

LITTLE LEAGUE[®] *Magazine*



www.LittleLeague.org

2011

PRESENTED BY



ALL SMILES

Phillies sparkplug Shane Victorino has plenty of reasons to love his job

Plus:

Big League managers fondly recall their Little League days

Softball legend Sue Enquist has some advice for Little Leaguers

INTRODUCING THE UNDER ARMOUR[®] LEADOFF CLEAT





MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL

Executive Vice President, Business Timothy J. Brosnan

MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL PROPERTIES

Senior Vice President, Consumer Products Howard Smith

Vice President, Publishing Donald S. Hintze

Editorial Director Mike McCormick

Publications Art Director Faith M. Rittenberg

Senior Production Manager Claire Walsh

Associate Editor Jon Schwartz

Account Executive, Publishing Chris Rodday

Associate Art Director Melanie Finnern

Senior Publishing Coordinator Anamika Panchoo

Project Assistant Editors Allison Duffy, Chris

Greenberg, Jake Schwartzstein

Editorial Interns Nicholas Carroll, Bill San Antonio

MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL PHOTOS

Director Rich Pilling

Photo Editor Jessica Foster

Photos Assistant Kasey Ciborowski

A special thank you to Major League Baseball Corporate Sales and Marketing and Major League Baseball Licensing for advertising sales support.

For Major League Baseball info, visit: MLB.com

LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL AND SOFTBALL

539 U.S. Route 15 Highway

P.O. Box 3485

Williamsport, PA 17701-0485

(570) 326-1921

Chairman: Dennis Lewin

President & CEO: Stephen D. Keener

Chief Financial Officer: David B. Houseknecht

Corporate Secretary: Joseph W. Losch

Vice President of Operations: Patrick W. Wilson

Treasurer: Melissa Singer

Vice President of Communications: Lance Van Auken

Senior Marketing Executive: Elizabeth DiLullo Brown

Director of Public Relations: Scott Rosenberg

Director of Publicity: Chris Downs

For Little League info, visit: www.LittleLeague.org

If you have any questions or comments regarding material in this publication, please send letters to: Attention: Editor, MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL, 245 Park Avenue, 29th Floor, New York, NY 10167

© 2011 Major League Baseball Properties, Inc. Reproduction in whole or in part without written permission is prohibited. Printed in the USA.

LITTLE LEAGUE[®] Magazine 2011

6 Around the Horn

News from Little League to the Major Leagues.

10 Flyin' High

Phillies center fielder Shane Victorino has no trouble keeping a smile on his face because he's doing what he loves best.

16 Playing the Game: Albert Pujols

Tips on hitting.

18 The World's Stage

Kids of all ages and from all walks of life competed in front of a global audience during the 2010 Little League Baseball and Softball World Series.

26 ARMageddon

The Giants' pitching staff annihilated the opposition to win the world title in 2010.

30 Lending a Helping Hand

Understanding how fortunate they are, Major Leaguers leap at the chance to improve communities both at home and abroad.



Page 30



Page 10

36 Playing the Game: Jason Bay

Tips on defense in the outfield.

38 Combination Coaching

Little League Baseball Camp and the Baseball Factory team up to expand education and training benefits for kids.

43 Little League Makes the Man(ager)

Many Big League managers were shaped by moments in Little League that stick with them to this day.

47 Prepare, Love, Honor the Game

College softball coaching legend and Little League enthusiast Sue Enquist has a message for success.

49 Playing the Game: Danielle Lawrie

Tips on becoming a more complete player.

51 Boys of Summer

Diamond stars look back.

53 Fun and Games

Test your baseball knowledge with these challenging puzzles.

56 Field of Dreams

A final snapshot from the 2010 Little League World Series.

COVER PHOTOGRAPH BY RYAN WEBER/RADIANT PHOTOGRAPHY FOR MLB PHOTOS

around THE horn

Follow Little League

Little League Baseball and Softball is connected with thousands of Little League fans from all over the world, as well as supporters on the Internet, through several pages on Facebook, and continues to distribute news and information to the public through its Twitter feed. More than 40,000 people are now able to receive immediate, up-to-date information from Little League on Facebook and another 3,000 people follow it on Twitter.

Check out our Twitter feed at: @LittleLeague; or friend us on Facebook at: facebook.com/LittleLeagueBaseballandSoftball.



Smile for the Camera

Little Leaguers grow up so fast. You try to save all the memories you can, and when you finally snap a picture that captures the essence of being a kid playing a game, don't you want to share it?

The annual Little League Baseball and Softball Photo Contest awards recognition to three photographers for their images depicting Little League Baseball and Softball. Winners have their photographs displayed in the Peter J. McGovern Little League Museum and are recognized on Little League's website.

Any local league or district volunteer is eligible to enter. You can find a required entry form that includes details on the contest and a Model Release (also required) by going to the Little League website at: LittleLeague.org. Good luck and keep the memories coming!



Gear Up for the Little League World Series

In 2011, the sites for the eight Little League championship tournaments will remain the same for the 10th straight year.

The Big League Baseball World Series kicks off the month of tournaments. Easley, S.C., will serve as the home for the Big

League tournament for the 11th year, as the oldest age division in baseball conducts its 44th championship from July 27 to Aug. 3.



The four softball World Series then take center stage, beginning with the Big League tourney in Kalamazoo, Mich., from Aug. 4-10. The Senior League (Lower Sussex, Del.) plays its championship from Aug. 7-13 and is followed by the Little League (Portland, Ore.) division from Aug. 11-17. The Junior League (Kirkland, Wash.) will play from Aug. 14-20.

Junior League (Taylor, Mich.) and Senior League (Bangor, Maine) Baseball tournaments will go from Aug. 14-20. The Little League Baseball World Series — the only division to change its schedule this year, adding one day — begins its 11-day run on Thursday, Aug. 18, in South Williamsport, Pa.



Show Off Your Skills

Kids have the opportunity to play their way into a Major League Ballpark this spring by participating in Major League Baseball Pitch, Hit & Run, the free official skills competition of MLB.

Local competitions are being scheduled across North America for the spring. Local winners in the three skills — pitching to a strike zone target, a timed run from second base to home, and hitting for distance and accuracy — can advance to sectional competitions in their region.

Top sectional players move on to the Team Championships, which are hosted by each of the 30 Major League clubs. The Team Championship participants will show their skills on a Big League field and take part in an on-field ceremony! And those winners will advance to the National Finals at the 2011 All-Star Game in Phoenix for a once-in-a-lifetime chance!

Communities are scheduling their PHR competitions now, and by mid-March, the official website — MLB.com/phr — will have a listing of contests scheduled in each state, so you can find the one closest to you.

Attention Coaches and Administrators: To ensure that your league, teams and players have a chance to participate, visit MLB.com/phr to register to host a free PHR Local Competition in your area. Sign up today!

Little League In the Palm of Your Hand

With new applications for your phone or iPad, Little League is making it easier than ever to keep up with all the exciting action.

“Little League Baseball and Softball Scorekeeper” keeps stats and pitch counts for coaches while beaming live action to the Internet and phones.

“Little League Live Game Viewer” lets parents and fans follow the stream of live play-by-play action generated by the Scorekeeper app.

“Little League Rulebooks 2011” provides Little League rules and is easy to navigate, with search, table of contents and bookmarks.

Finally, “Little League Card Maker 2011” lets you make your own personal baseball cards!

These applications will be available this spring. Go to LittleLeague.org for downloading information.



Power Up with Kellogg's

Kellogg's Frosted Flakes reminds every player that to perform at their best, they need to “Power Up” with a healthy breakfast. When powering up at the start of every day, Little Leaguers are giving their bodies the energy they need so they can be at their best — whether it's at practice or the Little League World Series.

At the 2010 Little League Baseball World Series in South Williamsport, Pa., Kellogg's Frosted Flakes hosted a “Power Up” breakfast for 300 hardworking Little League World Series coaches and players to start their day off right. The World Series teams were served a balanced breakfast with a variety of hot and cold foods, including Kellogg's Frosted Flakes, milk and “Power Up” toppings like berries, bananas, apples, nuts and granola.

Of course, “Tony the Tiger” was there to share in the excitement of being at the Little League World Series and posed for photos with coaches and players.



Golden Baseballs

The annual SUBWAY® Baseball DeSIGNS Tour and online auction raised more than \$10,000 for the Little League Urban Initiative the past two years. It featured more than 40 baseballs designed by Urban Initiative Little Leaguers and signed by celebrities and athletes, including Major Leaguers CC Sabathia and Ryan Howard and NASCAR driver Jeff Gordon.

The 2010 Baseball DeSIGNS virtual tour was on display at SubwayKids.com and on the Official SUBWAY Facebook page. The balls visited the national Little League Baseball Appreciation Game in Los Angeles, and their tour ended at the Little League World Series in South Williamsport, Pa., before they were auctioned off online.



flyin', ★ HIGH

By Todd Zolecki

Phillies center fielder **Shane Victorino** has no trouble keeping a smile on his face because he's doing what he loves best.

SHANE VICTORINO IS A LUCKY MAN — and he knows it. It might be why he always seems to be smiling and joking with his Philadelphia Phillies teammates. It might be why he always seems to be running at full speed on the field. He has a great job, and he still has the opportunity to play pro baseball. His energy and attitude have made him one of the most popular Phillies. Known as the “Flyin’ Hawaiian,” Victorino — who has made Las Vegas his offseason home — has helped the Phillies win two NL pennants and a World Series. He has been an All-Star and has won three straight Gold Gloves. Being from Hawaii, where he got his start playing Little League, Victorino has also inspired kids from his home state, from which two recent Little League World Series champs have emerged. He talked recently about his Little League experience, what he enjoys most about being a Big Leaguer and his interests off the field:

What do you remember about your Little League days?
It was the foundation of the game of baseball. At that age, our coach said it wasn't about winning or losing. It was about learning to play the game the right way and understanding the game of baseball. Ultimately, yeah, as a competitor you want to win. But wins and losses weren't everything to our coach, John Kukua. I think he had a big influence on the way I play baseball today.

What positions did you play?
I was a shortstop and pitcher. Almost every player in the Big Leagues, if you ask them what they played in high school, Little League or whatever, say a primary position like shortstop or pitcher. Because, growing up, they were probably the best or one of the better players on their team.

