

Sports Specific Baseball 9U and 11U

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The humidity and afternoon showers that are routine along the Gulf Coast did not stop the 9U Sports Specific Baseball team from playing hard against some of the best competition in the country. Coming off a State Championship victory, the AAA squad from Albany, Georgia set their sights on making a run at becoming the Global World Series Champions as the tournament took place across Lower Alabama in Gulf Shores, Orange Beach, and Foley. With a win in their first game and a rainout on Friday, Sports Specific sent Smith Pinson to the mound to continue the winning streak. Unfortunately, with several costly throwing errors in the field, their opponents from League City, Texas capitalized on the defensive mishaps and took an early lead. With momentum swung against them, Sports Specific came up to bat in the fourth inning with a new approach. It was the starting pitcher, Scott Pinson, who singled for the first hit for Sports Specific and got their quieted dugout and eager-to-cheer fans back into the game. After a walk, first baseman, Jeffery Bryan, roped a double to left field to score two runs and keep the energy up on the Sports Specific side. Unfortunately, a few batters later a diving catch by the right fielder ended the threat, and Sports Specific was not able to mount a comeback as they fell 11-3 in their second game of pool play. In game two of the doubleheader the heat and overbearing sun took its toll on the boys from Albany. Falling quickly behind 8-1, extra hitter, Jack Thompson, stepped up and had a hard hit single to get the Sports Specific bats going in the second. Passed balls plagued their opponent from Lake Butler, Florida as their lead was cut in half, making it 8-4. A double by Lake Butler pushed across one more run to make it 9-4 but that would be all the scoring they would do in an inning that saw Jacob Dunn flash some leather and make a diving catch in right field. Kyle Toole started Sports Specific going with a single in the third followed by several base hits and an unfortunate hard line out to

the second baseman. An aggressive double steal kept the inning going as they were able to score twice more to make it a 9-6 game. Sports Specific was, unfortunately, hard pressed for that one hit to push them over the edge as they were defeated 9-8 in a game that showed the Sports Specific boys that they had the ability to come back no matter how many runs they are down. With an overall season record of 34-15, the boys headed home with a winning record as well as a hunger to play well next year and return to Alabama to take home the World Series trophy.

Sports Specific was well represented at the Global World Series as their 11U AAA team also qualified for the tournament in Gulf Shores and played hard throughout despite the sweltering heat and the distractions that come with playing on the road. Facing off with a major league division team from Denham Springs, Louisiana, Layne Waird took the mound with a confidence that carried him through the early innings despite falling behind 4-0 following a couple of errors. Back to back singles in the second by Hunter Futch and Logan Fleming showed promise of a scoring opportunity for Sports Specific, but they were unable to do any damage. After loading the bases in the third following two walks and a base hit by Jack Kimbrell, a pitching change was in order for the team from Louisiana. The new pitcher ran into the clutch John Logan who drove in two RBI's. Cole Mitchell followed suit by singling to score another run for Sports Specific. Waird got his revenge as he tied the game with a base hit to make it 4-4 and then Futch had a go ahead RBI hit to make it a 5-4 game in favor of Sports Specific. The old baseball saying, "walks kill," was in order in the bottom of the third as a pair lead to a game tying score to make it 5-5. New pitcher, John Logan, entered the game to follow up the gutsy performance by Waird. After three quick ground balls, Sports Specific had a shutdown inning that got them back in the dugout and lifted the energy of the entire team. Sports Specific then took the lead 6-5 with three singles in the fifth. The bottom of the inning saw quality pitches made to force back to back put outs. Arguably the play of the game was made by the third baseman, Hunter Futch, as he stayed down and kept his eyes on a hard hit one hopper right into his glove followed by a strong throw to first to record the final out and a victory

for Sports Specific. Following the game Coach Revell reminded his boys that “Heart, hustle, and hard work will overcome talent any day.”

Sunday’s first game saw a one hour rain delay that may have been a momentum killer as Sports Specific dropped a close game to a tight knit group from Baton Rouge, Louisiana 8-5. That left the Albany natives playing for third place against a formidable team from Jenks, Oklahoma. The final game again saw Sports Specific fall quickly behind 4-0 beset by pass balls and walks. With nothing to show for loading the bases in the second, the bottom half saw two great defensive plays in the outfield highlighted by a pinpoint throw up the line by center fielder, Layne Waird, to nail an Oklahoma runner attempting to score at home. Sports Specific was unable to get their bats going in the tournament finale and ended up falling to the visiting team 11-2. The 11U Sports Specific boys headed home to Albany with an overall record of 33-14 and fourth place in the Global World Series but not before they broke it down with their favorite age modified cheer GATA “Get after that adversary!”