

American League Race Still Close

The season's first half Birmingham Little League champions are the Tigers in the American League and the Braves and Giants in the National League.

The Tigers crushed the Indians 8-1 in a showdown final game which ended their tie for first place. The Indians got four hits off Phil Label but could not match their rival's all-around play.

The Giants gained their sixth victory and a share in the National League title by getting three runs in the seventh inning to beat the Cubs 7-5. They had trailed in the early innings.

The Braves came through the next night to defeat the Pirates 8 to 1 to keep pace.

In the first game of the second half, it was the same old story in the American League as the Indians and Tigers racked up wins.

The Indians beat the Red Sox 7-1 and the Tigers, with Brad Springer getting 14 strikeouts, shut out the Yankees 4-0. Bill Muenchinger held the Tigers to two hits but his mates made seven runs behind him.

The National League standings, which have a habit of reversing themselves periodically, did another flip as the Pirates, showing a reversal of their first half form, won their second half opener with the Giants 6-0.

The Braves beat the Cubs 14-7 in a game in which 17 errors were committed.

The scrappy but hapless Red Sox managed to gain their second victory of the season by beating the Yankees 10-4. Home runs were hit by Bob Hawkins, Jim Han and Doug Witters.

Fielding records, compiled by Tom McDaniel, Little League statistician, give a pretty clear picture of the defensive play during the first half of the 1954 season.

Here, taken by position, are the way the regulars at each spot ranked.

Player	Team	AB	R	H	RBI	Errors
Kelly, Braves	B	44	2	3	2	2,823
Diller, Giants	N	24	2	2	1	1,851
Harr, Cubs	N	24	2	2	1	1,851

Player	Team	AB	R	H	RBI	Errors
Parrell, Cubs	N	11	1	2	0	383
Brannon, Braves	B	6	0	0	0	736
Perry, Giants	N	6	0	0	0	1,047

Player	Team	AB	R	H	RBI	Errors
Harrett, Cubs	N	1	0	0	0	1,000
Waters, Braves	B	1	0	0	0	1,000
Parfiter, Pirates	N	1	0	0	0	1,000

Player	Team	AB	R	H	RBI	Errors
Dunham, Pirates	N	1	0	0	0	1,000
Townsend, Cubs	N	1	0	0	0	1,000
Frederick, Braves	B	1	0	0	0	1,000

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Waltson, Braves	B	1	0	0	0	1,000
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Player	Team	AB	R	H	RBI	Errors
Laska, B	B	2	0	0	0	0
Hudson, B	B	2	0	0	0	0
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Player	Team	AB	R	H	RBI	Errors
McTigue, Cubs	N	1	0	0	0	1,000
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JEFF STRAIGHT DON OATMAN JON FOLLIS Trojan team mates demonstrate batting tee's use. (Eccentric Photo)

Junior Leaguers Have No Pitchers, Use Batting Tee

After looking at the scores of the junior league games you must wonder what the pitchers are like if so many runs score. There aren't any pitchers! The players use a batting tee which accounts for the amount of scoring.

This league is made up entirely of eight-year-olds divided into four teams which play a regular schedule every Wednesday night at Booth and Pembroke fields. There was such a demand by the younger players that a special league had to be set up.

As for the batting tee, it is a safety feature so that no one will get hurt either while pitching or catching. The teams take regular positions while in the field and their job is just to field the balls hit near them.

Gains Hole-In-One

Mrs. Robert E. Backstrom, 411 Glenary, Bloomfield Village, fired a hole-in-one Saturday, July 3, at the Harbor Point Golf Club, Harbor Springs, Michigan.

Mrs. Backstrom aced the 116 yard 16th hole with a five iron in the presence of her husband, while the two were vacationing at Harbor Springs.

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Birmingham Reds Hold First Place In District Play

The Birmingham Reds won one and lost one over the July 4th weekend but still managed to hold first place in American League 18th District play.

Berkley Hurter Duncan Friday held Birmingham to four hits while fanning 15 as the Red team dropped their first contest 4-0. Barrett, Harrett, Walker, Harr 2, Farrell, Harrett, Walker, Harr 2.

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Imperials Lead Babe Ruth League After First Half

With a tricky play in the final inning, Keller-Koch's Imperials defeated the Bel-Airs, 8 to 0, to lead the Birmingham Babe Ruth League at the end of the first half of the season last Friday.

In a week highlighted by three home runs—one with the bases loaded—it was the headwork of a 13-year-old shortstop and a 13-year-old relief pitcher, who had just entered the game in the last of the seventh, that won the admiration of the fans at the high school field.

After Ted Romaniuk, barely out of the Little League, had held the Bel-Airs scoreless for six innings, Wright and Bruce Johnson tallying two each, Bill Watkinson humored for the Bel-Airs.

Larry Milford went all the way on the mound to gain the victory. The Birmingham Blues, after losing to the Reds 8-0 earlier in the week, dropped a tough Berkley squad Sunday 2-1.

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Waltson, Braves	B	1	0	0	0	1,000
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Imperials shortstop, walked over to the mound, apparently intending to encourage the new pitcher, Jim Walls. Yet what he actually told Jim was that the man on second Jim was taking a long lead and could be trapped with a quick throw. Jim got set for his next pitch, then suddenly swung around and threw to Butzel, who tagged the runner for the final out.

The grand slam homer by Larry Hower came in the 9-9 tie game between the Imperials and Bel-Airs on Monday of last week.

Bill Deer, catcher for Suburban Motors Rockets, clouted a two-run homer the next evening when the Rockets lost to the Bel-Airs, 8 to 4.

Mike Pryce, of the Wilson Pontiac-Cadillac Chiefs, also homered the following evening when the Chiefs beat the Rockets, 7 to 5.

Hower won his second mound victory last Thursday when the Imperials beat the Chiefs, 2 to 1.

Tonight, Thursday, the Chiefs play the Rockets at 6 p.m. at the high school field.

Standings at the end of the first half:

Team	Won	Lost
Imperials	4	2
Rockets	3	3
Chiefs	3	3
Bel-Airs	2	4

Player	Team	AB	R	H	RBI	Errors
Waltson, Braves	B	1	0	0	0	1,000
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