How important have those Hawaiian teams been that have been playing in the Little League World Series the last few years?
It's a big deal. Not only for the kids, but for the state of Hawaii. It lets even younger kids realize that they have an opportunity



Victorino, who always roots for Hawaii's Little League teams, reminds kids to have fun.

in baseball. Guys like myself, Kurt Suzuki, my cousin Kanekoa Texeira — more and more kids from Hawaii are getting to the Big League level. Kids see that. There's hope. It's not, 'I want to be a Big Leaguer, but who do I look up to?' Now they know there's a chance. Growing up in Hawaii, I watched guys like Sid Fernandez and Benny Agbayani. But they were from Oahu. The exposure there was much better because it was the main island. Growing up in Maui, I really didn't have anybody to look up to. These Little League kids are important. We won in 2005 and 2008, and went back again in 2010.



What advice would you give to kids learning the game?

At this age, they're a few years away from figuring out what they've got to do. Your talents

are going to take over. You've just got to play the game. Don't get caught up in the hoopla of trying to do this and trying to do that. Have fun. Ultimately, for a kid, I think that's so important. Sometimes you get caught up in doing everything correctly that you really forget about the fun of baseball.

What is the best part of being in the Big Leagues?

There are so many positives. Today, I'm in a good position financially, which has allowed me to start my foundation. It all correlates to the game of baseball. Without baseball I wouldn't be where I am today off the field. The game of baseball teaches me about life and working as a team. You take that off the field and it helps you work with your family. Our team is like a family. We're almost like brothers. That's what has made our team so fun. We're always pulling for each other. We have one goal, which is being the best team we possibly can be.

“Without baseball I wouldn't be where I am today off the field. The game of baseball teaches me about life and working as a team.”

What do you wish people knew about your job?

People understand how difficult and how pressure-packed our job can be, but they also understand how fun it is. The biggest thing for me is when I see parents or family members and they say they tell their son or nephew or sibling to watch the way I play the game. To me that's just so much more important than coming up and saying, 'Congrats on being world champs,' or 'Congrats on being an All-Star.' It's, 'I tell my kids to watch how you play the game.' To me that's far more touching.

Why did you start The Shane Victorino Foundation? What can you tell us about it?

My parents are very involved in the community, and I always told myself that if I got into a situation in a city like Philly with some long-term stability, I would start my own foundation. Philly reminds me of home: hard-working, blue collar. I wanted to help kids, too. Whether it's Hawaii, Philly or Vegas, I wanted to give back to kids and make an impression on them. Philly has been great. We're helping the Boys & Girls Club there. Anytime you can make an impact on kids, that's what it's about.

What's the best way for a fan to get an autograph?

The best way is simply being polite. Try to get guys before batting practice or before the game. Our guys are pretty good about signing autographs. I think the worst way is to just scream the player's name over and over and over. Sometimes players are trying to lock themselves into the game. Of course, I did those things when I was a kid. But, now that I'm a player, I think being overly aggressive is worse than being polite.

You're a pretty upbeat guy. How do you stay so positive over a six-month season?

It's understanding how lucky I am and how fortunate I am. And being grounded from where I was born and raised. So when I go out there and play the game, I enjoy what I do. There are a lot of frustrations. Anytime you fail more than you succeed you get frustrated — that's a given. But I think you turn that into a positive. You keep working hard at being the best player you can be. But you realize how fortunate you are. You get to play 162 games a year.

You're the guy on the team who hits teammates in the



The switch-hitting Victorino has helped the Phillies capture two NL pennants.

face with shaving cream pies after walk-off wins. How did you get that role?

I did it one time and the next time guys said, "You've got to do it! You've got to do it!" It just became one of those things I got stuck with.

Anything you like to do when you go back to Hawaii to visit family and friends?

I go home every offseason for a couple weeks. I have my charity golf tournament there, which is an annual thing. I think that, going back home, it's most important to see my family. I get to see them in Philly during the season, and they'll come to Vegas in the offseason. But the most important thing is just seeing everybody.

How much are you looking forward to the 2011 season, with everybody in Philly hyped about Roy Halladay, Cliff Lee, Roy Oswalt and Cole Hamels? Are you excited?

Oh, absolutely. How can we not be? We understand how good this pitching staff can be if everybody stays healthy. We're a team with a lot of expectations. Charlie [Manuel] uses the word complacency. Are we going to be complacent? Deep down inside I don't think that would ever happen with us. I think Charlie knows us. He knows when he needs to kick us and wake us up. He makes the ship run. ♦

Todd Zolecki covers the Phillies for MLB.com.

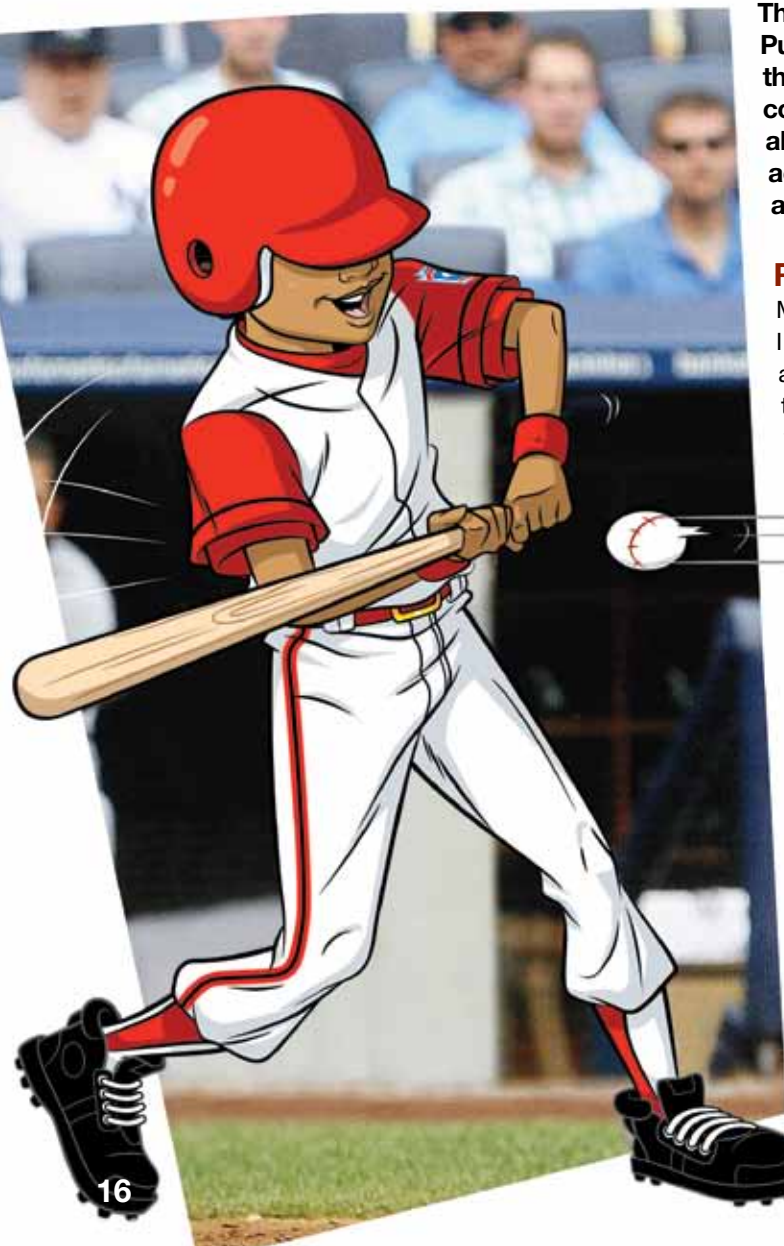
PURE GOLD

In 2010, Shane Victorino won his third Gold Glove Award in a row. Below are other active Major Leaguers who have won three or more consecutive Gold Gloves.

Player	Pos.	Consecutive Gold Gloves	Years
Andruw Jones	OF	10	1998–2007
Ivan Rodriguez	C	10	1992–2001
Ichiro Suzuki	OF	10	2001–10
Torii Hunter	OF	9	2001–09
Omar Vizquel	SS	9	1993–2001
Eric Chavez	3B	6	2001–06
Scott Rolen	3B	5	2000–04
Carlos Beltran	OF	3	2006–08
Luis Castillo	2B	3	2003–05
Derek Jeter	SS	3	2004–06
Joe Mauer	C	3	2008–10
Yadier Molina	C	3	2008–10
Jimmy Rollins	SS	3	2007–09
Vernon Wells	OF	3	2004–06

Albert Pujols on Hitting

playing THE game



There's not much new anyone can say about Albert Pujols. The slugger has been baseball's best hitter over the past decade, using an astounding combination of contact and power to hit more than 400 homers while also maintaining a .331 batting average, tops among active players. If there's anyone qualified to give hitting advice, it's Prince Albert, and he's willing to help:

Reach for the Sky

My stance is one of the big things I focus on, starting with where I hold the bat. I decided to hold the bat high, and my elbow high and back. This way, I'm in a position to come forward without too much movement. If the elbow isn't cocked high to begin with, you've got to move it up and back as the pitch comes in, and there's a lot more movement and opportunity for error. Ultimately, though, you have to go with what's comfortable.

Stay Inside

The idea is to stay "inside the ball," meaning you want to keep your hands — and the barrel — in. You don't want to reach out and extend off balance. I take the bottom half here (slightly cutting down, in a "chopping" fashion). You don't want an uppercut swing. But you also shouldn't cut down too much, with more of a downward swing, because you'll hit grounders. Inside the ball — that's where your power comes from.

Keep Your Balance

It's all about balance. You want to have a strong base — 60–40. Basically, you want to have 60 percent of your weight on your back leg and 40 percent on your front. I get my base almost in a squatting position. Like a boxer, you need to get your power from your legs. Same thing in baseball. Your power comes from your legs. As I finish a swing, the bat head starts to come through the hitting zone. Now my front leg is bent just a bit and, very importantly, my back leg is dug in and shaped like an "L." ♦

THE WORLD

Kids of all ages and from all walks of life competed in front of a global audience during the 2010 Little League Baseball and Softball World Series.



0'S STAGE



PILLING/MLB PHOTOS

●●● In its 64th year, last summer's Little League World Series once again captivated audiences in America and abroad, as its global appeal continued to grow. In the eight boys and girls divisions combined, five of the championship teams came from outside the continental United States, further demonstrating that baseball is not only the American pastime but the international pastime, as well. While we anxiously await another exciting summer of Little League action, let's look back on the 2010 tournaments that provided so many great moments.

Baseball 101

LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL

(ages 11–12) — South Williamsport, Pa.

When Japan's Edogawa Minami Little League defeated the West Region Champion — Hawaii's Waipio Little League — 4-1 in front of 29,812 people in the world championship game, it marked the first time a Japanese team won it all since 2003.

"They don't give up," Japan Manager Shingo Ariyasu said of his players. "They're very tough."

Becoming the first International champions since 2004, Japan thrived with pitching and defense, aggressiveness and timely hitting, and a balance of confidence and grace.

