



CHAMP'S CHATTER

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE ISF XII WORLD MEN'S SOFTBALL
CHAMPIONSHIP – SUNDAY, JULY 26 EDITION



We have finally made it to **Championship Sunday**. When the tickets have been counted organizers expect the total attendance for the event to be over 50,000. Men's softball is alive and well and the people of Saskatoon as well as the fans from around the world, who attended this championship, drove that point home. Way to go everyone! If you have not had enough and would like to see these games again, you will be able to check them out on TV. Those trucks outside the gate and the camera's around the park are here to produce the game to be broadcast Wednesday and Friday on Roger's Sport Net. Play by play will be done by **Peter Loubardias** and color commentary by ISF Hall of Famer **Terry Baytor**. Plans are also underway to send the broadcast to dozens of countries around the world. The quest to crown the best men's softball team/country in the World has been whittled down to three teams. What will the final chant be: Can a da, Can a da or Aussie, Aussie, Aussie, hoy, hoy, hoy or We are the Back Sox, We are the Black Sox.

GAMES SUMMARIES

New Zealand regains form to jolt Japan in extra inning thriller

New Zealand executed offensive fundamentals to perfection, making the most of seven base hits and moving runners along the base-paths to win 10-6 in a thrilling extra-inning game to eliminate Japan. Japan stole a page from the Kiwi playbook, scoring four of their runs on automatics that cleared the outfield fences.

Early innings - In the first stanza, Japan P **Kunihiko Iida** acknowledged the long-ball potential of the Black Sox line-up. It's understandable that Kiwi lead-off batter OF **Thomas Makea** did not see a pitch that he could drive to the outfield. With Makea drawing a walk, NZ field manager Eddie Kohlhase uncharacteristically chose to play small ball. LF **Rhys Casley**, a surprise #2 batter in the Black Sox batting order, skillfully executed a two-strike swinging bunt advancing Makea to scoring position. 1B **Jarred Martin** then hit a high-hop, short-bouncer to SS **Kyuji Hazeyama** who deftly scooped the ball, but in hurrying his throw, sailed it wide of 1B. Makea scores and Sox lead by one. B1 - P **Heinie Shannon** enjoys a 1-2-3 inning, striking out one.

In T2, 3B **Brad Rona**, the tournament's leading hitter (.556 10/18) draws a tournament high tenth walk. With C **Pat Shannon** in batter's box, a passed ball moves Rona to 2B and Manager Kohlhase plays more small ball as Shannon bunts a short twister to 1B, moving Rona to 3B. DP **Paul Walford**, an unexpected starter, drives the first pitch over 3B just foul by inches. Walford continues fouling off an extended series of pitches before drawing the innings 2nd base-on-balls. NZ lead-off batter Makea demonstrates versatility and power, as Iida grooves one and Makea loses it in Tent City over the RF field. Three Iida walks have now been plated for a commanding 4-0 Black Sox lead.

B2 – Japan strikes back quickly with clean-up batter 1B **Yasumitsu Harada** filing a fly-ball flight-plan similar to Makea's, winging a towering automatic deposited between Boston Pizza and Great Western Beer tents. The Shannon battery-mate twins collaborate and three strike-outs end the inning.

T3 – Japan changes pitchers with P **Kazutaka Murasato** entering the circle and is greeted by 1B Martin's lead-off single. A well-executed sacrifice by Wilson moves Martin 60' to 2B. Kohlhase realizes importance of another single run, and brings in pinch runner Gareth Cooke. Hale, with a chopper that 3B **Masateru Matsuoka** leaps high to corral, is out by a step and the ever-dangerous Rona, grounds on to shortstop. B3 – P Shannon, with efficient 8-pitch inning, gets three up/three down. After three complete – **NZ 4 Japan 1**

T4 – Defensively, Japan moves SS **Kyuji Hazeyama** closer to 3B foul line and the "Shannon shift" backfires as C Shannon hits one through the gaping hole. Shannon steals 2B and on the overthrow, advances to 3B. SS **Roman Gabriel's** fly ball to short RF draws Ishimura's high throw with Shannon scoring on a text-book slide. **Will 5-1 lead be sufficient?**

B4 – P Shannon issues a walk to 1B Harada between two strike-outs, but successive hits by C **Yohei Ono**, 3B **Masateru Matsuoka** and LF **Shuhei Suzuki's** homer that clears the bases ties the game at 5. Kohlhase hooks P Shannon and P **Marty Grant** assumes the mounds. Grant Ks 2B Tsukamoto to end the inning.

