



Welcome to the 'Motherland' of baseball



photo by Greg Wagner

Robert Protexter addresses the RusStar Baseball team players.

BY GLENN MILLER

Roy Hobbs Baseball

Veronika Gribanovskiy sat in the bleachers Saturday as he husband, Igor, and several other Russians ball players started warming up for a practice.

She knows what it means for Igor and his RusStar teammates to be here and playing this game. She knows they took an 11-hour direct flight from Moscow to Miami. She was on it. She has attended night games in Moscow when temperatures dip near freezing. She knows what playing in the Roy Hobbs World Series means for Igor and his countrymen.

Coming to America is a pilgrimage for these players, one they missed in 2020 because COVID-19 restrictions prevented traveling.

"America is the Motherland of baseball," Verokina said. "In Russia where we live there are only a few people who play baseball. So, for them, it's sort of they are coming close to the traditions of baseball, to the real ways of playing, and also to the spirit of baseball."

Igor has been making the trans-continental journey to the

Roy Hobbs World Series since 1998. With only about 5,000 Russians of all ages playing the game and most of them in or near Moscow, the pool of available players is small. That's why the RusStar roster is comprised of seven Russians and eight Americans.

Las Vegas resident Anton Schlumpf, 39, is one of the Americans. He speaks Russian well and taught English in the country for four years and while in Russia played on the team. His time in Russia endeared him to the country's culture and people.

"I feel I'm partially Russian in my soul," Schlumpf said.

He enjoys playing with his Russian teammates. He appreciates how they embrace America's game and its people. The seven Russians here are not ordinary Ivans.

"You get the cream of the crop from Russian baseball," Schlumpf said. "You also get the guys who love America the most."

RusStar field manager Bob Protexter is an American from Iowa. He has lived in Russia for a total of eight years spread

see RUSSTAR on page 2

RUSSTAR

continued from page 1

over the past 30 years or so and coached baseball there. He's learned the language.

He knows the history of the game and its connection to the country dating back to the days of the USSR. He knows how challenging it is to grow the game there.

"There's probably more baseball fields in Fort Myers than in Russia," Protexter said.

He knows what this journey means to the Russians.

"It's their World Series," Protexter said.

The Russians help put the word World into Roy Hobbs World Series.

Anthony Schlumpf of the RusStar Baseball team adjusts his uniform prior to a pitch.



photo by Greg Wagner



photo by Greg Wagner
RusStar Baseball team catcher Igor Gribanovsky keeps an eye on the baseball as it is heading toward home plate.

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VETERANS RESULTS

Monday

Baltimore Chop 11, Germain Ohio Aces 7
 Baltimore Chop 9, Akron Cardinals 8
 Chicago Giants 4, Vukgripz Akron A's 2
 Cleveland Steve Sports 11, South Florida Eagles 1
 Detroit Dodgers 18 Chi-Sox 5
 Glass City Black Sox 14, NEO Angels 2
 Indiana Yankees 2, The Oilers 1
 Lakeville Lobos 12, Cincinnati Colts 2
 Lakeville Lobos 6, South Bend Cardinals 5
 Minnesota Bulldogs 12, Chicago Giants 9
 Minnesota WebGems 11, Tidewater Drillers 7
 Minnesota WebGems 9, Cleveland Steve Sports 8
 Neo Angels 11, Fort Myers Lumberjacks 9

New Jersey Mets 22, Chicago Woodpeckers 12
 Orlando Lugnuts 11, Minnesota Bulldogs 7
 Orlando Lugnuts 11, New Jersey Mets 10
 Panhandle Pirates 19, Ukraine Baseball 1
 Panhandle, Pirates 13, Chicago Knights 12
 Puerto Rico Twins 10, Cobra Kai 1
 Puerto Rico Twins 11, Minnesota Blenders 1
 Rock Solid Americans 12, Cobra Kai 3
 Rock Solid Americans 8, South Florida Eagles 3
 RusStar Baseball 12, Central Florida Bulldogs 5
 Tennessee White Lightnin' 21, Can-Am Padres 18
 The Oilers 14, Vukgripz Akron A's 11
 TTown, Jack-Os 18, Chi-Sox 3



Baltimore Chop shortstop Kirt Bennett makes the flip to second from his knees.

