

Day 2

G8 and 9

Australia v Czech Republic, 8-1 / Japan v Samoa, 7-0

Both the first two games of the TAB Challenge Cup on day 2 ended in a blowout with Australia beating Czech Republic 8-1 on Freeman Field and Japan taking to Samoa 7-0 on Leveloff Field.

Both games were finished in the 6th due to the 'run rule' where a team is ahead by 7 runs after 5 innings.

Japan dominated Samoa in the hitting count 10 to 1 while Australia also dominated Czech 10-4.

Hayden Mathews was the highlight for the Australians with the bat hitting a home run in the 6th, while second baseman Brendon O'Brien made the catch of the tournament thus far taking a spectacular backward diving catch.

G10 – New Zealand v Argentina,

The Golden Homes Black Sox came to play when they met the Argentinians at the 12:30 game today on Freeman Field.

The game was a much anticipated one given Argentina had beaten the Black Sox 3 out of 4 games last November on South American soil.

The Black Sox were in no mood for friendly fire and took apart the Argentinians in just 5 inning with a complete performance. It was an exhibition that will give Head Coach Mark Sorenson alot of confidence as the team starts to positions itself in first place and automatic entry into Sunday's final.

The Sox have now taken down their biggest threats including Japan after a day and half's play at the TAB Challenge Cup.

Penese Iosefo got the start in the middle and provided a strong and much needed showing after he relived Nik Hayes against Japan last night.

The hitting machine took apart Huemal Mata and then number one Roman Godoy with 9 hits. Performers with the bat for the Black Sox were once again Ben and Thomas Enoka with 2 hits each and 5 RBI's between them.

G11 – Australia v Japan 1-0

Game 11 saw the first upset of the TAB Challenge Cup when fifth seed Australia took down second seed Japan 1-0.

It was a tight and tense game with solid pitching performances from both teams. Harrison Peters of Australia won the battle in middle giving up just the one hit in seven innings.

The turning point of the game came early when Lewis Weldon reached first base on a single and later scored on a Japanese error on an attempted double play.

Australia who struggled yesterday with late flights and quick turnaround between games are starting to find their feet midway through round one of the Cup.

G12 – New Zealand v Czech Republic, 7-2

The Golden Homes Black Sox went 4 and 0 when they played Czech Republic at 3pm at the TAB Challenge Cup today.

The Czech's didn't lie down making New Zealand work hard for their win only giving up 5 hits in 7 innings.

Jovaan Hanley got his first start in the tournament and did a solid job with the exception of a booming 2 run shot to Czech batter David Mertyl.

But it was Hanley who delivered with his own three run homer in his first at bat to be the standout hitter for the Black Sox. Cole Evans carried on his good form with the bat contributing two hits as the lead off hitter.

G13 – Argentina vs Samoa, 6-0

Samoa had another tough day at the office when they come up against a wounded Argentina side who fell heavily only hours earlier to the Golden Homes Black Sox.

Argentina started fast with 2 quick runs in the bottom of the first and then another 4 in the 4th.

Francesco Lombardo took the ball deep in the 4th with a two run homer to take the game away from Samoa.

Argentina pitcher Martin Gonzalez got the win with a solid performance and 10 strikeouts to his name.

G14 – New Zealand v Australia 8-1

In the big game of the evening the Black Sox took on old foes Australia showing them no love hammering them 8-1.

Australia scored their lone run with an in the park home run to Liam O'Leary. To be fair it was a fortuitous run as the ball hit the right field fence pole and deviated in the opposite direction to outfielder Jovaan Hanley allowing O'Leary to run all the way home.

One run each in the bottom of the third the Black Sox bats fired up scoring 6 runs largely due to a 3 run shot to kid Cole Evans.

The Sox scored their final run in the 5th to close out the game in the fifth for the victory.

It was another solid performance with the bats backed by a quality performance by pitcher Nik Hayes. Hayes threw 5 innings with 7ks and giving up just 2 hits.

G15 - Samoa v Czech Republic, 6-5

The last game of the evening was a thriller which saw Samoa edge out the Czech's 6-5 to give them their first win of the TAB Challenge Cup.

Samoa who were up 4-0 in the top of the 6th and probably thought they had the game in the bag but got a wakeup call when the Czech's rallied 5 runs to take the lead. Samoa didn't lie down and tied it up with a run in the bottom of the 6th. They went one better with another in the 7th to give them the go ahead run.

It was a dramatic finish as the Jiri Korcak was called out at home plate on the final play of the game when attempting to score an in the park home run.

Full results below

<http://www.softball.org.nz/TAB+Challenge+Cup/Challenge+Cup+Results+and+Game+updates/Day+2+9022017.html>