

- Baseball

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*'It's just another game to me.'* — APTOS PITCHER KYLE ANDERSON



THE HEAT IS ON



# Winner-take-all championship tonight

By JULIE JAG

SENTINEL STAFF WRITER

SAN BERNARDINO — Monday morning, the San Bernardino mountains are hidden in a shroud of smog.

Not fog. Smog.

With heavy brown clouds hanging over the city and temperatures breaking 100 daily, it hasn't exactly been perfect baseball weather, especially not for 12 boys who are used to cool and often foggy Aptos.

"You should have heard them on the way over here," said Dave Anderson, the manager of the Aptos Little League All-Stars, from the poolside shade of an Ontario hotel. "They said 'we can't wait to get back where it's cool.'"

That doesn't mean, though, that the boys are planning on losing their Western Region Tournament championship game against the Arrowhead, Ariz., team tonight and making an early trip back. Instead they hope to win and advance to the Little League World Series in Williamsport, Pa., where the temperature averages 85 degrees with occasional showers.

Besides, the Aptos boys have found creative ways to deal with the scalding temperatures. A dip in the pool has become part of their daily routines, as has sitting in air-conditioned movie theaters.

In the dugout and on the field, water fights are favored. "It's kind of fun to get soaked in the dugout," said Andrew Biancardi, Aptos' shortstop. "We're always spraying each other."

Combating the heat may have become a game in itself, but having to do so during the championship game may hinder the Aptos players more than their adversaries from Arizona, where August temperatures average 100 degrees

or more daily.

Anderson said he's not concerned.

Last time the two teams met, in round-robin play, the game started just after noon and the temperature was a boiling 112 degrees. Yet, Aptos emerged from that game looking cool and collected with a 5-2 victory. By his estimation, the heat did as much damage to Arizona as it did to Aptos.

"It's not like it's unfair. You just have to get used to it," he said.

In that game last Wednesday, Anderson had to pull his son and starting pitcher, Kyle Anderson, after four innings. But the manager said the left-hander had to sit more because of fatigue from throwing two days earlier than from weakness caused by the heat. Tonight, Kyle Anderson will start on the mound again. Instead of sunlight and heat, though, he'll be battling the stadium lights and a crowd of about 10,000, plus the glare of ESPN2's TV cameras, which will be broadcasting the 7 p.m. game live.

"It's just another game to me," said Kyle Anderson, who has allowed just two runs on nine hits with 14 strikeouts while facing 44 batters during the Western Region Tournament. "I think we'll be fine. We already played them once, and they don't have their best pitcher."

Arizona's best pitcher, right-hander Nick Carillo, earned the 4-3 win to advance the team over the Peccole team of Las Vegas, Nev., in the semifinals Sunday. So, Aptos, which defeated Taylorsville, Utah, on Sunday to advance, will likely see No. 2 pitcher Chris Capper.

Capper, also a righthander, has allowed three runs on eight hits with four strikeouts in facing 28 batters.