T5- For Japan, DP **Kenji Namakura** enters the game defensively on the mound (3rd pitcher of the game) and Ks first batter. 1B Martin collects his 2nd single, and 2B Wilson's ground ball produces a 6-4-3 double play to escape damage. B5 – Japan puts a pair of runners on base, but Grant retires three in a row. After **5 complete – tied at 5**

T6 – New Zealand has two on, but leave them stranded. B6 – C **Yohei Ono** singles, and pinch runner **Yu Nishimori** attempts stealing, but a good throw by C Shannon and a superb tag by 2B Wilson erases him. **After 6 innings – tied 5-5.**

T7 when LF **Rhys Casley** walked, and eventually scored on 2B **Travis Wilson** line drive scored as an error off 3B Matsuoka's glove. Japan took it to extra innings in B7 when ninth batter 2B **Masakazu Tsukamoto** hit a well-placed single that 2B Wilson almost collared. With two outs, 1B **Yasumitsu Harada**, who had homered in B2, drove a single to knot the game at a half dozen. In T8, with tie-breaker runner **Ben Enoka** perched on 2B, Japan brought in its 4th pitcher **Tatsuya Hamaguchi**. 3B **Brad Rona** promptly bunted the runner to 3B. C **Pat Shannon** was awarded first when hit by a pitch. With lefty SS **Nathan Nukunuku** scheduled to bat, Japan manager **Yoshihiro Tange** opened another can of pitchers bringing in southpaw **Kengo Terui** to face Nukunuku, who lofted a fly ball to left field. With winds from the northwest, the ball carried short and LF **Shuhei Suzuki** sprinted a long way to get to the ball and was unable to contain it, scored as a hit. Enoka scored. Japan's strategy called for another pitching change, re-entering original starter **Kunihiko Iida**. For 2B Makea at the plate, this seemed like old times as Makea had walked and hit a three-run homer off Iida in the first two innings. Makea drilled a liner that big-hopped over SS **Kyuji Hazeyama**, and two more runs scored. Moments later

Black Sox prevail skewering the States

New Zealand did what it needed to do - win a pair of games to get where they wanted to be. The Black Sox objective all along has been a date with destiny as they attempt to become the first nation to win four consecutive ISF World men's titles. What was needed was a Saturday double-header sweep and the 7-3 win over USA was the 2nd of 2 and qualified the Kiwis for championship Sunday.

In T2, **3B Brad Rona**, elevated to the clean-up spot with his patient decision-making in selecting pitches, opened with a patented line-drive double to LF. DP **Donny Hale**, he of the long ball fame, squared to bunt, and provided a short pop-up down the right-side foul line. The throw to first plunked Hale in the right shoulder and Rona scored easily. Hale, like a stallion, legged it successfully to third base. **C Patrick Shannon** worked Koert on a series of foul ball swings and took a Koert offering in the small of the back to gain first base. With runners on the corners, **RF Rhys Casley** drilled a shot up the middle and the Sox were up by a pair.

In B2, **RF Chase Turner** opened with a first pitch double to the centre field fence. **CF Adam Lalonde** walks and next pitch the runners move up. With 2 out, an attempted pick-off by **C Pat Shannon** at 3B goes awry and Turner scores. **LF Kyle Magnusson** delivers a solid hit through the pitchers box, plating Lalonde. Score is square at two each.

The T4 provide the stage for the turning point with hits from Hale, **2B Travis Wilson** and a walk to Casley. With one out, **LF Daniel Milne** seized the moment with a three run automatic deposited into the darkness beyond the north-west stands. A walk to Makea was plated by **1B Jarrad Martin'** RBI single. Sox would never look back, leading 7-2.

And so, the Sox live for another day, and the big three, as anticipated, will duke it out on Day #10. Medals for all - colors to be determined.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	R	H	E
New Zealand	0	2	0	5	0	0	0	7	7	2
United States	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	3	8	1

What Happened to The Three Wise Men?? Predictions from Yesterday

Al Doran 4 /4 on Friday, 3/4 on Saturday (lesson - never pick with your heart)

John Thompson Went 3/ 4 on Friday and 3/4 on Saturday

Mark Loehndorf After going 3 /4 on the first day of the playoffs went 1/4 on day two.

PLAYOFF PREVIEW

12:00 – CANADA VS NEW ZEALAND



Mark's Prediction

Canada's first loss of the championship was a costly one. Although they were not eliminated, it forced them to win back to back games against two of

the world's superpowers. Expect the same approach in handling the pitchers that we have seen so far. Sean Whitten will start, until coach Mark Smith feels the Black Sox are getting too comfortable and in comes the relief. In the last two big games

the relief has started with Trevor Ethier. The Black Sox bats have shown some inconsistency lately, after being in tighter games with Japan and the US and getting shut down completely by **Adam Folkard** of Australia. In spite of slow starts Canada has been fairly solid at the plate throughout the championship. They have missed the bat of **Jody Eidt** who is nursing an injury and has been limited to just a couple of at bats, since the Australia game. **Ian Fehrman** looks ready to carry the team's offense. The Black Sox who at one time were battling close to .400 as a team have dropped off that pace considerably and have come back to the pack. The bats were hot last night which means they may be getting on a roll. They usually play vey solid, clever defense but they had committed 8 errors in their three games prior to their game against the US. All in all, they definitely look beatable. Canada is just the team to do it. They will be the team that halts the Black sox dynasty.

