

# Sports News & Notes

## Prospect Little League News

By Jeff Clarke, President

The old expression, "It's not whether you win or lose, it's how you play the game" was never more true than when we watched our Prospect All Stars in the Little League Tournament. The players relentlessly trained for two weeks with Steve Reilly and his staff, coaching the 9 to 10-year-old All-Stars; and Don McKay and his coaching staff with the 11 to 12-year-old All-Stars as the coaches worked hard preparing the kids for the tournaments.

Each day, the kids played together as a team and cheered each other on. Their never-give-up attitude and determined play helped win games for each team. Our 11 to 12-year-old All Stars were defeated 19-0 in the opening tournament game, but came back with an eleven inning thriller. In one of the best Little League games many have ever seen, our 11 to 12-year-olds received great pitching performances from Joe Bongiorno and Anthony Ross. A key defensive play was mastered by Mike and David Hardy on a relay play from the right field corner, throwing the ball to Dan Giacomazzi who nabbed the runner trying to score from first base on a double in the tenth inning. Clutch hitting by Ryan McKay and Jake Pinho propelled the team to the victory.

The 9 to 10-year-old All Stars played their hearts out and played as a team. The effort by such a young team lays the groundwork for next year's team. We had an exceptional pitching performance by Mike Kenney, who pitched a no-hitter into the sixth inning of the first game. Brendon Riley ripped a home run over the left field wall in the final game.

I would like to thank everyone who supported our teams in the tournament. Prospect had the most fan attendance by far. Due to the efforts of Bob Ross printing up Prospect Baseball shirts in support of the league, we jammed the stands in a sea of yellow. The most meaningful support came from the 9 to 10-year-old All Stars going to the 11 to 12-year-old game and vice versa. It meant a lot to see the players cheering for one another.

As our season ended, we had many positive events over the past year, including increased registration, clean up and repairs to the Fusco Complex, a tremendous Opening Day Ceremony, the formation of the Event Committee and Team Moms, new coaches into our program, and the practice schedule during the season for Tee Ball and AA

levels. In talking with many of the coaches, there was such an upbeat attitude on how much the kids improved. That is really what Little League is all about.

I would also like to thank all of the coaches and volunteers for being such a large part of Prospect Baseball. We couldn't have done it without so many quality people. Thank you to Don Ensero for preparing our fields and making the Fusco Complex a great place to play ball. Thank you to Bob Ross and Mike Coretto for being the master chefs and being at the fields every Saturday before 7 a.m. to prep the fields. Thank you to the Event Committee for raising funds and being such a major part of our organization. Thank you to the Team Moms for helping out the coaches. Thank you to the Board of Directors for your tireless work. Thank you to Joe Holland for helping out with the Website. Thank you to all the volunteers for manning the snack bar and helping us prepare for Opening Day. Thank you to Chris D'Occhio for getting the sound system for our Closing Ceremony. Thank you to Steve Reilly, Steve Kenney, Bill Fonti, Jim Augelli, Audra Dyckman and Paul Bongiorno for helping in every field project. Thank you to all the parents for getting your kids to the games and being part of Prospect Baseball. And lastly, thank you to my wife Nancy for being so wonderful.

Upcoming events include Fall Ball. We will come up with the final process at our next Board Meeting, but the following is the preliminary schedule: Saturday, August 12 will be sign-ups. That week we will formulate teams and league play; Saturday, August 19 will begin practices; Saturday, August 5 (9 a.m. to 1 p.m.) will be field prep for the upcoming season. Fall Ball seasons run normally from September through October.

The Prospect Little League Volunteer Picnic is scheduled for Saturday, September 16 at 4 p.m. Fall Cleanup is set for consecutive Saturdays, October 14, 21, and 28. For further updates, please go to our website at [eteamz.active.com/prospectbaseball](http://eteamz.active.com/prospectbaseball)

**Every man is the architect of his own fortune.**  
— English Proverb

## Woodland Hawks Softball Team News

The Woodland Hawks Softball team finished the season with an overall record of 18-7 and 15-5 in the Naugatuck Valley League (NVL). The team, coached by Loren Luddy, Joe Fortier, Krystle Levinsky and volunteer coach Tara Shingola, was led by seven seniors, including pitcher Adrienne Miller, catcher Jessica Badale, outfielders Alice Levinsky and Lindsay Shiboski, and infielders Ashley Georgia, Courtney Pokora and Casey Maher.

In the NVL, the Hawks finished the regular season in third place and then advanced to the finals of the NVL Tournament. The Hawks lost the final game to the league and state champion team from Seymour. In the game, Woodland received especially strong defensive efforts from Adrienne Miller, Jessica Badale, Courtney Pokora and Lindsay Shiboski. The team also made it to the second round of the State Tournament.

