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of *The Westfield Leader*

David B. Corbin for *The Westfield Leader* and *The Times*
TRYING TO GET THE PICKOFF...Raider pitcher Nick McCormack fires to first baseman Jake Friedman in an effort to pickoff Miller Ben Bograd in the third inning at Gumbert 2 Field.



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David B. Corbin for *The Westfield Leader* and *The Times*
TAKING A HARD SWING...Raider Anthony DiNizo takes a cut at the ball in the Cal Ripken game against Millburn at Gumbert 2 Field in Westfield. DiNizo got one of the Raiders' three hits.

DiNIZO, MOONEY, SCHETELICH GET SPF'S ONLY HITS; MALDONALDO TOSSES 3-HITTER

Millburn 12s Sting Raiders in Cal Ripken Playoffs, 8-0

By **DAVID B. CORBIN**
Specially Written for The Westfield Leader and The Times

Millburn 12s pitching ace Nick Maldonado tossed a complete game shutout, allowing just three hits, while walking none to lead the Millers to an 8-0 victory over Scotch Plains-Fanwood at Gumbert 2 Field in Westfield on July 8 in the battle for third place and advancement to the Cal Ripken Regional Tournament.

"Putting him on the mound is always something that I can count on. I know we are going to be in good shape when he is on the mound," Millburn Head Coach Kevin Ford said.

"He's the best pitcher we've seen this year. He got ahead of everybody, and he threw the

curveball for strikes, which you don't see from a 12-year-old kid very often. He was excellent," Raider Head Coach Joe Higgins said.

The Raiders were unable to put more than one hit together in any given inning. Regan Mooney singled in the top of the second. Sam Schetelich had a leadoff single in the third, and Anthony DiNizo singled in the fourth. The Millers did successfully field some sharply hit balls, and Maldonado managed to keep Raider power hitter Nick McCormack off-balance in two plate appearances.

"He knew what to throw when. He knew where to throw it, but we did have some good at-bats against him. We had a couple of

guys hit the ball hard. We just couldn't string anything together," Coach Higgins said.

The Millers totaled seven hits, but they managed to deliver them in lumps and follow them up with aggressive base running and hit-and-run plays. Leadoff hitter Ben Pampush singled, stole three bases and scored twice. Maldonado finished with a double, a stolen base, two RBI and two runs scored. Ben Bograd rapped an RBI single, stole two bases and scored once. Connor Lally walked twice, stole a base and scored once. Peter Serruto (run

scored) and Kyle Mazur each singled. But it was Peter Gula, who put on the finishing touch. Not only did he single in the fourth, but he also blasted a two-run home run to cap a five-run fifth inning.

"We wanted to be more aggressive today. We kind of sat back in the last game and didn't take the game to them. Today, we decided that we were going to take the game to them," Coach Ford said.

Millburn scored three runs on three hits in the third inning but broke it open in the fifth with five runs on three hits, including Gula's home run, and two walks, four stolen bases and an RBI sacrifice fly from Mike Kologlu.

Throughout the Ripken Dis-

trict 12 Tournament, the Raiders and Millburn constantly faced fierce competition.

"Every game we played in was a dogfight, win or lose, including this one. We were in this game until the fifth inning. There were 13 solid teams. To take fourth out of 13 with these guys, I will take it. These guys gave it everything they had," Coach Higgins said.

"We were excited about getting a second chance to stay alive in the tournament. I think they were determined to do everything in their power to keep this run going," Coach Ford said.

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