photo by Greg Wagner



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VETERANS STANDINGS

Veterans A Division

	W	L	PCT	RA
Puerto Rico Twins	3	0	1.000	3
Minnesota Web Gems	3	0	1.000	25
Indiana Yankees	2	0	1.000	2
Rock Solid Americans	2	1	0.667	7
Cleveland Steve Sports	2	1	0.667	13
The Oilers	2	1	0.667	15
Orlando Lugnuts	2	1	0.667	22
New Jersey Mets	2	1	0.667	24
Minnesota Blenders	1	1	0.500	11
Minnesota Bulldogs	1	2	0.333	22
Vukgripz Akron A's	1	2	0.333	22
Chicago Giants	1	2	0.333	23
Tidewater Drillers 35+	0	2	0.000	20
Chicago Woodpeckers	0	2	0.000	30
South Florida Eagles	0	3	0.000	30
Cobra Kai	0	3	0.000	43

Veterans B Division

	W	L	PCT	RA
Lakeville Lobos	3	0	1.000	7
Detroit Dodgers	3	0	1.000	11
RusStar Baseball Club	2	0	1.000	8
Glass City Black Sox	2	0	1.000	14
South Bend Cardinals	2	1	0.667	18
Chicago Knights	2	1	0.667	19
Baltimore Chop	2	1	0.667	28
Panhandle Pirates	2	1	0.667	29
TTown Jack-Os 35s	1	1	0.500	10
Tennessee White Lightnin'	1	1	0.500	34
Akron Cardinals	1	2	0.333	23
Central Florida Bulldogs	1	2	0.333	31
Fort Myers Breeze	1	2	0.333	34
NEO Angels	1	2	0.333	38
Chi - Sox	1	2	0.333	41
Cincinnati Colt .45s	0	2	0.000	21
Ukraine Baseball	0	2	0.000	22
Germain Ohio Aces	0	2	0.000	25
Can-Am Padres	0	3	0.000	59



photo by Greg Wagner
 Puerto Rico Twins 2nd baseman tracks an infield pop-up vs. Cobra Kai.



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VETERANS SCHEDULE

Tuesday

10 a.m.

Baltimore Chop @ TTown, Jack-Os, TP2
 Chicago Giants @ Orlando Lugnuts, JB4
 Chicago Woodpeckers @ Minnesota Bulldogs, PDC3
 Cincinnati Colt @ Can-Am, Padres, PDC5
 Germain Ohio Aces @ Detroit Dodgers, TP-S
 Glass City Black Sox @ Chicago Knights, TP3
 Minnesota Blenders @ Tidewater Drillers, PDC4
 Minnesota WebGems @ Puerto Rico, Twins, JB5
 NEO Angels @ Ukraine Baseball, TP4
 New, Jersey Mets @ The Oilers, JB3
 RusStar Baseball @ Tennessee White Lightnin', PDC2
 Vukgripz Akron A's @ Indiana Yankees, PDC1

1:45, p.m.

Chi-Sox @ Germain Ohio Aces, TP2
 Cobra Kai @ Minnesota Blenders, PDC5
 Indiana Yankees @ Chicago Woodpeckers, PDC2
 Lakeville Lobos @ Central Florida Bulldogs, JB4
 Panhandle, Pirates @ Glass City Black Sox, TP4
 Rock Solid Americans @ Cleveland Steve Sports, JB5
 South Bend Cardinals @ RusStar Baseball, PDC3
 Tennessee White Lightnin' @ Cincinnati Colt, PDC4
 Tidewater Drillers @ South Florida Eagles, PDC1
 TTown, Jack-Os @ Akron Cardinals, TP-S
 Ukraine Baseball @ Fort Myers Breeze, TP3



Chi-Sox centerfielder works on a diving catch.

photo by Greg Wagner



NOTEBOOK

Playoff pitching guidelines

Roy Hobbs requirement is that all pitchers who will be starters or closers in save situations (3-run or less difference in the 8th and 9th innings) qualify for the playoffs by pitching at least 2 innings – 6 outs or 10 hitters – during pool play.

AAAA qualifier teams may not add pitchers to their lineup after Pool Play concludes; however, Open Division teams may have pitchers arrive Wednesday – those pitchers must throw 5 innings or 25 hitters to qualify for the playoffs.