The team got a boost from Konan Tomori, who drove in Japan's second run with a single in the fourth inning. He later added a two-run home run in the sixth to give Japan all the insurance runs it needed.

"There were good and bad parts," he said. "But the big picture is the team won, so I am happy."

Hawaii, obviously, felt some disappointment, although Manager Brian Yoshii said he was proud of his players and was sure they would bounce back.



FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH

FOR ESPN ANNOUNCER Orel Hershiser, working the Little League World Series each year is the natural culmination of a life in baseball that began 40 years ago on the Little League fields of Cherry Hill, N.J. Starting this Aug. 18, Hershiser will again call the action for youth baseball's marquee event, along with two other accomplished ex-players: Michele Smith, a two-time Olympic softball

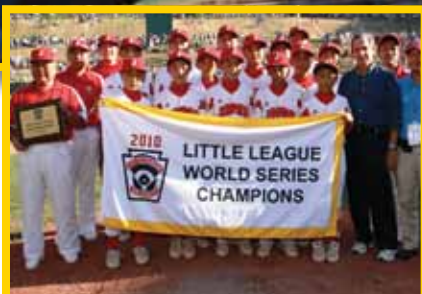
gold medalist, and Nomar Garciaparra, a two-time AL batting champ. "It's a part of the Big League dream," Hershiser says of the Little League World Series. "I grew up with it and always watched it on TV."

For these adult athletes, two weeks in South Williamsport reminds them of a time in their own lives when baseball wasn't yet a business, but more a fun diversion. "If they were booting the ball all over the place, it wouldn't be fun to watch," Hershiser says. "But they're good. They're cute as can be, they're untarnished and they're out here showing what they can do. The kids are just out there playing and enjoying themselves, and I think that's the appeal to the viewer."

During Hershiser's own Little League days, his dad served as district administrator and his mom ran the concession stand. "We ate lots of hot dogs and popsicles," he says. Hershiser's father was so dedicated that at one point, after recognizing Orel's potential, he even hired Bucky Brandon, a former Red Sox and Phillies pitcher, to tutor his son in the art of pitching. That effort paid off some 18 years later, in 1988, when Hershiser won virtually every award a player can win, from World Series MVP to *Sports Illustrated's* Sportsman of the Year. But perhaps the most special award of '88 was given to Hershiser's mom and dad, who were named Little League Parents of the Year.

Orel's team never did make it to Williamsport, but the last game of his Little League career still provided an indelible memory. "Our team got knocked out at the district tournament, and I came up for what I knew would probably be my last at-bat in Little League," he says. "I told myself I was going to hit a home run, and I did." As it turned out, that was one of the final round-trippers of Hershiser's life. He would go homerless throughout his 22-year pro career.

Even today, Hershiser ranks that Little League blast among the best memories of his baseball life, and that's why he looks forward to Williamsport each August, when a new generation of kids will be busy creating similar memories. "Your whole childhood is an accumulation of things that make you grow," he says. "These are big moments, playing against maybe a team from a country you've never come in contact with. It's a lot of fun." —Eric Enders



A well-rounded Japan team brought a world title home for the first time since 2003.

"I'm ready to go back home," he said. "But I love it here. There are no losers that come here."

Back to Back

LITTLE LEAGUE SOFTBALL

(ages 11–12) — Portland, Ore.

One of just two World Series to feature a pair of continental U.S. teams in the final, Warner Robins American Little League (Ga.) defeated Burbank Little League (Calif.), 8-6, in the championship game of the Portland tournament to repeat as World Series champions.

"It was a competitive game," said Sara Thompson, Little League Softball Manager for Little League International. "The West never gave up, even though they were behind."

Warner Robins went a perfect 10-0 through regional play and World Series action, and pitcher Avery Lamb pitched in seven of those contests, compiling four complete games. But it was teammate Hayley Tierce who earned the six-hit, complete-game win in the final.



PILLING/MLB PHOTOS (TOP); LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL (JAPAN TEAM PHOTO); BEVILACQUA/ESPN

International Dominance

JUNIOR LEAGUE BASEBALL

(ages 13-14) — Taylor, Mich.

The Asia-Pacific champs from Taipei City, Chinese Taipei, took home the Junior League Baseball World Series title with a 9-1 win over Tyler, Texas.

Chinese Taipei (6-0) thrashed its opponents throughout the tourney, outscoring them, 57-11.

Tzu Wei Lin tossed a complete game in the final, allowing three hits while striking out 10. He also helped himself at the plate with three RBI.

“Chinese Taipei is probably the most dominant team we’ve ever had [in 30 years],” said Tournament Director Greg Bzura.

Walk (Off) This Way

JUNIOR LEAGUE SOFTBALL

(ages 13-14) — Kirkland, Wash.

ASOFEM Little League from Maunabo, Puerto Rico, earned a 4-3 victory over West Tampa Little League to repeat as champions in the 2010 Junior League Softball World Series.

The Latin American champions scored in the bottom of the seventh to edge the U.S. team, which had just tied the game in the top half of the final frame. Michelle Rivera was the winning pitcher for Puerto Rico.

“The championship was excellent,” said Tournament Director John Chadwick. “You couldn’t ask for better.”



Puerto Rico won both Big League Baseball (above) and Junior League Softball titles.

Island Fever

SENIOR LEAGUE BASEBALL

(ages 15-16) — Bangor, Maine

The Senior League Baseball World Series celebrated its 50th anniversary this year as Aruba South Little League of San Nicolas, Aruba, took the 2010 title, defeating host team Bangor East/West Side Little League, 8-1.

Aruba’s Shawn Duinkerker tossed a complete-game victory for the Latin American squad, allowing just five hits.

The tournament was another success for Bangor, which saw its own squad in the title game for the first time.

“Having the host team advance further than it ever had produced a lot of excitement in the town,” said Tournament Director Mike Brooker.

Indeed, 1,900 fans attended the host’s semifinal match, and about 3,000 came out for the title game.

Made in America

SENIOR LEAGUE SOFTBALL

(ages 15-16) — Lower Sussex, Del.

Northside Suburban Little League of San Antonio topped East Region winner Haverstraw, N.Y., 3-1, in the championship game. It was the second of just two all-continental-U.S. title games among the eight divisions.

“We had a good bunch of girls this year,” said Tournament Director Martin Donovan. “There were some close games. It was very competitive.”

The KMC American Little League from Germany’s Ramstein Air Base sent its first team to a World Series

Warner Robins took the Little League Softball title for the second straight year.



TWICE AS NICE

REPEATING AS LITTLE LEAGUE Softball World Series champions has been sweet as a Georgia peach for Warner Robins (Ga.) American Little League.

Warner Robins, located in the center of the Peach State, is known as “The International City” because many residents come from around the world to work at nearby Robins Air Force Base.

In the last two years, though, this community of nearly 50,000 has gained global recognition for Little League Softball as the home of the two-time defending champs.

“We’ve done well, but we are not a powerhouse program,” said Scott Winner, Vice President of the Warner Robins American Little League Softball Program. “These are just local kids who have done very well.”

Two years ago, the Warner Robins American Little League Softball team won the 2009 World Series, making Warner Robins the only Little League to have won both a Little League Baseball and Little League Softball world championship. The WRALL Little League Baseball team won the World Series in 2007 and made a return trip to Williamsport in 2009.

Last year, the Warner Robins American Little League Softball team defended its 2009 title by defeating Burbank (Calif.) Little League in Portland, Ore.



“Going back-to-back elevated our program, and has highlighted Little League Softball overall,” Mr. Winner said.

Roger Stella, manager of the world champs, has been a volunteer coach in the league for many years. His wife, Stacy, has also volunteered. In fact, Stacy managed a softball team in the league’s coach-pitch softball division. The Stellas’ daughter, Sierra, was a member of both world title teams, helping make Little League a family activity.

In two seasons of Little League Softball World Series competition, Roger’s WRALL squads went 11-0 with six shutouts, and outscored the opposition, 77-15.

“We’re fortunate that our league has good volunteers, the caliber of the players is great and they’re good kids,” Winner said. “As a league, we are proud of our success, but providing for the children in Warner Robins and growing our program are always our goals.” —Chris Downs

in 2010 when the Senior League team went to Lower Sussex as the EMEA (Europe, Middle East and Africa) squad.

The Big Easley

BIG LEAGUE BASEBALL (ages 17–18) — Easley, S.C.

Easley has hosted 10 Big League Baseball World Series, and according to Tournament Director Jon Humphries, last year’s was one of the best.

After a home run derby and concert that is custom at the tournament, Puerto Rico won the title, defeating Thousand Oaks, Calif., 3-2, in a tense contest.

“It was excellent,” Humphries said. “We had the best teams playing that day.”

The Big League World Series included a host team (South Carolina

District 1), but there also was a second squad from South Carolina — a team from District 7 made it all the way to Easley as the Southeast Region Champion. The two local teams helped increase community involvement in the tournament, which had a title sponsor — Baptist Easley Hospital — for the first time in its history.

“The community embraced it a little more,” Humphries said. “They had a great time out there.”

Front and Central

BIG LEAGUE SOFTBALL (ages 17–18) — Kalamazoo, Mich.

Although an international team reached the Big League Softball World Series Championship Game for the third year

in a row, the tournament maintained a local feel.

Grand Rapids, Mich., the Central Region Champions, defeated the Philippines, 14-4, to win the World Series in their home state. More than 4,000 fans showed up in Kalamazoo — the 30th year that Derek Jeter’s hometown, located an hour from Grand Rapids, has hosted a World Series — for the final, which was played in primetime on ESPN2 for the second straight year.

