



Challenge Chatter

The Official Newsletter of the 2008 Ramada 3 Nations Challenge

Saturday, July 4th edition sponsored by



Welcome to the final night of preliminary round play of the Ramada 3 Nations Challenge. Japan sits on top of the standings with a 2 - 0 record coming into their double header tonight. Canada sits second at 2-1 and the U. S is winless in three tries. This sets up a huge match up tonight, between Canada and Japan. Should Canada beat Japan, and the Japanese go on to beat the Americans, the committee would be forced to go to the ISF tie breaking criteria to determine who would get first place. Thus simply a victory over Japan may not be enough for Canada, but they may need a victory by at least 5 runs to guarantee themselves first place and a bye to the final.



Canada vs. Japan 6:30

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	R	H	E
Japan	0	0	4	2	0	0	0	6	6	1
Canada	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	2	6	0

In the first action of the night, Team Canada lost to Japan 6-2 in a game in which they never really threatened. The game which was played in front of 1500 fans started slowly, as neither team came close to scoring after getting the first batter of the inning on base. Canada's **Ryan Wolfe** was called out for lead off to end the home half of the first. Team Canada's starter **Grant Patterson** looked ready to settle in after forcing three easy pop up in the second. However, the wheels fell off for him in the third, as Japan scored four runs on three hits and a walk. The biggest damage came from **Takuto Tsutsai's** first pitch three run homerun to left. A rattled Patterson then walked the next hitter and proceeded to give up run scoring double to **Ryuji Hazeyama**, for a 4-0 Japanese lead. Canada again let a lead off a bunt single by **Craig Crawford** go unrewarded, in their half of the inning, as Japan's starter **Kunihiko Iida** proved tough to beat. Japan was not done yet as the second batter in the 4th inning; **Yu Nishimori** slapped a bouncer over new pitcher **Todd Martin's** head for a single. That was followed up by **Shuhei Suzuki's** blast deep over the center field fence to give Japan a 6-0 lead. In the home half of the 4th, **Jody Eidt** gave Canada some hope with a solo blast over the center field fence. However, they could not generate any more offense until the bottom of the seventh. In Canada's last chance, they again got the first runner on as a result of **Ian Fehrman's** double. That was followed by **Jason Sanford's** single and a long fly out by **Jeff Ellsworth** that scored Fehrman. Any hopes of a come back was snuffed out by a pair of close calls where **Ryan Wolfe** was called out swinging and **Rob Giesbrecht** was called out on his grounder to second. The only hitter to record more than one hit was Japanese second baseman **Yu Nishimori**. The RBI leaders for Japan were **Shuhei Suzuki** with two and **Takuto Tsutsui** with three.



Canada vs. USA – 8:00

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	R	H	E
United States	0	0	3	0	0	1	1	5	9	2
Canada	3	1	0	0	3	2	x	9	5	1

Team Canada's starting lineup contained a strong local flavour for this matchup as **Trevor Ethier** got the start on the mound and **Keith Mackintosh** started at second base. Both of them contributed greatly to the 9-5 win as Trevor was the winning pitcher and Keith chipped in with a hit and 3 RBI. Canada's offense took full advantage of its five hits this game, after a disappointing loss to Japan where they consistently got the lead off man aboard but could not score him. A pair of three run innings were key for Canada in the victory. In the first inning they scored three runs off losing pitcher **Gerald Pyle**, on one hit and two U.S. errors. In the 5th Keith MacKintosh came up with loaded base and two out and proceeded to blast a single past second baseman **Steve Pinochio** scoring **Jeff Ellsworth**, **Steve Mullaley** and **Jody Eidt**. The rest of the runs came off homeruns; a solo shot by **Jason Sanford** in the second inning and a two run shot by **Kevin Schellenberg** in the sixth. Ethier pitched four innings giving up three runs, and was relieved by **Frank Cox** who gave up two runs in his three innings of work

Did you know?

- The starting times for the playoffs have been changed. They have been moved to **1:00 for the semi final and 3:00 for the final.**
- Due to an injury to **Dean Holoien**, Team Canada has brought in National Team veteran **Todd Martin**.
- Saskatchewan loves softball! The three national teams have played to large crowds all week in three different cities. 1800 attended the game on Thursday night in Saskatoon, 1400 were showed up Wednesday night in Melfort for the Canada vs. USA double header and over1000 were in Prince Albert for the Japan vs. Aspen Interiors double header.
- The Ramada 3 Nations Challenge is in the news. You can read Dustin Munroe's daily articles in the **Saskatoon Star Phoenix**. You can also see details online on **Al's Fastball** website <http://alsfastball.com/>. Just go to the news update section – or go directly to our tournament page at <http://www.alsfastball.com/uploads/File/2008%20ISC%20Files/Saskatoon%203-nat-2008.htm>.
- You can now listen to the game via the internet as **Jon Equina** is doing a live play by play web broadcast of the Ramada 3 Nations Challenge. He is doing it through yahoo voice conference so any one wanting to listen can add John at jonequina@yahoo.com and he will invite them to the conference.



A big thanks to the five “boys in blue” who have worked the entire tournament. From left to right - **Frank Omo** - Edmonton, **Bent Chadwick** - Assiniboine, **Terry Richter**- Edmonton, **Gary Skjerven** – Edmonton and **Dave Moore** – Saskatoon. These men are all level 5 Umpires, certified for international competition.