The battery of Miller and Badale recorded 12 wins and five losses, including an impressive 3-0 win over Holy Cross and a 1-0 win over Watertown in the NVL Tournament. Adrienne Miller was the Hawks Most Improved Player this year and offensively she added 20 hits, 16 runs scored and 13 RBIs for the

season. Jess Badale added 17 hits and 7 RBIs and was voted Teammate of the Year by her fellow players.

On the mound, junior pitcher Monique Peterson also chipped in with a record of 6-2 including a tremendous relief effort against Naugatuck, which sparked a four-run Woodland comeback. Freshman Kelley Mollor also chipped in with eight scoreless innings from the mound.

Defensively, Casey Maher anchored the infield from first base, recording an amazing 172 put-outs for the season. Fellow senior Ashley Georgia at third base, earned All-NVL honors and was Woodland's offensive player of the year batting .354 for the season including 23 hits, 16 runs scored and 16 RBIs, as well as eight stolen bases and 11 sacrifice bunts. At second base, was Woodland's defensive player of the year, Courtney Pokora, who had a .980 fielding percentage as well as a batting average of .324 with 23 hits, 15 runs scored and 7 RBIs.

At short stop, the Hawks had All-NVL sophomore Mikelyn Messina, who chipped in with 21 hits, 20 runs scored and 19 RBIs. Her double, three triples and five homeruns earned her a .683 slugging percentage. Designated hitter, Lauren Gentile, also filled in

the infield and offensively recorded 11 runs scored on 11 walks and 12 hits, including three doubles and six RBI's.

In the outfield, Lindsay Shiboski recorded 15 put-outs in right field and earned the Woodland Softball Coaches' Award for her heart, hustle and sportsmanship. Hawk outfielder Alice Levinsky earned All-NVL and All-State honors for the third time. She batted .444 with 36 hits, 30 runs scored, 8 RBI and 27 stolen bases. Alice also participated in the Connecticut State Senior All-Star game. Leftfielder junior Chelsea Rich added 20 hits, 10 runs and 9 RBI for a .357 batting average.

Freshman Kristine Swingle helped out as a pinch runner as well as in the infield and outfield and Krista Conti also helped run the bases for the Hawks.

For the 2007 season, the Hawks will return juniors Monique Peterson and Chelsea Rich; sophomores Mikelyn Messina and Lauren Gentile; and freshmen Kelley Mollor, Kristine Swingle and Krista Conti. A strong JV team, also 15-5 for the season, will be led by sophomores Danielle Dickman, Rachel Enama, Rachel Sammis, Jamie Bellemare, Mandi Decarolis and Tara McMahan.

## The Homecoming

By Marlene Ambrosini

*On June 22 at 9:30 a.m. there was a long-awaited applause at the Atlanta airport. This was our signal that Matt was finally home. Members of the USO team greeted each service man and woman.*

*As my son-in-law walked off the escalator Morgan and Rachel (5 and 3 years old) ran up to him and wouldn't let him go. They had waited patiently for about an hour holding their "Welcome Home Daddy" signs that we had made. The twins, Kayla and Cameron, 19 months old, climbed all over him. They recognized him because I had made pillows for each of the girls before their Dad left with a picture of them with Matt. There wasn't a dry eye in the area. My daughter Allison burst into tears.*

*She had been the pillar of strength for a year, but she just about melted in his arms. Of course I just sobbed and tried to capture the moments in pictures.*

This story started about seven years ago with a beautiful military wedding at West Point. Allison was a captain in the Army serving as a critical care nurse. She resigned her commission a few years ago. Matt moved up quickly in rank and is now a Major. After living in Savannah, Georgia and Tacoma, Washington they settled in Columbus, Georgia for three years.

Their family quickly grew

and soon they had four beautiful, healthy daughters. When Matt headed to Baghdad, Allison was alone with the girls: ages four, two and nine-month-old twins. I now have such a new respect of my daughter's strength.

I asked Matt to describe his job in Iraq. He keeps insisting he was not in danger, but noted that no matter where you go over there it is dangerous. His job was the assistant to the Commanding Officer in charge of building the Iraqi Ministry of the Interior training and equipping 200,000 Iraqi troops.

Matt is making a career of the service. Over the past several years I have visited the Holly family wherever they've been stationed. My travel time revolves around our school vacations. I've learned that when you live in a tight-knit community with other officers and their families you begin to depend on each other. The Holly's have formed lasting friendships with so many people.

Each time a family leaves for their next venture, I find it very upsetting. Allison accepts all these people moving in and out of her life and knows she will [Holly -- cont. on pg. 35]



Allison and Matt Holly are shown here with their children, Kayla, Cameron, Morgan and Rachel.