“That really brings the crowd out,” Vanderberg said. ♦

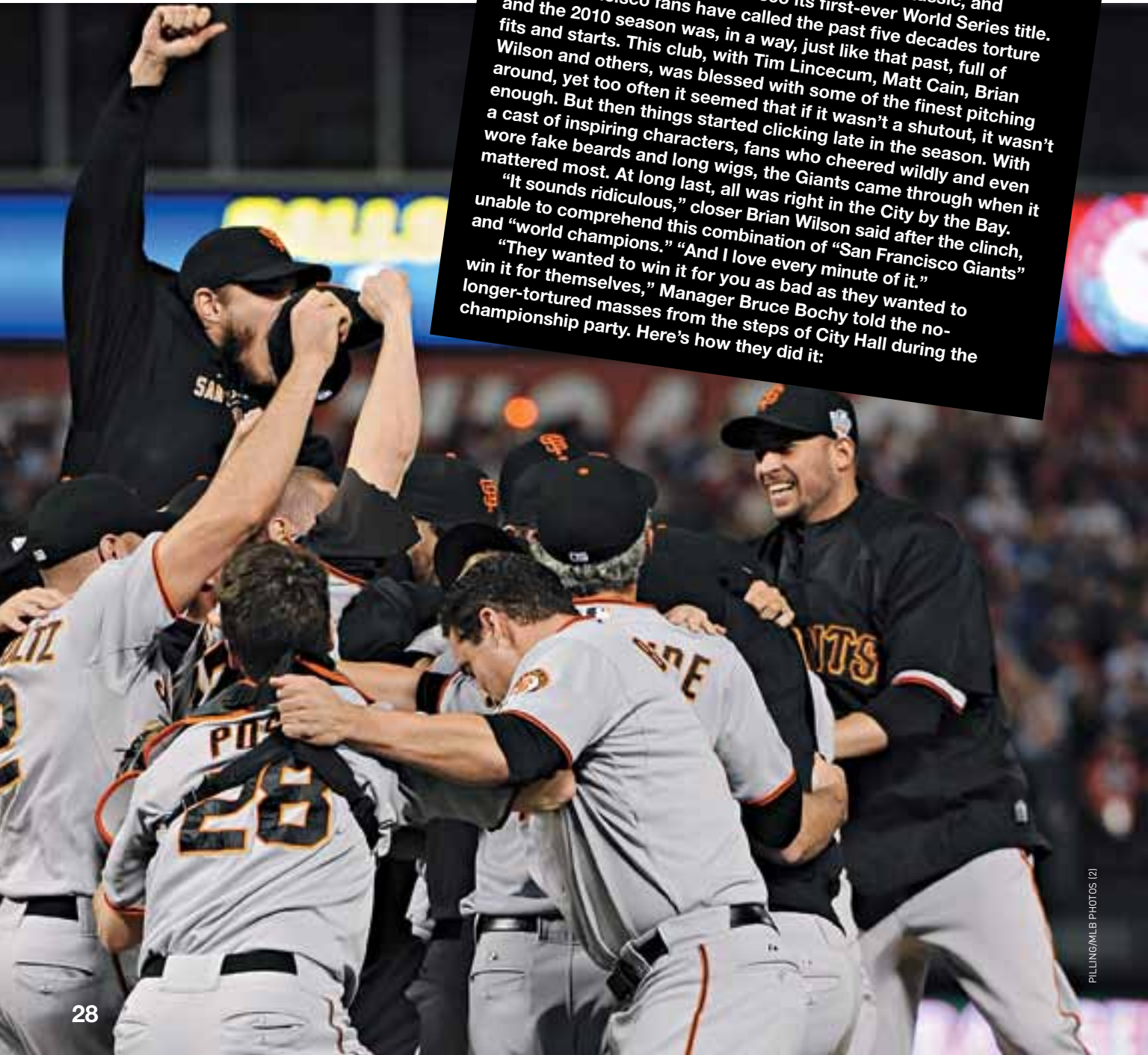
Stories compiled by Little League World Series special correspondents Teddy Cahill, Mark Rogoff, Mark Price and Allie Weinberger.

ARMageddon

The Giants' pitching staff annihilated the opposition to win the world title in 2010.



WHAT DOES A PITCHER MEAN to a team? In the early days of baseball, his job was to deliver the ball underhand exactly where the hitter asked for it. The Texas Rangers' hitters could only wish that it was 1845 all over again during the 2010 World Series. The Giants' terrific starting pitching posted a sizzling 2.45 ERA in the Fall Classic, and brought the city of San Francisco the past five decades torture and the 2010 season was, in a way, just like that past, full of fits and starts. This club, with Tim Lincecum, Matt Cain, Brian Wilson and others, was blessed with some of the finest pitching around, yet too often it seemed that if it wasn't a shutout, it wasn't enough. But then things started clicking late in the season. With a cast of inspiring characters, fans who cheered wildly and even wore fake beards and long wigs, the Giants came through when it mattered most. At long last, all was right in the City by the Bay. "It sounds ridiculous," closer Brian Wilson said after the clinch, and "world champions." "And I love every minute of it." "They wanted to win it for you as bad as they wanted to win it for themselves," Manager Bruce Bochy told the no-longer-tortured masses from the steps of City Hall during the championship party. Here's how they did it:



Start Me Up

Of the 45 innings played in the five games during the 2010 World Series, there were 27 scoreless frames. After finishing the regular season with the lowest team ERA in the Major Leagues, the San Francisco Giants' pitching staff surrendered just 12 runs over the course of the entire Series, which included two shutouts. Surprising? Hardly. It was, after all, the "Year of the Pitcher," which continued into the Fall Classic, where aces Tim Lincecum of the Giants and Cliff Lee of the Rangers went head-to-head in Games 1 and 5.

"Starting pitching set the tempo," said closer Brian Wilson. "Other teams didn't want to face our pitching."

And for good reason. Led by two-game winner Lincecum, the steady Matt Cain, Jonathan Sanchez and rookie left-hander Madison Bumgarner — the second-youngest player, at age 21, to throw eight shutout World Series innings — San Francisco's staff controlled all of the action.

"To get here, you need to have great pitching," said Rangers slugger Michael Young. "The Giants definitely have that."

Lincecum led a great Giants staff in 2010.



The Land of Misfit Boys

They were the underdogs. The castoffs. The longshots.

Were is the key word.

For 14 days in May, Pat Burrell sat at home without a Big League job. In the Giants' final regular-season series, Burrell hit .364 with two doubles and two runs scored to help his club clinch the NL West title.

Then there's Cody Ross, a waiver pickup in August, without whom the Giants are short their NLCS MVP.

Aubrey Huff, shunned after a poor performance in 2009, joined the Giants in the offseason, entertaining teammates and launching what would be the game-winning home run in Game 4 of the Fall Classic.

"This team is a cast of characters," said former Giants first baseman J.T. Snow. "Nobody outside of this clubhouse thought that they could get it done — the Phillies were going to beat 'em, then the Rangers were going to beat 'em, and earlier they were going to have to battle to beat the Braves, and they weren't going to beat the Padres down the stretch."

But somehow, this patchwork of players assembled by General Manager Brian Sabean won the whole thing in 2010. So much for misfits and outcasts.

"Keep saying it," said Ross. "We like that kind of stuff."

Sideshow

In a Series coinciding with Halloween, it's no wonder that some players relied on a little bit of black magic. Dyeing his beard an artificial hue of shoe-polish black, closer Brian Wilson inspired teammates and fans to follow suit.

"I don't think I'd have a problem dressing up as myself in this city," Wilson said.

Fittingly, San Francisco shopkeepers stocked up on fake beards and mohawks. AT&T Park fans also donned Tim Lincecum-inspired wigs. And the get-ups wouldn't have

been complete without panda hats in honor of third baseman Pablo Sandoval, a.k.a. "Kung Fu Panda."

Not to be outdone, the Rangers entertained Texas with the "Claw" and "Antlers" hand signals. One notable Texan — former First Lady Barbara Bush — showed allegiance to her team with some handiwork of her own, filling in a scorecard from the *Official World Series Program* during Game 4.

But in the end, the Giants and their quirks emerged on top.

"The Beard's a champion!" exalted Giants reliever Sergio Romo. ♦

DRIVE, DETERMINATION & DESTINY

Cody Ross decided in Little League that being a Big Leaguer was his calling. Nicknamed "Smiles," Ross, an outfielder for the world champion San Francisco Giants, used clutch hits to turn playoff smiles upside down for all of the Giants' opponents throughout the 2010 postseason. He hit .294 with a slugging percentage of .686, and collected 15 hits, highlighted by five homers in 51 at-bats during the Giants' title run.

The 5-foot-10, 194-pound Ross is small by Big League standards, but ever since his days as a Little Leaguer in Allen, Texas, confidence, determination and a love of competition have driven him to excel.

"Everything a Little League player dreams of happened for Cody at the end of last season," says Cody's father, Kenny. "It was a dream come true for him to be a postseason MVP and win a World Series, but for us what he did was no surprise. He has always done well when the pressure is on."

Ross was a terror at the plate during the 2010 playoffs.



Understanding how fortunate they are, Major Leaguers leap at the chance to improve communities both at home and abroad.



Lending a
Helping!

T

HE BREWERS' RICKIE WEEKS

showed up at a Boys & Girls Club in one of Milwaukee's poorest neighborhoods. The Twins' Justin Morneau appeared at a kids' baseball field in his wife's tiny Minnesota hometown. The Marlins' John

Baker traveled to the middle of a war zone in Iraq.

These three Big Leaguers travel seven months a year to play baseball before cheering crowds. But they all say the most important trips they've ever taken were the extra ones, the trips they didn't need to make, the trips that helped others.

"Sometimes we feel like we're the elite because we're athletes," Baker says. "And in reality, all we really do is hit a

ball with a stick and chase it around. We're not solving the world's problems.

As my wife and I start a family, I have tried to take it upon myself to act like an adult, and when I think of adults, I think of my parents and in-laws and grandparents, and how they live their lives in service to their families."

Major League Baseball recognizes that kind of contribution to families and communities each year with the Roberto Clemente

