

# AROUND THE MILL



The Mill Creek Little League has enjoyed a beautiful 2020 Spring season, featuring a combined total of zero rain outs! Locals knew they were in for a special season as the Avalanche and Lightning of the Majors softball division got things underway March 14th. The game at Freedom Field turned out to be a pitching duel for the ages. With a long season ahead, coaches were still trying out pitchers and just decided to pitch everyone. Little was decided however, as every pitcher recorded a strikeout and there was only one recorded hit on the day! Grace Buechler and Natalie Noonan each owe their catchers new mitts after their rocket fire pitches singed their gloves. Plus, broken bats were aplenty as pitchers Allie Thomsen, Grace Kim, Aubree Orr, and Nika Calderon, combined to leave

a wasteland of bat parts piled up around the batter's box. When batters were lucky enough to barrel up a pitch, defensive prowess was on full display. Nowhere was this more evident than the 2nd inning when the Lightning's Molly Ouderkirk ripped a line shot over third. Avalanche Shortstop Elena Eigner broke right toward third baseman Emily Crawford who immediately got on all fours. Elena launched off her back, gloved the ball 20 feet in the air, rotated, and fired a strike to Cael Hare at first base before coming to rest clinging 15 feet up the third base line fence like some sort of Spiderwoman! Then, in the bottom of the 6th, with 2 outs and a 0-0 ballgame on the line, ferocious fireballer Maya Miller took the mound for the Lightning against the Avalanche's Emmaline "drive" Beatty. The defense instinctively moved back. Power hitter Beatty then did the unthinkable and laid down the most beautiful bunt ever, easily arriving safe at first base. With fire in her eyes, Miller was determined to close the

door. Kiana Holden settled into the batter's box and immediately found herself behind 0-2. Then came a play for the ages. She looked down at Beatty and gave a nod. It was on! Miller offered up the exact same heater again, but this time Holden laced a frozen rope down the first base line. Instead of breaking for second base, Beatty stood strong on first, reached up with the speed of a frog snatching a fly, and bare-handed the line drive out of the air. With one foot on the bag, she then turned and threw a bullet over the right field wall. The crowd gasped. The dubious umpires looked at each other. Finally, the home plate ump shrugged, then threw up his finger in a circular motion. Home run!!!

On March 16th, baseball got off to a rockin' start at Freedom Field as well when the Majors Braves hosted the Diamondbacks and, together, the teams put on an absolute hitting display. Diamondbacks speed demon MJ Holcomb led off the game and took the very first



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pitch over the center field wall and into an empty soccer goal scoring twice on the same play! That was just the start of the fireworks. As the game continued, almost everyone recorded a dinger! Noah Langsea almost had two for the Braves, however in the bottom of the 5th, outfielders Adam McPherson, Skyler Seki, and Jerry Thompson raced to the center field fence, jumped on each other's shoulders forming the legendary "Tater Taker Totem Pole" with McPherson reaching up at the top to rob Langsea of the run. He still notched an RBI though as Steven Wilson easily scored from third recording a Tik-Tok dance down the basepath that immediately went viral. By the bottom of the 6th, only slugger Mikko Furby stood homerless. He stepped to the plate for the Braves with two outs, his team down by 3 runs, and teammates Landon Gillihan (Hughes), Cole Yama, and Garrett Stromski serving as ducks on the pond. With ice in his veins Furby stared down pitcher Colby Bossert. Unphased, Bossert peered over his glove at catcher Gavin Clark and got the sign - a spitball. Hidden behind his glove, he quickly hocked a big ol' juicer on the ball, then started into his windup. Like a mighty 12-year-old Paul Bunyun, Furby knew how to wield his axe. He leaned into the pitch, swung his hefty lumber, and connected with a splash, launching a meteoric blast that dented the left field scoreboard for the walk-off, grand slam homerun!

Okay, okay, it's easy to get off-track on what this season could have been, but we all know life was put on hold.

No warm Spring nights devouring tasty Freedom Burgers. No dugouts filled with youngsters cheering in unison. No game winning, walk-off homeruns. At the time of this writing, there is still a glimmer of hope that we may be able to salvage some sort of short season later this summer, but we'll have to wait and see.

For Little Leaguers, their 12-year-old season is something special. With that, we've recognized a handful of them in the story above, but would also like to mention our Cardinals 12s: Andrew Templin, Ashton Bergman, Benjamin Ewer, Jeremiah Halim, Myles Powell, Nathan Hajek, Quinten Johns, and Zachary Grenier, as well as our Giants 12s: Atticus Quist, Caleb Holmstedt, Cole Eaton, Derek Sundstrom, Isaac Blackburn, and Landon Klein. At the very least, we plan to continue with our tradition of holding a Homerun Derby and Fastest Man Competition at some point. This event provides us the opportunity to recognize our 12s and their families. In addition, discussions are still underway to proceed with the 12-year-old division of All-Stars, but that would only go through the State level as Little League International officially cancelled the Regionals and World Series tournaments on April 30th.

We miss our Little League games and the opportunity to create memories with our community. While much is still up in the air, we should have more answers soon so please visit [www.MillCreekLittleLeague.com](http://www.MillCreekLittleLeague.com) for the latest news and info.

## Freedom Field

