bzura at (734) 306-3113. Also, follow the World Series all week on Facebook at www.facebook.com/juniorleagueworldseries.