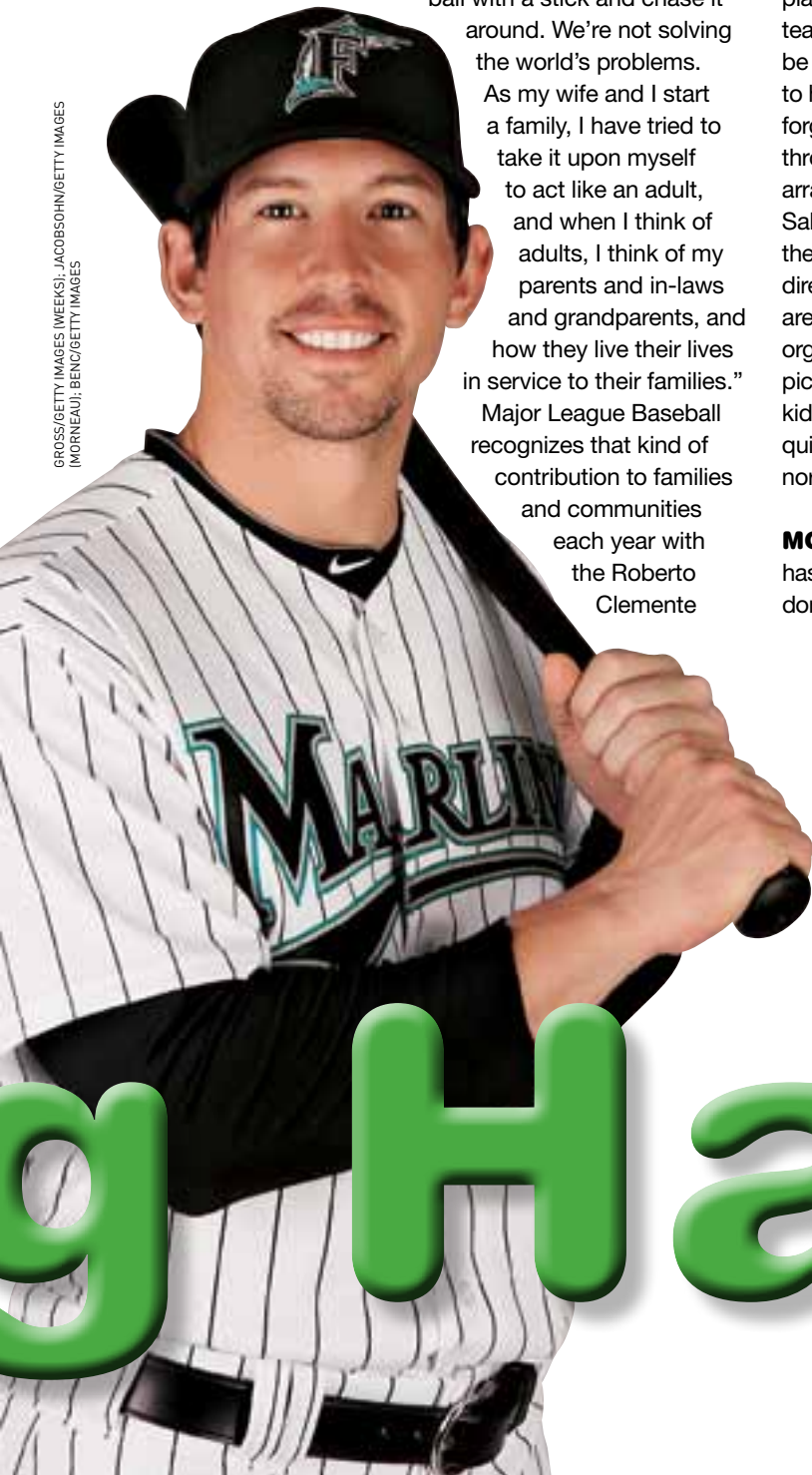
Award. Clemente, a Hall of Famer for the Pirates, was flying emergency supplies to earthquake victims in Nicaragua when his plane crashed on New Year's Eve, 1972, killing him and the other four people on board. He was 38 years old.

In 2010, the Clemente Award went to Boston's Tim Wakefield for his years of efforts with "Pitching in for Kids," an organization that provides grants to improve the lives of kids in New England, and with the Make-A-Wish Foundation. Wakefield was chosen from 30 club finalists for the award. "The clubs have quite a task picking only one player to nominate because there's so much charitable participation," says Tom Brasuell, MLB's vice president of community affairs.

Weeks, Morneau and Baker are just three examples of MLB players helping out, and they're all quick to say that one of their teammates deserves more credit, or that the spotlight should be on those who inspired them in the first place. Weeks points to his mom, Valeria, who taught the second baseman never to forget his roots. He follows that lesson by funding a scholarship through his mother's church in Orlando, Fla. Weeks has also arranged for the "Rickie Van" to be donated to the Don and Sallie Davis chapter of Milwaukee's Boys & Girls Club. "We're the main club on the south side of the city," says chapter sports director Brett Gullicksrud. "Lots of teams at schools in the area have no way to travel for games, so with the van, we can organize leagues in flag football, basketball and baseball and pick up the teams and bring them here to play. We also reward kids for sticking with the team, showing up for practice, not quitting. We'll take them for a pizza party at a restaurant they normally wouldn't get to visit. The Rickie Van has been huge."

MORNEAU, THE TWINS' ALL-STAR FIRST BASEMAN, has been contributing in two countries. For years, he has been donating equipment to the youth league in Vancouver, British

From left: Weeks, Morneau and Baker are just three of the many players who take care of their communities.



GROSS/GETTY IMAGES (WEEKS); JACOBSON/GETTY IMAGES (MORNEAU); BEING/GETTY IMAGES

By Chris Smith

gH and

Columbia, where he grew up. Recently he noticed that his boyhood field could use some flair. "If kids are saying, 'We play on the worst field in the league,' then they don't have pride in it," Morneau says. "I remember, as a kid, we'd ride our bikes to the field and it was always exciting." So up went a new scoreboard. The field got a new name, too. "When I was a kid we played at Larry Walker Field," he says, recalling the former All-Star and fellow Canadian. "I never imagined my name would be on a field. It's cool."

But it isn't something Morneau will get carried away with. When he gave money to rebuild the field in Winthrop, Minn., he mandated that the facility couldn't be named after him. "He didn't want the attention — he wanted it to be about

Home Run Derby trophy he had just won. "He wasn't showing off," Erickson says. "He was just having a ball with the kids."

BAKER, A CATCHER FOR THE Marlins, might not be a household name, but he has done big things around the world. In January 2010, Baker, teammate Chris Coghlan and several Marlins officials flew to Kuwait, where the players signed autographs for Little Leaguers. Then they headed into southern Iraq to visit American soldiers. "It was strange," Baker says. "We were telling these people, 'Thank you,' because they put their lives on the line, and they're telling us, 'Thank you,' for visiting. The stakes are much different for soldiers and ballplayers, but the camaraderie

were displaced from their homes, and everything was falling down. The only positive was that it opened my eyes."

Baker wants to make sure there will be more good results. He has helped raise hundreds of thousands of dollars to build a new community, Inspiration Village, in northern Haiti, and has lent his support to two groups that are providing key supplies during the recovery: Food for the Poor and Helping Hands for a Sustainable Haiti. "The next project is water filtration," Baker says. "I'm no scientist, but maybe I can help out."

The desire to help is a powerful force, no matter where it is deployed and where it starts. Baker says it was only after his trips that he realized why he wanted to go. "My grandfather worked at the phone

"Sometimes we feel like we're the elite because we're athletes. And in reality, all we really do is hit a ball with a stick and chase it around. We're not solving the world's problems." —John Baker

the kids," says Mark Erickson, the city administrator. "Justin kind of adopted the Little League teams in Winthrop before he married Krista, who grew up here. But the field was terrible. One day I got a call from the Twins Foundation telling us that Justin donated \$5,000 to rebuild the field, and that the foundation was matching it with \$5,000. So the city matched it with another \$10,000, and we installed aluminum benches, new fences, redid everything. At the end of the season Justin sent another \$7,000. It was a godsend. Now we use it for Little Leaguers, adult softball, a 4H league, church leagues. This year we'll host a high school tournament."

An even bigger thrill for Winthrop, an agricultural town of 1,500 people, came the day after the 2008 All-Star Game, when Morneau dropped in with the

is similar. We met some guys on the border of Iraq and Iran who had been patrolling for like 220 days, and they ate bologna sandwiches every day. So I told them about when I was in A-ball and our clubhouse guy would cut up three strawberries and put them on the table, and that was our postgame spread."

It was harder to find laughs on his next goodwill trip. Baker spent much of the 2010 season on the DL with an elbow injury and used some of his free time to visit Haiti, six months after an earthquake devastated the island nation. "It was the most disturbing thing I'd ever seen," Baker says. "Poverty like I couldn't believe. Kids with no pants living in garbage. Dirty water, no sanitation, no electricity. And that was in an area unaffected by the quake. Then we went to Port-au-Prince, where 2 million people

company for 50 years, and he'd get off work Friday night and drive from Oakland to Riverside to watch one son pitch in a college game, then drive to New Mexico, where his other son was in the Air Force, to watch him play softball, and be back at work Monday morning," Baker says. "He was and is the kind of person who was always present when something was taking place with one of his children or grandchildren, and it meant so much. When I had the chance to go to Iraq and Kuwait and Haiti, I realized that a lot of times it's not how much money you give or the publicity you gain from these things. It's showing up on a human level and being in someone else's presence that makes the difference." ♦

Chris Smith is a contributing editor to New York magazine.

Jason Bay on Defense in the Outfield

playing THE game



Ever since his 2004 NL Rookie of the Year campaign, Jason Bay has been one of the Majors' premier outfielders, making three All-Star teams. The Canada native — who played in the 1990 Little League World Series for Trail Little League from Vancouver, British Columbia — is looking to have a bounce-back season in his second season with the Mets. As he prepares for another year playing in the expansive Citi Field outfield, Bay has some advice for you on improving your outfield defense:

Aim for the Top

When you're watching a fly ball, you should always watch the top of the baseball because if you watch the bottom of the ball, you might get a little underneath it and then it can start floating behind you and end up sailing over your head. If you're looking at the top, you're always going to be behind it.

Stay Cool

At some point you have to be able to take your eye off the ball. You don't want to just put your head down and sprint 15 yards, but you cover a lot more ground when you're not looking at the ball. A lot of people will advise you to turn, take three or four steps and then take a peek and find the ball again. Even if it's in batting practice, try to look at it, then take your eye off it, and then find it again, so you can get more comfortable. A lot of people tend to panic when they don't know where the ball is. You have to be comfortable knowing where it might be.

Use Your Teammates

More often than not you're not going to get a chance to throw somebody out directly. It happens every now and again, but the smart play is to hit your cut-off man. People say the moment the ball leaves your hand, as an outfielder, your job is done. But if you don't hit the cut-off man, you aren't letting the infielders do *their* jobs. ♦



PILLING/MLB PHOTOS; ILLUSTRATION BY LAWRENCE CHRISTMAS

Combina

Little League Baseball Camp and the Baseball Factory team up to expand education and training benefits for kids.

By Chris Downs

When the school year ends, baseball season is already in full swing for most Little Leaguers. To cap the regular season and start their summer off right, Little League International is enhancing its Little League Baseball Camp program through its partnership with the Baseball Factory.

“The Baseball Factory is proud to work with Little League Baseball to enhance their summer camp experience in 2011,” says Jeff Brazier, the senior director of youth baseball and softball for the Baseball Factory, the official and exclusive player development partner of Little League Baseball and Softball. “Our staff of former pro players, former college coaches and college players will provide an opportunity for all of the attendees at the Little League Summer Camp to receive a detailed assessment of their skills.”