Finally, in the playoffs, those “non-qualified” middle-inning pitchers will come to the mound from their normal defensive positions where they started the game. That is as important as the “spirit of the rule” that these *non-qualified* pitchers who are used as “inning-eaters” are players who ordinarily are playing other positions.

And, please remember that any players leaving the RHWS Monday to return on Thursday MUST turn in their player ID Card and re-register upon their return. They must return before the quarterfinals of the playoffs, regardless of division.

Managers should email a list of their qualified pitchers to Roy Hobbs: tg@royhobbs.com by 7 p.m. the night before their playoffs begin.



50/50 raffle

50/50 raffle tickets, to benefit the Roy Hobbs Foundation, are available each day at the Player Development Complex. Tickets are \$1 apiece or 6 for \$5. The drawing will be held in the patio area at the Player Development Complex at 5 PM Friday.

The Roy Hobbs Foundation was established to raise monies for research on finding a cure for Leukemia and to assist our Challenged Athlete friends.

Revenues from the 2020 RHWS led to some \$15,000 in contributions to MD Anderson Cancer Center, St. Jude Hospital in Memphis and to Southern Florida Challenger Athletes.



Results corrections

Please check the posted results and standings each day.

Managers should **contact Tom** at the Tournament Headquarters. Email to tg@royhobbs.com with corrections to scores.

That's the best way to make sure that playoff seedings and pairings are as accurate as we can make them.



Please help with dugouts

Roy Hobbs Baseball and the grounds crews need your help in the dugouts.

When your games are over and you are leaving the dugout, please police it for trash and cups, etc. Your assistance in cleaning up the dugouts each day will be greatly appreciated.



photo by Greg Wagner

Chicago Giants Jon Ongstad tries to break up double play against Vukgripz Akron A's Tony Gandee.

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NOTEBOOK

continued from page 6

First Aid

Two key First Aid items: Drink plenty of fluids while playing; don't just wait until the game is over. Water will be available at the fields.

Second, be sure to stretch and loosen up before playing, or even re-entering a game.

In case of an emergency, contact the field manager at your site. He has the First Aid supplies and will contact 911 services as needed.

Ice is available for injuries ... check with the field manager on duty or go to the nearest concession stand to have the appropriate personnel paged. Roy Hobbs requests that managers plan for pitchers needing ice for their arms and to supply it.



Admission, \$1 a game

Admission continues at the Roy Hobbs World Series.

Admission is \$1 per game or \$5 for a tournament pass. Spectators will pay \$1 for entrance into each complex and are good for one day.

The \$5 tournament pass is available at RH Headquarters or from the Site Concierges at each security table; there is no family pass. The tournament pass is a plastic card that

see NOTEBOOK on page 8



photo by Greg Wagner
Chicago Giants Art Solorio follows flight of foul ball vs. Vukgripz Akron A's.



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NOTEBOOK

continued from page 7

guarantees admission for that person for the duration of the RHWS. A loop comes with the tournament pass card for easy attachment to purses, beltloops, etc.

Playing site security

The active steps taken several years ago to deal with parking lot security will continue as parking lot theft issues have – knock on wood – not been an issue the last 7 years.

Are we out of the woods? No, it is a daily procedure and effort to make sure parking lots are safe.

Once again, Roy Hobbs will have personnel posted at the player/spectators' entrances to Terry Park, PDC, JetBlue Complex and at the entrance to the Quad fields at Lee County.

These individuals will have a view of the parking lot, and they will be available in emergencies, be enforcing cooler guidelines and handling admissions.

Customer Service

Roy Hobbs Baseball is proud of its record on customer service.

Staff members are required to wear identifying staff shirts during the working hours of the tournament and should be easily identifiable. At least two are assigned to each of the satellite complexes daily.

In the case of **emergency**, please go to the nearest concession stand at the satellite complexes, where someone will be available to summon help.

Roy Hobbs field managers and key personnel are Red Cross First Aid **certified**, and Roy Hobbs Baseball has guidelines in place on the handling of injuries. Additionally, **AED devices** are available at each of the facilities, and Roy Hobbs personnel have been trained on those devices.



*Vukgripz
Akron A's
Tony Gandee
makes the
tag from his
knees on Pete
Gubricky of
the Chicago
Giants.*

*photo by
Greg Wagner*