

**COLTER CRACKS HR, 3 RBI; SASFAI SLAMS HR, 2 RBI; BRENDAHL RAPS 2 HITS, CHASE 2 RBI**

# S. Orange/Maplewood Quiets Chatham for Cal Ripken Title

By **DAVID B. CORBIN**

*Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times*

Power hitting took charge early then three singles with three walks yielded four runs in the fourth inning to catapult the South Orange/Maplewood (SOM) Cougars 12-year-old baseball to an 8-3 victory over the Chatham Cougars in the championship game of the Cal Ripken District 12 Tournament at Gumbert 2 Field in Westfield on July 3.

The SOM Cougars endured the heat and beat several tough teams, including Millburn and Cranford to reach the championship game against another tough team that won five straight games, including two over Scotch Plains-Fanwood. Both teams qualified for the state tournament.

"These kids never quit. They always find a way to fight back and pull out the wins. I can't be more proud of these guys to repeat, to win last year and come back and do it again after we lost our first one to Westfield Blue, a tough team. Then to come through tough pool play games, then Cranford in the first round and a phenomenal Millburn team was great. Also this team,

Chatham! My hat is off to [Head Coach] Bill Karpowic. He is a classy coach, and he runs an excellent team. It's a lot of fun playing him," SOM Head Coach Doug Sasfai said.

"We were ecstatic with the effort the kids gave us in the four pool games. Obviously winning the semifinal playoff game against Scotch Plains automatically got us into the states. That was our primary goal. We did play here to win. Our power hitter [Peter Demaria] was out for

the day. That left us a little bit deflated, but the kids played hard. It's a very good South Orange team. A couple of more timely hits and we are in the game," Coach Karpowic said.

In the championship rounds, SOM shut out the Cranford Cougars, 10-0, with a one-hitter and followed with the impressive win over Millburn.

"My guy who started tonight's game, Casey Thompson, was throwing seeds. He was fun to watch. In the Millburn game,

Palmer Kraiss and Reid Evans came in and were phenomenal," Coach Sasfai explained.

The SOM Cougars used three pitchers beginning with Thompson. Will Nomura relieved and pitched to two batters in the second inning. Daniel Cotler stepped to the mound in the third and tossed four innings of shutout ball, while yielding just

two hits, a hit batter and a walk.

The Chatham Cougars, who had also played a game the night before, had to go with five pitchers. Billy Gyves pitched the first inning. Matt Stamford pitched the second. Will Covino pitched to three batters in the third. Tommy Winter relieved and pitched to all but one batter in the sixth. Chloe Blanc pitched to the final batter.

SOM out-hit Chatham, 10-5, and received some power off the "metal stick" of Cotler (2 runs scored), who hammered a solo home run in the first inning and added a two-run single in the fourth. Jake Sasfai lined an RBI single in the first and slammed a solo homer in the third inning.

Thompson singled twice and scored once. Peter Nolet and Christian Pierre each rapped an RBI single and scored once. Evans drilled a double. Nomura and Kraiss each scored a run, and Danny Boemer singled in his plate appearance. Joe Barello, Josh Watson-Lewis and Miles Leandre also had plate appearances.

Mac Brendahl led Chatham with a pair of singles, two stolen bases and a run scored. Ryan Chase poked a two-run single. Gyves (run scored) and Blanc each singled. Ethan Glasgow was hit-by-a-pitch and walked. Tommy Winter walked twice and scored once. Max Schelling and Clay Delsandro each had a walk. Charlie Bergman had three plate appearances, Stamford had two, and Covino hit a sharp line drive that forced SOM shortstop Nomura to make a circus catch.

Cotler's solo blast and Sasfai's RBI single gave SOM a 2-0 lead in the first. Chatham answered with a run when Brendahl singled and later scored on an overthrow at

*Probitas Verus Honos*

*Story on page 13  
of The Westfield Leader*

*More Photos in "Photo Library"  
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David B. Corbin for *The Westfield Leader and The Times*  
**CAUGHT STEALING AT SECOND...Chatham's Mac Brendahl, No. 13, gets tagged out by South Orange/Maplewood shortstop Will Nomura at Gumbert 2 Field in Westfield on July 3 in the Cal Ripken District 12 Championship game.**

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