

Wyoming edges out Del Norte 13-12 in regional

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The second day of the West Regional in Sacramento went much better for the Del Norte Little League Senior All Stars.

After suffering a 21-0 loss at the hands of Arizona on Thursday, Del Norte found itself in the closest game of the entire regional tournament so far against Wyoming. The Warriors put together a rally to score nine straight runs and grab a one-run lead, but Wyoming was able to turn the tables in the seventh inning with a walk off single for a 13-12 victory over Del Norte.

“It was the only one run game in the tournament,” said Del Norte manager Warren Loftin. “We were down by eight and we were able to come back and take the lead. We just lost in the last inning when they had the last at bat.”

Wyoming got off to a hot start on Friday with four runs in the first inning to grab a quick 4-0 lead, but Del Norte managed to answer right back with three runs in the top of the second inning to pull within one run.

After that the Warriors bats went cold for a few innings as Wyoming started to pull ahead.

“They just scored one run here, two runs there, they were all spread out,” Loftin said. “(Wyoming) didn’t have one big rally. They just inched ahead and we weren’t able to get our bats going. We weren’t striking out, we were just hitting pop flies or getting out on the bases, so we weren’t able to get any runs in.”

That all changed in the fifth inning when the Warriors put up five more runs to pull within 11-8, followed by four more runs in the sixth inning to take the lead at 12-11.

It was in stark contrast to the previous day when Loftin said the team started to get down on itself after falling behind by about six runs midway through the second inning.

“They kept their morale together (on Friday),” Loftin said. “They played as a good team, they stuck together and they kept each other motivated. They were just stayed positive and didn’t give up the whole day. The day before it was kind of a rough day. One kid kind of got down on himself and it kind of trickled through the rest of the team.”

Del Norte held onto its one run advantage heading into the bottom of the seventh inning and managed to get the first Wyoming batter out, coming within two outs of picking up the win. But Wyoming was able to take advantage of an error to tie the game back up, then grabbed the victory with a walk off base hit down the right field line.

Although the loss eliminated Del Norte from its first ever appearance in the West Regional Tournament, the Warriors felt like they were able to leave Sacramento on a bit of a high note.

“We told them just to be proud of themselves for being there and competing,” Loftin said. “They were very competitive and there were other teams there that didn’t even score a run. They represented Del Norte very well.”

As it turned out, the first day of the tournament was pretty rough for several teams as Northern California beat Nevada 18-0 in the first game and Hawaii handed Wyoming a 14-0 loss as well.

Arizona, which topped Del Norte in the first round, was one of the final two undefeated teams in the tournament prior to Monday’s showdown with Hawaii.

“We really didn’t fare too badly,” Loftin said. “We scored 12 runs in that second game, but the team from Washington was shut out in both of their games, and the team from Nevada only scored one run in the tournament. So we fared pretty well compared to some of the other teams.”

In the end, Loftin said Del Norte Little League’s first trip to the regional round was a success.

“It was just a great experience to even be part of the tournament,” Loftin said. “It was neat to meet all of the other teams from the other states, and the kids intermingled with the other teams. It was just a great experience for all of them to be a part of.”

This season the Del Norte Senior All Stars were fairly young for their age group, so must of this year’s 10-man roster will be eligible to play again next summer.

“Pretty much the whole team will be eligible to play again next year for us, so hopefully we stick together and maybe we will get another opportunity,” Loftin said. “They have seen for themselves that we have an opportunity to win. We just need to work hard and stick together and it pays off in the end.”