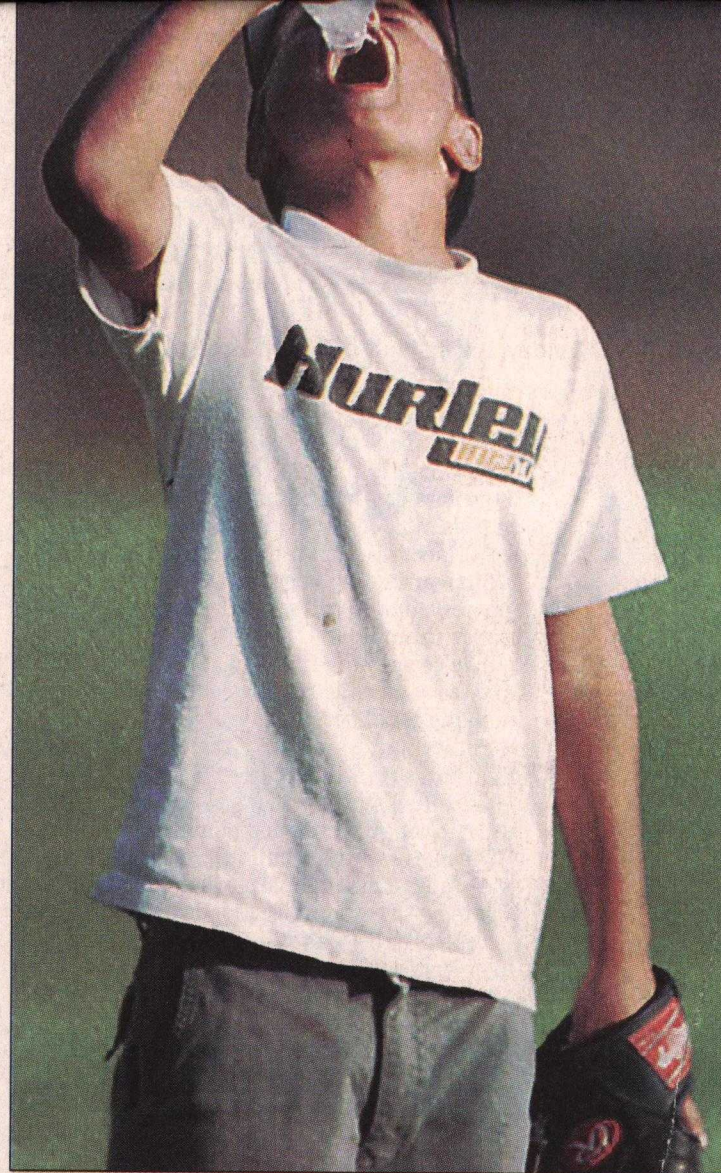
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## Aptos All-Stars

No.	Name, age	Position
00	Mark Lamothe, 11	reserve
1	Drew McCauley, 12	Catcher
3	Jarred Bachan, 11	2B/3B
7	Kyle Anderson, 12	P/OF
8	Kevin Eichhorn, 12	P/2B
9	Andrew Biancardi, 12	SS
10	Cesar Zermeno, 12	reserve
11	Tyler Raymond, 12	OF
14	Brian Godoy, 12	OF/3B
15	Kevin Farmer, 12	1B
24	Justin Burns, 12	reserve
25	Curtis Worden, 12	OF

**Manager** — Dave Anderson

**Coach** — Mark Eichhorn



## Western Region Tournament

■ **TODAY'S FINAL:** Aptos vs. Arrowhead, Ariz., 7 p.m.

■ **BIG PICTURE:** The winner of tonight's matchup in San Bernardino advances to the Little League World Series, Aug. 16-25, in Williamsport, Pa.

■ **HISTORY:** Should Aptos advance, it would be the first Santa Cruz County team to reach the Little League World Series

■ **TV:** ESPN2 (live)

**TOP:** Brian Godoy takes a break from the hectic pace he and his Aptos teammates have set during the Western Region Little League Tournament in San Bernardino.

**LEFT:** Jarred Bachan quenches his thirst during practice Monday. The Aptos boys take on Arizona in the title game tonight.

Bill Lovejoy/Sentinel photos

# Aptos

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Aptos also takes comfort in the fact its team is both bigger and more savvy than Arizona's. Aptos entered the Western tournament as one of the tallest and bulkiest teams, sporting three boys that stand 5-foot-8 or taller.

Arizona is one of the smallest. It is also one of the youngest, with six 11-year-olds filling the 14-man roster. Anderson said generally, 11-year-olds are much less mature than 12-year-olds.

"That doesn't make them as good as decision-makers in situations that have pressure involved or anxiety involved," he said.

Likewise, the younger players typically can't hit the ball as far or as well as their older counterparts.

If Arizona doesn't measure up, Aptos can worry less about losing an entire game on one good swing of the bat. During the tournament, however, Arizona has been making solid contact. In 126 at-bats, the Arrowhead team has gotten a hit 24 percent of the time.

Aptos, in 111 at-bats, has earned a hit 23 percent of the time.

Carillo has been especially adept for Arizona, scoring six runs on seven hits for a .412 batting average. Aptos' best hitter has been Biancardi, who has scored four runs on six hits and sports a .500 batting average.

So, as Anderson said, "Big doesn't necessarily guarantee a win."

There is one more reason Anderson said Aptos' chances of advancing to the Little League World Series look about as good as a fog bank — attitude.

"Their swagger was back last night," Anderson said of his Aptos squad. "I haven't seen that in a while."

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