At Little League International in South Williamsport, Pa., and Green Acres in Hillsgrove, Pa., the 2011 Little League Baseball Camp will again provide superb instruction and fun for campers. But, along with the chance to improve their skills and play on the Little League World Series fields, campers will now be assessed and

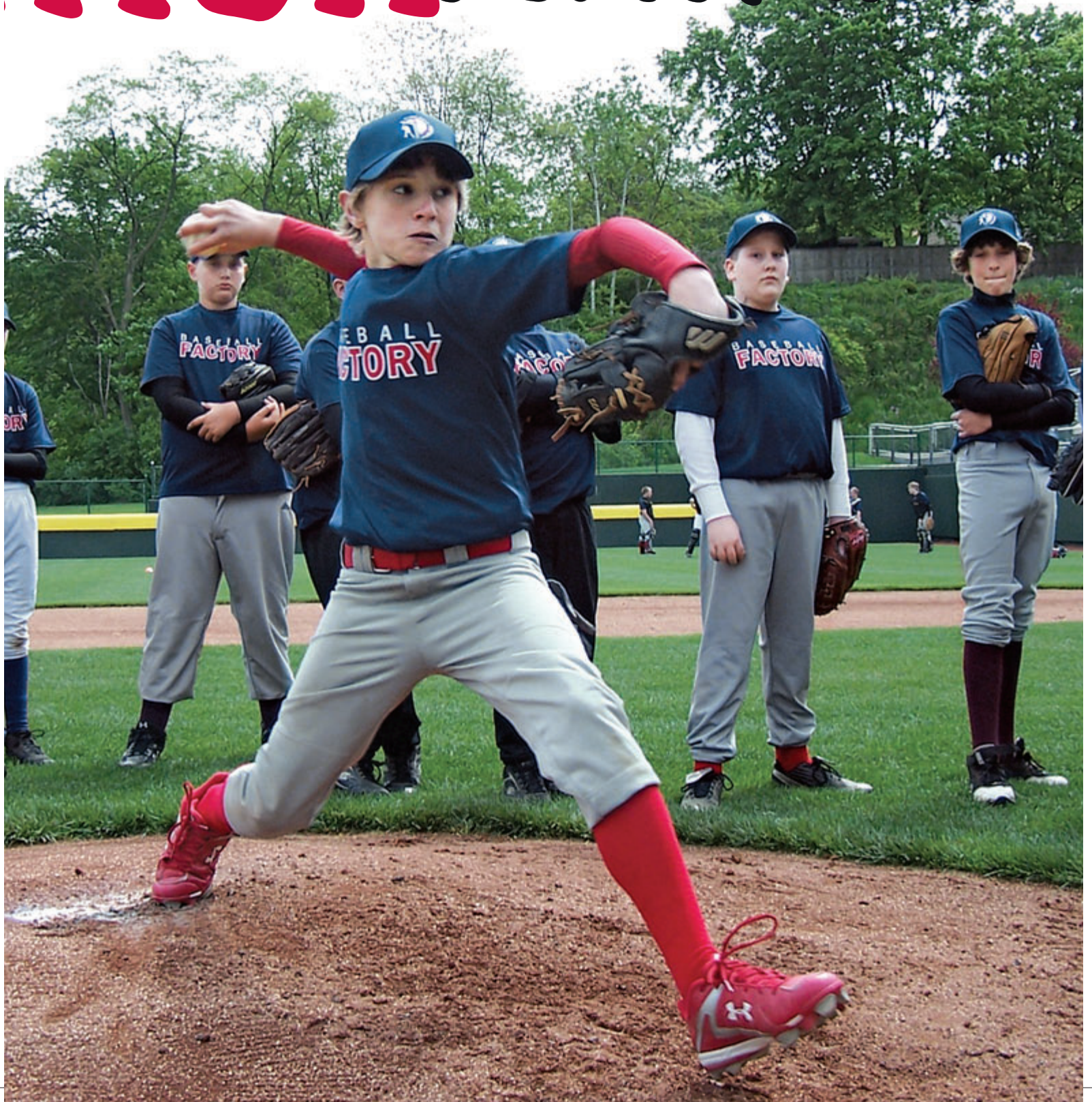
evaluated by instructors from the Baseball Factory, which fans can learn more about by logging onto baseballfactory.com or by following it on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.

“We are very pleased to have the Baseball Factory as part of Little League Baseball Camp,” says Jamie Joy, Little League

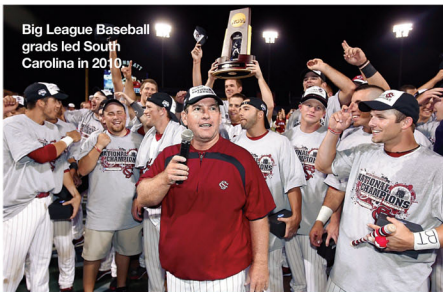


COURTESY BASEBALL FACTORY (2)

tion COACHING



Big League Baseball
grads led South
Carolina in 2010



A Big League Step In the Right Direction

The University of South Carolina had never won a major sports title before 2010, even though the baseball team had qualified for the NCAA Regionals in 10 straight years and reached the College World Series three times (2002–04) during that span. In 2010, they again reached the CWS, but shedding bridesmaid status would require winning a semifinal matchup against Clemson.

Luckily, they had three Big League Baseball World Series graduates and champions on the roster in senior catcher Kyle Enders, sophomore pitcher Michael Roth and junior infielder Scott Wingo. Roth, normally a reliever, stepped in to pitch a complete game, and Enders — the team's captain — homered and drove in two, as South Carolina prevailed, 5-1. Four nights later, Wingo scored the walk-off run against UCLA, and with it, gave South Carolina its first championship. "I couldn't have written it up any better to end my baseball career," says Enders. The experience the three South Carolina natives gained in Big League Baseball helped them write that ending.

The Big League Baseball World Series, one of eight tournaments sponsored by Little League Baseball, is an event that, as Roth describes simply, has "a lot of great ballplayers."

"Playing in a level of competition like the Big League World Series definitely helped me prepare to face college hitters," Roth says in reflection.

Enders agrees: "It was a real step up from high school level."

The BLBWS is held in Easley, S.C., and matches the winners of 10 regions, five USA and five international. Enders and Wingo played on the host squad, with Enders' teams taking home the crown each year from 2003–05 and Wingo's squad winning it in 2007. In 2008, Roth's team won it all. Roth remembers having the most fun he's ever had on a diamond, and that it gave him a chance to get used to playing in front of a big crowd.

"The excitement was awesome," Wingo says. "Telling my friends that we were going to be on ESPN was really cool."

The games weren't on ESPN when Enders played, but the excitement wasn't any less pronounced. "You get used to playing in front of a bunch of fans; it helps you handle pressure." That experience paid off in 2010. —Paul Swydan

International's manager of operations and Little League Baseball camp coordinator. "The camp was already a great value. Now, with the assessment and evaluation of the Baseball Factory, it is even better."

Players will take part in an on-field workout where they will perform in front of Baseball Factory scouts, who will evaluate the campers on speed, pitching, hitting, defense and arm strength. All players will receive a written evaluation, and this report will reveal areas of strength and areas for improvement. The evaluation also will let players know where they rate compared to others across the country.

"Starting in 2011, the Baseball Factory will incorporate a one-day player evaluation day as part of the camp experience," Brazier says.

"Our baseball experts see thousands of players nationwide every year and can give campers an idea of where they stand nationally. Having a detailed evaluation will help players better understand their strengths and weaknesses."

The Baseball Factory will produce an edited online video showing each player's performance. Also online, campers will receive a personal player web page that displays their academic information, video footage and Pro Scout evaluation.

This profile will act as a template for players to revise in coming years. As a player reaches high-school age, this up-to-date profile can be e-mailed to college coaches, pro scouts, family and friends.

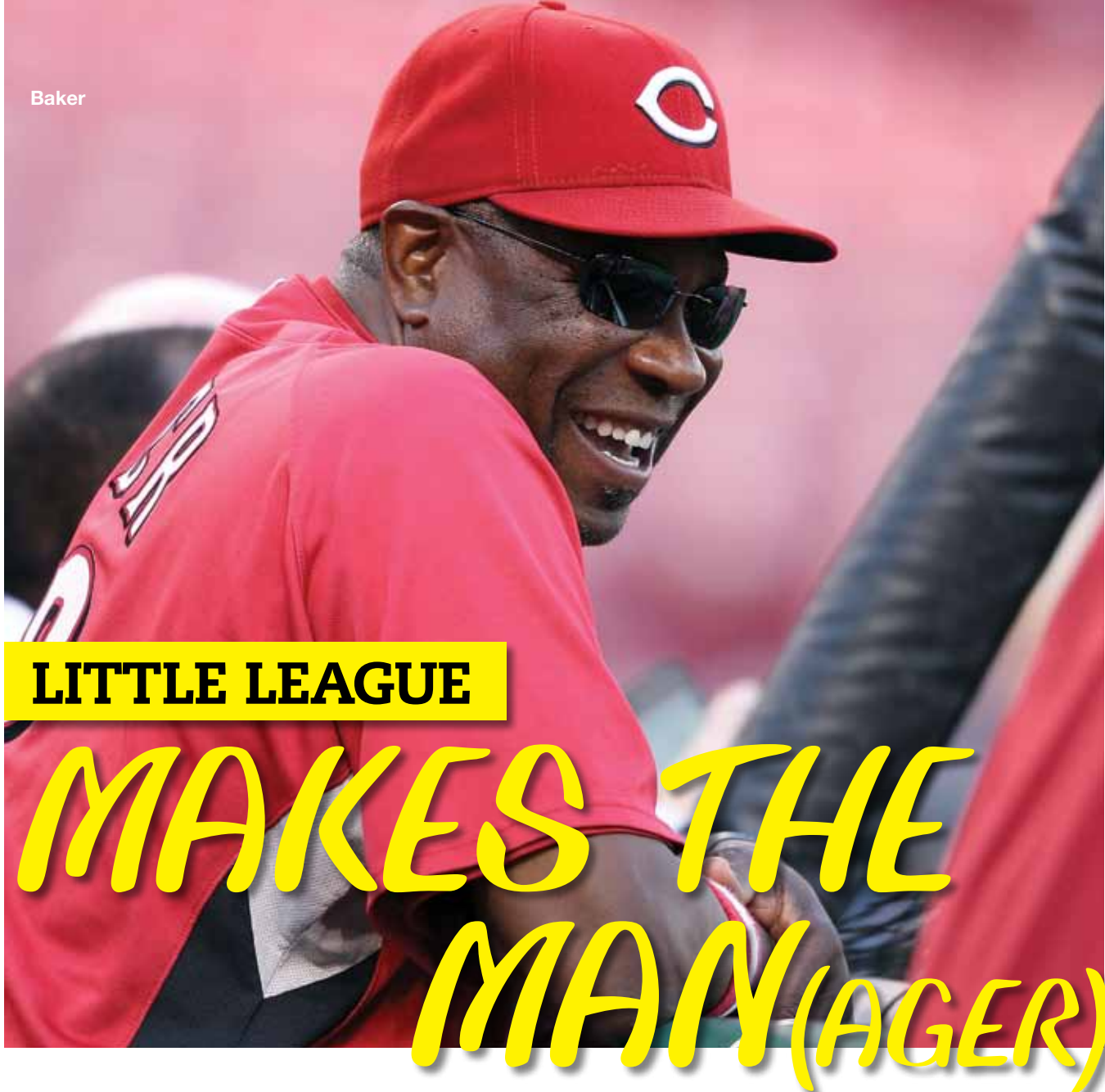
In the summer of 2011, Little League Baseball Camp — which has more information on it at the website littleleague.org/learn/camps.htm — will be celebrating its 49th year. Teaching baseball skills and molding character during five one-week sessions, the program is open to kids aged 10–14, whether or not they are members of a Little League team. The 60-acre complex provides the perfect setting for children to learn fundamentals, sharpen skills, and enjoy other recreational activities.