John's Prediction – New Zealand possesses an instinct for turning adversity into opportunity. The plan all along was a victory in the Championship game on Sunday. The obstacle that confronts them is Team Canada. The highly partisan fans will not deter the Kiwis and the Black Sox bats will be barking. In a nail-biter, the Black Sox will prevail for a down-under finale



3:00 – AUSTRALIA VS CANADA

Mark's Prediction The best two out of three games will win the world championship fro Canada or Australia. Australia looks like a team that will take advantage of their outstanding pitching. They

have great team speed; they can play the short game very well and are aggressive on the bases. All this is designed to consistently get just enough runs to win against good pitching, but depends on great pitching to keep the game close. The first time they met Adam Folkard could not so they lost. In last night's game Andrew Kirkpatrick keep them down so the they could score enough runs to win.

AUSTRALIA VS NEW ZEALAND



John's Prediction – the Aussie Steelers pitching has been the best of the assortment of fine hurlers from throughout the world. Kirkpatrick threw a 2-hit gem last night shutting down Canada

2-0 and righty Adam Folkard was simply outstanding in his awe-inspiring 1-hit taming of the Black Sox. In a repeat of the elimination match of Friday, New Zealand will be sharper following their modest three-game winning streak. Once again, solid "D" from both sides of the mound will prevail, whether it be Folkard alone or in tandem with Kirkpatrick.

TEAM HITTING AVERAGES

New Zealand	.342
Canada	.326
Australia	.311



You have seen them, you have heard them and some of you may have even made an interesting comment towards one of them. Without a doubt the most underappreciated group in the event are the officials. This fine crew has come here from around the world, basically as volunteers. They have been forced to take holidays or time off without pay from work just to make this championship great. Well done Blue Crew, keep up the great work!

Lou Davis, Leigh Evans, Juan Fajardo, Bob Henning, Jan Hora, Jens Jakobsen, Keith Kearney, Reinaldo Lanzavecchia, Shigeo Kamat, Gianluca Magnani, Vincent Maoeng, Mark Mcfarlane, Frank Omoe, Armando Rodregiz, Gary Skjerven, Wu Tamaki, Scott Thomas, Santos Vasquez, Supervisors: Julie Johnson, Bob Stanton, Brian Van Os

HITTING		AB	AP	H	2B	3B	HR	W	K	OB%	Sac	SB	R	RBI	SA	BA
Rafael Flores	Venezuela	15	16	9	1	0	3	1	1	69	0	0	5	10	1267	600
Galarza Eduardo	Puerto Rico	17	18	9	0	0	5	1	3	56	0	0	7	8	1412	529
Arturo Acacio	Venezuela	19	19	10	1	1	0	0	2	53	0	2	4	3	684	526
Carlos Ojeda	Venezuela	14	18	7	0	0	2	4	2	61	0	2	8	6	929	500
Brad Rona	New Zealand	23	35	11	4	0	1	10	4	68	1	3	13	7	783	478
Jorge Aranzamendi	Puerto Rico	21	21	10	1	1	1	0	2	52	0	0	5	2	762	476
Frederik Terkelsen	Denmark	19	23	9	2	0	2	3	1	61	0	1	7	4	895	474
Bruno Motroni	Argentina	17	19	8	3	0	2	2	2	53	0	0	5	5	1000	471
Hiraku Yokoyama	Japan	26	31	12	2	2	0	2	7	50	3	1	7	4	692	462
Yohei Ono	Japan	29	31	13	2	1	1	1	3	53	1	0	8	6	690	448
PITCHING		IP	Bat	P	H	W	K	R	ER	Wins	ERA	BK				
Andrew Kirkpatrick	Australia	19.0	72	268	3	7	34	4	0	3	0.00	0				
Kenji Nakamura	Japan	13.3	49	178	5	4	13	2	1	0	0.53	0				
Travis Price	United States	26.0	101	384	18	4	22	4	4	3	1.08	0				
Marty Grant	New Zealand	17.3	67	284	13	4	19	3	3	4	1.21	0				
Adam Folkard	Australia	28.7	104	415	10	6	47	6	5	4	1.22	1				
Jeremy Manley	New Zealand	21.0	97	365	18	13	26	6	4	3	1.33	0				
Todd Martin	Canada	16.7	71	264	15	6	22	5	4	4	1.68	2				
Leo Barredo	Philippines	13.7	59	204	18	2	12	6	5	1	2.56	0				
Lubomir Vrbensky	Czech	23.7	103	383	26	4	33	15	10	1	2.96	0				
James Darby	Great Britain	30.0	137	519	22	19	40	16	13	2	3.03	0				
Sean Whitten	Canada	15.3	63	227	10	4	25	9	7	0	3.20	0				