



Valparaiso Triple Crown Crosstown Classic Played for "The Love of Baseball"

By Barbara Jo Alfredson

Playing in Valpo's own **Little League "Triple Crown Crosstown Classic"** were the 9 & 10 year old players of the **Valpo Americans** and the **Cal Ripken Little League** teams. The game was played just before dusk on July 19, 2011 with hopes there will be many more to come.

There was a constant sea of green jersey's on the field and at bat during the **Triple Crown Crosstown Classic**, both teams being from Valpo and sporting "Valpo Green" jerseys. The **Valpo Americans** team is privately owned, with manager **Rob Behrend** and coaches **Rob Zborowski** and **Eric Delaney**.

On the team: **#14 Connor Brinson, #33 Sam Behrend, #4 Adrian Guzman, #12 Ronny Morey, #6 Matt Lahey, #34 Will Behrend, #7 Brady Delaney, #8 Jared Armstrong, and #24 Zach Zborowski**



Behrend commented that he would love to see the merger of the two teams into one league, he stated *"it would be nice to have the city fund both leagues and house a facility that would allow for one league, then we will have an elite baseball league and compete with any city, a facility similar to that of **Munster, IN.**"*



He continued, *"I was raised here in Valpo and I would like a facility here in Valpo so the kids coming up through the program would want to raise their kids here and not move away, say to Munster, and other communities."*

Playing for the **Parks Department** and managing The **Cal Ripken Little League Team** was, **Carl Cochran**, along with coaches, **Dom Catarello, Dan Frye, and Ed Casco**.

On the team: **#13 Carter Casco, #3 Sam Catarello, #2 Liam Cochran, #4 Max Conley, #10 Stephan Crowell, #14 Sarah Douglas, #15 Levi Kraker, #11 Ben Leyde, #16 Garrett Mroz, #11 Devin Mullins, #7 Ryan Troxel, #6 Danny Vamegas, and #9 Bryce Weiler**



There was one girl playing the "Classic" and that was **Sarah Douglas**. Sarah could hold her own out there playing on the **Cal Ripken Little League Team**. She is no stranger to playing sports, she is also a player for the **Pop Warner "Jr. Mighty Mights"** and also loves to play basketball at the **YMCA** and **Boys & Girls Club**. She might be small but she can play hard.

Leading the teams, parents, families and spectators in *"Take Me Out to the Ball Game"* was manager of the **Cal Ripken Little League Team, Carl Cochran**. During the fifth inning stretch, all joined in for the classic song. **Cochran** was also the announcer for the evening of the batting order, adding a little personal praise to each player that came up to bat.

The final score of the night was 21-7, with the **Valpo Americans** taking home the trophy, but all were winners. **Cochran** stated that *"the game was played all in the love of baseball."*

Coach Dan Frye added that they changed the rules a little just for fun. They played only 6 innings, put a different pitcher in every time and used a "no slaughter rule", in which, the game was not called if there was a team ahead by ten runs. *"It was for today only, just to have a fun game"* **Frye** stated.

Triple Crown Baseball and Softball Training Center was the official sponsor of the **Triple Crown Crosstown Classic Little League Game**. They are a baseball and softball training facility which prides itself on *"being the ideal facility for baseball team practice and softball team practice"*. They are located at 2902 Cascade Drive right here in Valpo.