



Challenge Chatter

The Official Newsletter of the 2008 Ramada 3 Nations Challenge



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It was a great night for ball last night, as more than 1800 fans had the chance to watch the opening ceremonies for the 2008 Ramada 3 Nations Challenge. During the ceremony, the Host Committee was pleased to introduce three members of the silver medal winning team at the Junior Men's World Softball Championship that finished up last weekend in Whitehorse: **Devon McCullough**, **Derek Arsenie** and **Travis Dauvin**. Derek had a chance to receive the opening pitch from a Canadian Softball legend **Gene McWillie** whose fastball still has a lot of zip in it. Gene will be the guest speaker at the players/sponsors luncheon at 11:45 Saturday at the Ramada Hotel. The boys are pictured to the left with Saskatchewan's three players playing for Team Canada this weekend, Keith Mackintosh, Trevor Ethier and Dean Holoien.

Canada added another player from the list originally printed in the program, **Nick Underhill**. Underhill a resident of Campbell River, BC, was a member of Canada's National Team at the most recently held ISF World Championship and Pan American Games and was selected again to play in this event. His late confirmation to the team came about as a result of a delay in confirming arrangements with his employer. Nick is a proven top quality Senior Men's pitcher, whose experience will be counted on greatly here in Saskatoon.



Team Canada Rookie **Grant Patterson**, pictured to the left, was incorrectly captioned with the wrong picture in the program. The tall right hander plays for Midland Explorers in Michigan. He was born in Brampton but now calls Toronto home. Grant has packed lot of top caliber experience in his short career as he been playing in the ISC's since 1998 and has also has played in three Canadian Championships. The 25 year old, is a former Laurentian University All Star Volleyball player.



Canada vs. USA 6:30

In game one of the 3 Nations Challenge, Canada defeated the U.S. 4- 2. The Americans pitched very well as Canada never had more than 4 hitters bat in any inning. The Canadians managed only four hits off pitchers **Sean Kelly** (5 innings) and **Cody Thomsosn** (2 innings). **Ryan Wolfe** was the Team Canada hero as he made sure Canada got the most out of those four hits. Wolfe led off the game f with a deep solo home run to left field and hit another in the 5th with **Jeff Crawford** and **Jason Hill** aboard. He was basically the whole offense as he finished the game 2 for 3 with 4 RBI and 2 runs

scored. Canadian starter **Frank Cox** gave up the American's only run in the fourth inning which was unearned. **Blake Miller** Walked and an error by third baseman **Rob Giesbrecht** on **Steve Pinochio's** bunt advanced Blake Miller. Miller scored on **Matt Palazzo's** fielder's choice that got caught up in first baseman **Derek Mayson's** glove forcing him to take the out at first. **Nick Underhill** shut out the U.S in the last two innings giving up two of the Americans five hits. The Americans played solid defense turning two double plays helping to dispose of the few base runner Canada did manage to get.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	R	H	E
Canada	1	0	0	0	3	0	0	4	4	1
United State	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	2	5	0

Winning Pitcher: Frank Cox Losing Pitcher: Sean Kelly



USA vs. Japan 8:30

In the late game, the fans witnessed a slugfest as the United States and Japan combined for twenty hits in an 8-3 Japanese victory. Shortstop **Ryuji Hazeyama** led the Japanese with a homerun and two singles, **Norihiko Aoyama** also chipped in with two singles. Right Fielder **Chase Turner** led the American attack with a home run and a single and second baseman **Nate Devine** went 2 for 3 with a pair of singles. The Japanese blew open a 3-0 ball game in the top of the sixth inning with five runs on two pinch hit homeruns. The first was a grand slam by **Masateru Matsuoka** off losing pitcher Travis Price. It was followed by a solo shot by **Kenji Nakamura**. **Paul Algar** replaced Price after that shot, giving up only one hit to the six batters he faced. In spite of the Japanese power surge, the Americans did not die however, as they came storming back with two runs in the bottom of the inning as a result of two run single with two out by Devine. The three different Japanese pitchers combined for twelve strikeouts while giving up just two walks. Price struggled with his control giving up six walks and nine hits in five and a third innings.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	R	H	E
Japan	0	2	0	1	0	5	0	8	10	0
United States	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	3	10	0

Winning Pitcher: Tatsuya Hamaguchi Losing Pitcher: Travis Price

Tonight is Canada's turn for the double header as they play Japan at 6:30 and the Americans at 8:30. A sweep would make it very hard for anyone to knock them out of first place. Team Canada will be looking for a better offensive showing than they had last night as they work to spread out the offense a little more. Last night Coach **Mark Smith** went with the veterans on the hill, so we can count on seeing some of the younger members of the staff tonight. United States are winless in three games against Canada after losing a close one last night as well a double header to Canada in pre tournament action in Melfort on Wednesday night. They will look to break that streak tonight. The Japanese will provide a tough test for Canada as they have been strong in all facets of the game. They swept a very tough Aspen Interiors team in Prince Albert on Wednesday and looked real good against the United States in the late game last night.