

T.O.C. Takes HRBL Title with Thrilling Walk-Off Win

The inaugural HomeRun Baseball League season came to an exciting conclusion today with Tamworth Outing Club defeating Delaney's 7-6. Going in, all indications were that this would be a close, hard-fought battle as the teams had shown themselves to be evenly matched during regular-season play.

The day got off to a good start when former big leaguer and friend to TOC baseball, Jimmy Driscoll, fired a strike with the ceremonial first pitch.

TOC tabbed Devin Nordlund to start and "Nordy" did what he always does, stays around the plate and gets a lot of ground balls. Unfortunately, a couple were misplayed and then supplemented by a pair of flair hits which allowed four Delaney runners to come home.

Quickly down 4-0, the TOC crew wasted no time in chipping away at the lead, getting two runs back in the bottom of the first, powered by Zach Smith's leadoff triple. Nordlund and his defense fared much better in the second and third with two easy, scoreless innings.

Heading into the bottom of the third, Delaney's was maintaining a 4-2 lead but that would change in the bottom of the inning. Brady King led off with a walk and was followed by back-to-back doubles from Dylan West and Riley Fletcher and a single from Jackson Ogren, and the TOC scored four runs to move ahead 6-4.

In what would be "Nordy's" last inning before yielding to Smith, the visitors managed to add a run (unearned) to pull back within one run. Tamworth held on to a slim 6-5 lead as the game entered the final inning.

Reliever Zach Smith had held Delaney's scoreless for two innings and was looking to make it three before a leadoff error to start the seventh inning



allowed Delaney's to knot things up at 6.

With the top of the order due up for the TOC in the home half of the seventh, the odds of scoring, and winning, seemed pretty good. Both Smith and King hit the ball sharply but right at defenders. Now down to their last out before the game would be pushed to extra innings, slugger Dylan West came to the plate. Dylan took a couple monstrous cuts that produced foul balls that went out of play and left him with two strikes when he served a single to right field. West now stood at first base as the potential winning run for cleanup hitter Riley Fletcher. Fletcher took the fourth pitch he saw and hit it to deep right to bring West all the way around from first to win the game—and the Championship—for Tamworth.

A truly great way to end a great season in what was a successful first year for the HomeRun Baseball League.

I want to thank all who came out to cheer us on at every game, it meant a lot to have a terrific cheering section all season.

Also, thanks go out to the Brett

School staff and A.D. Parker Roberts for the use of the field and assisting with scheduling and field preparation.

Obviously a big thank you goes out to the Tamworth Outing Club for their continued support of summer baseball.

My coaching staff deserves a great deal of thanks for making everything run smoothly throughout the season—Mike Brooks and Doc Walker are essential to the program, and the help of Emery Roberts and Kelley Jon Scruggs cannot be overlooked either.

Finally, I want to thank all the players for their hard work and dedication all season that led up to capturing the HRBL title. Getting this Championship is extra special as this is such a good group of kids, many of whom have played for me the last few years during the summer and at the high school. You should all be very proud of what you accomplished this summer!

