



For immediate release

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Challenger Division Teams Selected for Little League Baseball World Series Exhibition Game

SOUTH WILLIAMSPORT, Pa. (Jan. 24, 2013) - The two leagues that will be sending their Challenger Division programs to the 2013 Little League Baseball World Series have been selected. Representing more than 30,000 Challenger players and more than 900 leagues worldwide will be Illinois District 13 from the Chicago area, and California District 57 from the San Francisco area.

The exhibition game will be played Aug. 24 at Little League Volunteer Stadium, one of the two stadiums used for the Little League Baseball World Series, in South Williamsport, Pa. The Challenger game will be part of the schedule on the final Saturday of the 67th Little League Baseball World Series that also will feature the International and U.S. championship games. The International and U.S. champions advance to the World Championship game on Sunday, Aug. 25.

The Little League Baseball World Series Challenger Exhibition Game has been a part of the Little League Baseball World Series schedule since 2001.

“The Challenger Exhibition Game has become an integral part of the annual Little League Baseball World Series schedule, and has played an important role in the growth of the program,” Sam Ranck, Little League’s Director of the Challenger Division, said. “It has proved to be an experience the participants and fans will talk about for the rest of their lives.”

The Illinois District 13 Challenger Division, founded in 1994, has 165 players and 14 teams from the combination of the Bartlett, Tri-Cities and Woodstock Little Leagues in the Greater Chicago area. In September 2012, District 13 held its first Challenger Jamboree to promote special needs baseball throughout the area.

“Being selected by Little League as one of two Challenger teams in the country is truly an honor,” Mark Johnson, Assistant District 13 Administrator, said. “Our kids, buddies, leagues, families and communities are extremely excited to be part of such a special event.

“Playing at Volunteer Stadium in August is something that every Little Leaguer dreams about,” Mr. Johnson said. “Making that dream a reality for a team of kids from Illinois is a memory that will last a lifetime. We cannot thank Little League enough for this wonderful opportunity!”

The California Little League District 57 Challenger program has 100 players participating in its program which is playing its 23rd season.

“It is a great honor to be selected to participate in the Challenger exhibition game at the 2013 Little League World Series,” Mike Muranaka, Director of the California District 57 Challenger Division program, said. “This is truly one of the great events for all the leagues in our District and for the players, coaches and coordinators in our Challenger program.

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“The Challenger program in our District was started shortly after Little League started the Challenger Division in 1989,” Mr. Muranaka, the 2012 Little League Challenger Award winner, said. “Currently we have eight teams from nearly every city and town within our District, and we hopefully will be adding another two teams in 2013. We have a great group of coordinators to organize the individual teams and strong support from the 12 teams in the District who provide uniforms and equipment for each team.”

For the past eight years, California District 57 has hosted the Western Region Challenger Jamboree in Dublin, Calif. Teams from throughout the Western Region, including Southern and Central California, and as far away as Phoenix, have attended the Jamboree.

The Challenger Division was established in 1989 as a separate division of Little League that enables boys and girls with developmental and physical challenges, ages 4-18, or up to age 22 if still enrolled in high school, to enjoy the game of baseball.

More information on Little League’s Challenger Division can be found on the Little League website, at: www.LittleLeagueChallenger.org; by contacting Mr. Ranck, Little League’s Director of the Challenger Division, at: Challenger@LittleLeague.org; or on Facebook, at: www.facebook.com/LittleLeagueChallenger.

History of the Challenger Exhibition Game at the Little League Baseball World Series

- **2001** – The three teams in the South Challenger Division of Pennsylvania District 12 were split into two teams and the first game was played at the World Series.
- **2002** – Danville (Pa.) Area Little League vs. Pennsylvania District 12
- **2003** – East Lycoming Challenger Division (Hughesville, Pa.) vs. Danville (Pa.) Area Little League
- **2004** – Canton (Ohio) Little League vs. Horsham (Pa.) Little League
- **2005** – Peachtree City (Ga.) Little League vs. Frederick (Md.) Little League
- **2006** – Shamokin-Coal Township Little League (Shamokin, Pa.) vs. Front Royal (Pa.) Little League
- **2007** – Lewisburg (Pa.) Little League vs. Danville (Pa.) Area Little League
- **2008** – Tucson (Ariz.) Little League vs. West University Little League (Houston, Texas)
- **2009** – Lackawanna County Challenger (South Scranton Little League – Clarks Summit, Pa.) vs. Springfield (Va.) Little League
- **2010** – Cherry Hill (N.J.) American Little League vs. Friendswood (Texas) Little League
- **2011** – Lafayette (La.) Little League vs. Baugo Little League (Mishawaka, Ind.)
- **2012** - Southwest Forsyth Little League (Clemmons, N.C.) vs. Rhode Island District 2 Challenger (Portsmouth, R.I.)

Little League Baseball and Softball is the world’s largest organized youth sports program, with nearly 2.6 million players and one million adult volunteers in every U.S. state and scores of other countries.

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