Located in North Central Pennsylvania, the Williamsport and Hillsgrove Little League Baseball Camps encourage children to develop leadership skills and self-confidence amid newfound friends. What a perfect way to spend a summer day. ♦

Chris Downs is director of publicity for Little League International.



PETERSEN/NETT IMAGES SOUTH CAROLINA;
COURTESY BASEBALL FACTORY



LITTLE LEAGUE

MAKES THE MAN (AGER)

JOE MADDON — OR JOEY BACK THEN — FIGURED THAT he might as well be honest. He was 9 years old, playing shortstop for a West Hazleton, Pa., Little League team. By his count, he had already committed four errors when a groundball with bad intentions rolled his way.

Make that five errors.

“So the coach, Ernie Valente, talks to me after the inning. He was very intimidating — a prominent school teacher, an icon,” Maddon says as he drives the streets of Hazleton. “He asked, ‘Should you have caught the ball?’ He had his sunken eyes, big nose and 50-year-old bad breath. I said, ‘Yes, I should have.’ He said, ‘No, it took a bad hop.’ That was nice of him.”

There is something about Little League, especially back in the early 1960s, where a man can recall his worst game as

one of his best memories. Maddon still sees his childhood in black and white clips, convinced his experiences on a Little League field helped shape who he is and how he does his job

today as manager of the Tampa Bay Rays.

“Where I grew up and how I grew up, it was nothing but the best,” Maddon says. “I don’t think I ever had a bad day. Those memories are special.”

Maddon is among several Big League bosses whose baseball careers began in earnest on Little League diamonds. Their lives are different now, dictated by big business, and their performance defined by results, not development.

Yet, there are moments on summer nights that reconnect them to their Little League experience. For some, they are humorous — like melting ice cream and protective cups. For others, they are serious — the execution

Many Big League managers were shaped by moments in Little League that stick with them to this day.

By Troy E. Renck

of fundamentals that became ingrained when they slipped on their very first glove.

Orioles Manager Buck Showalter settles on a memory from the late 1960s that seems straight out of a Disney movie. Showalter, or 'Nat', as friends called him, was part of the thriving Little League program in Century, Fla. He took the game seriously even then, his love and knowledge of the sport imbedded by hours of conversation with his father Nathaniel, the local principal and high school coach.

The Showalters lived near the baseball field — in fact, it was practically in their backyard. So after doing some lawn work one day late in Showalter's Little League career, Dad walked a few feet and put a lawn chair down behind the center-field fence to peek over and watch his son. What happened next is impossible to make up.

"I hit my first home run. And my dad caught it," recalls Showalter, providing details as if he was still in the midst of his home run trot around the bases. "He told my sister to run back to the house to get another ball to throw back so he could keep that one."

Showalter still has that ball on his desk.

WHILE PARTICIPATING IN Riverside California's Little League program at Patterson Park, Reds Manager Dusty Baker realized that the staples of the game go beyond the box score.

"I played for my dad (Johnnie B. Baker Sr.)," Baker recalls. "One year, he cut me for having a bad attitude and made me play for another team."

For Baker, the discipline left an impression. It also created a positive experience going forward.

"I still have many of the friends I made while playing Little League," Baker says.

What Yankees skipper Joe Girardi gleaned from Little League was the importance of preparation. Yes, he loved when his parents stopped at the Dairy Queen in East Peoria, Ill., after games. But the ice cream tasted better when he played well.



"Where I grew up and how I grew up, it was nothing but the best. I don't think I ever had a bad day. Those memories are special." —Joe Maddon

"I remember learning how to get ready to play. And not just the day of the game, but the night before, learning to get your rest," Girardi recalls.

Cardinals Manager Tony La Russa falls back on fundamentals when asked about his earliest playing days in the Tampa, Fla., area. He was lucky enough to have a coach provide the proper foundation.

"I learned the real basics, the proper fielding and hitting position," La Russa says. "He didn't overdo it. Give you a little of what you need and go play."

EQUIPMENT IS CRUCIAL for participation. It starts with the glove. Maddon couldn't afford a big-label glove growing up, but would wander into a local sporting goods store and try them on.

"I can still smell the leather in that shop. I just wanted to hold the gloves," Maddon says.

Texas Rangers Manager Ron Washington can relate. An infield coach by trade who prides himself on

teaching defense, Washington can still recall his first new mitt.

"My dad bought me my first glove that was actually my own around the age of 12 — that's my best memory," Washington says. "I had to borrow before then."

Seattle's Eric Wedge smiles when asked about Little League. There was no favorite home run — only humor.

"The first practice I showed up to, I was a little chubby and the coach told me I needed to be a catcher," Wedge said. "I loved the position. But after practice, I told my mom that my coach said we had to go get a cup. I thought it was something I could drink from. Little did I know ..."

The pressure of baseball now is easy to identify for the managers. Their jobs depend on the success of their team. But they still remember when that wasn't always the case.

"When I played Little League, it was a Norman Rockwell painting — with the coach who has his arm around the kid," Pirates Manager Clint Hurdle says. "I couldn't wait to get out of school and go play." ♦

Troy E. Renck is the national baseball writer for The Denver Post.

Prepare, Love, Honor the Game

College softball coaching legend
and Little League enthusiast Sue Enquist
has a message for success.

BY CHRIS DOWNS

SUE ENQUIST HAS WON MORE COLLEGIATE NATIONAL championships as a coach (10) than anyone in softball history. She was UCLA's first softball All-American, National Champion and Hall of Famer, but her love of the game all began with Little League.

Introduced to baseball by her brother, Bill, and practicing — if not playing — in the San Clemente (Calif.) Optimist Little League, Enquist embraced the competition and camaraderie of baseball and, later, softball.

"I was the official shagger for all the foul balls at batting practice," says Enquist, who in the late 1960s was not allowed to play Little League due to rules limiting it to boys. "My Little League coach was the late John Springman. His son, Bill, played on the team and now works for the Minnesota Twins. I would not be the coach and former player I am today if not for the Springmans and my brother, who laid my foundation for the love of the game."

In 1968, Coach Springman allowed an 11-year-old Enquist to take some swings after her brother's practices as a reward for chasing down balls for 90 minutes in the summer heat.

"I even got a trophy at the annual banquet," Enquist says. "I've kept it for all these years because it meant so much to me. It's a joy to recognize Little League because it set a standard of excellence for me as a person, athlete and teammate."

Enquist honed her baseball and softball skills through her teenage years and even played junior varsity baseball at San Clemente High School for one of her mentors, Coach Joe Cludy. She is considered

the first girl in California to play high school baseball, and she credits the distinction of playing both sports for getting the attention of UCLA scouts.

Turning exclusively to softball in college, she immediately stood out. In four years, she hit .401 and was a key player on the Bruins' first national championship team in 1978, the year she graduated with a kinesiology degree. During her tenure as a player and coach at UCLA, Enquist tallied 1,314 wins.

"One of my greatest coaching influences was UCLA basketball coach John Wooden," Enquist says. "Each week during the season, our softball team would break down another part of his Pyramid for Success."

In 2006, Enquist — the first person in NCAA softball

history to win a national championship as both a head coach and a player — concluded her 18th and final season as UCLA's head softball coach. It was her 27th year on the coaching staff. In nearly two decades at the helm of the Bruins, she went 887-175-1, making her college softball's most successful coach. Enquist credits much of this to Little League.

"I wasn't the biggest, fastest or smartest," Enquist says, "but I still learned through Little League that I have no limits. My brother was 11 months older than me, and he constantly challenged me to go for it. At the end of the day, you were judged on how well you prepared, not just by how you executed.

"Softball asks that you master the game's fundamentals, give 100 percent effort and a positive attitude," she adds. "Players must learn that the team comes first and we are all playing for something bigger than ourselves: the team." ♦

Enquist won
1,314 games
at UCLA.



Danielle Lawrie

on Becoming a More Complete Player

playing THE game



In 2010, Danielle Lawrie became the first University of Washington athlete to win two National Player of the Year awards, finishing her senior season with a 40-5 record and 495 strikeouts in 302.1 innings for the Huskies. She credits that success to her athletic upbringing and attention to detail, acknowledging that success on the field doesn't come overnight. Here's her advice on how you can become a more complete player:

Start in the Offseason

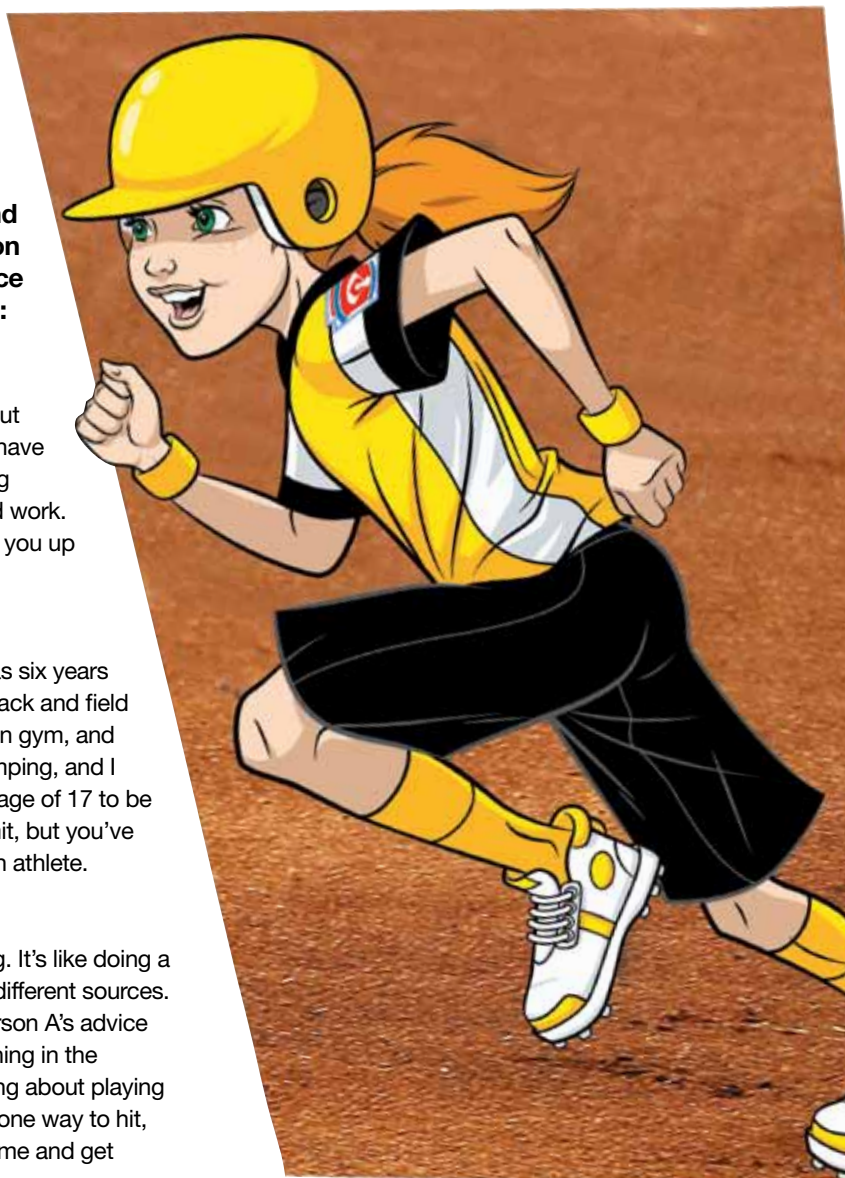
A lot of people don't like to go out and run and exercise, but there's a reason people do it: to get better. Every day you have to try to get better. As you get older, conditioning and lifting weights — when you're not used to it — can be hard, hard work. But if you push yourself when you're younger, it really sets you up for when you get old enough to train more seriously.

Day In, Day Out

You can get better by playing other sports. Ever since I was six years old, my dad would take me to go train down at the local track and field facility almost every day. He would also take me to an open gym, and we would go in and play basketball and get our blood pumping, and I think that was important. You can't teach someone at the age of 17 to be competitive, so it has to start early. Obviously, there's a limit, but you've got to be pushed to the limit sometimes to get better as an athlete.

Be a Bookworm

Utilize your resources. Go read stuff on pitching and hitting. It's like doing a research paper in which you're going to get facts from all different sources. You're not going to use just one source; you might like Person A's advice more than Person B's, but maybe you can still find something in the second person's advice that helps you. That's the cool thing about playing a sport. There's not one way to skin a cat, and there's not one way to hit, and there's not one way to throw or field. Research the game and get better at every opportunity you can. ♦



COURTESY UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON; ILLUSTRATION BY LAWRENCE CHRISTMAS



Troy Tulowitzki
Shortstop
Colorado Rockies

I played a lot of Wiffle Ball with my friends. We would talk about playing in the Little League World Series all the time.

When I was 12 years old, we were one game away from going to Williamsport — we even played on TV. I manned shortstop and pitched sometimes, but I didn't pitch the game that was on TV. I was at short during that one and I was awful. I remember striking out and going back to the dugout pretty upset. We lost and it was pretty tough to take. But I kept track of the team that beat us in the tournament, and to this day, I still watch the tournament every year. I almost played in it, and it was my dream.



Heath Bell
Pitcher
San Diego Padres

As a kid, I would pretend I was trying to hit a home run to win Game 7 of the World Series, or robbing a home run or pitching in the big game. Growing up watching the Angels, Padres, Red Sox and Cubs on TV, I just loved the game. My parents said that I was the only one out of their four kids who could go to the ballpark and not ask for a thing. I didn't want popcorn. I just wanted to watch the game, ever since I started playing when I was 5.

I looked up to Nolan Ryan, Roger Clemens, and then as I was getting older, it was Troy Percival and Trevor Hoffman. And I always imitated Jim Edmonds with everything.

BOYS OF SUMMER

When I was a kid ...

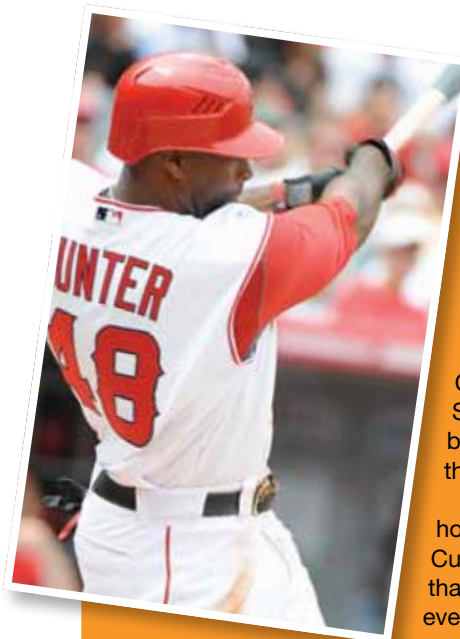


Brian Wilson
Pitcher
San Francisco Giants

I looked up to Nolan Ryan and Robb Nen — not because he was a Giant, but because he threw absolute cheese.

He was really fun to watch. Same thing with Nolan. He gets up there, you take a massive hack off him, he's going to send you a message with the next pitch.

I admired Ryan's work ethic. Not that I got to play with the guy, obviously, but you would hear about how hard he worked. It's just nice to hear about guys going the extra mile to get strong. Regardless of what people think about how you develop velocity, or what makes people throw harder than other people, I think it has to do with hard work.



Torii Hunter
Outfield
Los Angeles Angels

I loved Andre Dawson when I was growing up. I was from Arkansas, so we didn't have a local professional team. But WGN was broadcasting Chicago games everywhere. So the Cubs were the only ballclub that we watched — those guys and the Braves.

Dawson, when he hit 49 home runs that one year with the Cubs, and he had the curl and that stiff front leg ... I watched every Cubs game, and if I had a game that night, I'd go out and hit

just like him. Stiff front leg, and I had the curl. Everything like that. He was one of my favorite players ever.

fun AND games

WORD SEARCH

Below are players who switched teams this offseason. Their last names can be found in all directions: up, down, backward, forward and diagonally. See how many you can spot!

B	A	L	O	G	T	W	S	K	N	E	J
Z	C	E	X	A	K	Y	D	M	H	F	K
U	M	R	O	T	J	U	L	E	E	G	A
P	E	N	A	Z	L	M	O	N	P	O	M
J	P	O	E	W	U	K	N	U	V	A	Z
A	H	P	M	E	F	E	Y	M	E	E	V
M	B	A	D	R	R	O	E	M	L	X	T
V	U	M	B	T	H	U	R	A	V	L	Z
D	A	K	Y	H	L	Y	Z	D	Z	O	G
K	M	A	R	T	I	N	D	U	L	Y	J
X	R	P	O	A	O	U	M	N	H	U	R
Z	J	L	T	G	R	E	I	N	K	E	B

SCRAMBLED

Can you unscramble the names of these Hall of Famers who played Little League Baseball? Read the hint if you need help.

1. DWEA GOSGB

This longtime Red Sox third baseman won a World Series with the New York Yankees in 1996.

— — — — —

2. GREGOE RTETB

This Kansas City Royals legend made a run at a .400 batting average in 1980, when he finished with a .390 mark.

— — — — —

3. TVESE NRLOCAT

Won four Cy Young Awards and was a member of the 1980 Phillies team that won the World Series.

— — — — —

4. LIRLEO RNFGIES

This pitcher won the AL Cy Young and MVP awards with the Brewers in 1981.

— — — — —

5. LCA NKIRPE RJ

This Baltimore Orioles' Iron Man broke Lou Gehrig's consecutive games played streak in 1995.

— — — — —

6. KMEI MHSDCIT

The MVP of the 1980 World Series.

— — — — —

7. LCRA IMEKRSZYATS

The last hitter to win the Triple Crown (league leader in home runs, RBI and batting average).

— — — — —

(Zack) **GREINKE**

(Cliff) **LEE**

(Carlos) **PENA**

(Adrian) **GONZALEZ**

(Carl) **CRAWFORD**

(Jayson) **WERTH**

(Mark) **REYNOLDS**

(Bobby) **JENKS**

(Adam) **DUNN**

(Russell) **MARTIN**



MIX 'n' MATCH

Match the stat with the player who ranks first in that category among active Big Leaguers.

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Batting Average | A) Alex Rodriguez |
| 2. Games Played | B) Carl Crawford |
| 3. Runs Scored | C) Omar Vizquel |
| 4. Hits | D) Manny Ramirez |
| 5. Doubles | E) Albert Pujols |
| 6. Triples | F) Ivan Rodriguez |
| 7. Walks | G) Juan Pierre |
| 8. Stolen Bases | H) Jason Kendall |
| 9. Extra-base Hits | I) Derek Jeter |
| 10. Hit By Pitch | J) Jim Thome |

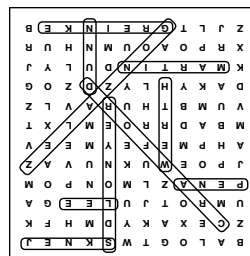
WHERE AM I FROM?

Match the player's home state or country with its capital.

- | | | |
|------------------|---|------------------|
| states | 1. Josh Hamilton (North Carolina) | A. Olympia |
| | 2. Tim Lincecum (Washington) | B. Nashville |
| | 3. Dustin Pedroia (California) | C. Honolulu |
| | 4. David Price (Tennessee) | D. Raleigh |
| | 5. Shane Victorino (Hawaii) | E. Sacramento |
| countries | 6. Jason Bay (Canada) | F. Sydney |
| | 7. Aroldis Chapman (Cuba) | G. Havana |
| | 8. Grant Balfour (Australia) | H. Santo Domingo |
| | 9. Felix Hernandez (Venezuela) | I. Ottawa |
| | 10. Ubaldo Jimenez (Dominican Republic) | J. Caracas |



JETER



WORD SEARCH

- ANSWERS**
1. Wade Boggs; 2. George Brett; 3. Steve Carlton; 4. Rollie Schmidt; 5. Cal Ripken Jr.; 6. Mike Jeter; 7. Carl Yastrzemski; 8. George Brett; 9. Steve Carlton; 10. Wade Boggs
- MIX 'n' MATCH**
 1. E; 2. C; 3. A; 4. I; 5. F; 6. B; 7. J; 8. G; 9. D; 10. H
- WHERE I'M FROM**
 1. D; 2. A; 3. E; 4. B; 5. C; 6. I; 7. G; 8. F; 9. J; 10. H

PILLING/MLB PHOTOS