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## Tazziz leads Somersworth Little League past Rye

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SOMERSWORTH — With the score tied in the fifth inning, Sammy Tazziz belted his second home run of the game Saturday, giving the Somersworth Little League All-Star team a 5-3 lead.

Tazziz's late-inning blast proved to be the game-winning hit, as Somersworth beat Rye 6-3 in the round-robin portion of the District II 11-and-12-year-old tournament.

"I wasn't up there looking for a home run," Tazziz said. "All I was thinking about was hitting the ball hard."

Tazziz's homer came minutes after Rye had tied the game at 3-3 in the top of the fifth. Zane Keebler scored the tying run on a Somersworth error, after leading off the inning with a single, and advancing to third on a passed ball. Rye failed to take the lead after an intentional walk to Owen Shepcaro, stranding runners on first and second.

After Cody Bryant reached on an error to lead off the bottom of the frame, Tazziz put Somersworth ahead for good.

"Everyone was confident coming into the game," Tazziz said. "We all knew that we could hit their pitchers, and I just kept telling myself, 'you can do it.'"

"Sammy was huge for us today," Somersworth coach David Kretschmar said. "After moving him into center field I just told him to keep his head up — I knew we'd need him to come through at some point. He stayed focused and came up with another huge hit."

Tazziz started on the mound for Somersworth, but moved to center field in the second inning due to control issues. Rye took a 1-0 lead in the top of the first after taking advantage of three straight walks by Tazziz to start the game. Charlie Kendall scored the first inning run on a double steal, in which Carter Madden was thrown out a second.

"The kids played really hard today," Rye coach Ron King said. "They had good at-bats, and they stayed focused throughout the whole game."

Rye's lead didn't last very long however, as Somersworth answered right back in the bottom of the inning. After Bryant led-off with a single, Tazziz hit a deep home run over the scoreboard in right-center field. With Somersworth's fans still on their feet, Hunter Kretschmar stepped into the box and smashed a long home run of his own. Tazziz and Kretschmar's back-to-back shots gave Somersworth a 3-1 lead.

"Offensively, our focus is just to put the bat on the ball," David Kretschmar said. "If you can hit it hard somewhere — who knows what will happen."

Rye (0-2) made the score 3-2 in the second inning thanks to a number of passed balls. After working a walk off Tazziz, Xavier Quinn advanced to second and third on consecutive passed balls. After bringing in Drew Colbert for relief, a third passed ball allowed Quinn to score. Colbert settled down nicely though, striking out the side to end the inning.

Colbert picked up the win for Somersworth (1-0) allowing just two hits, and striking out nine in five innings of relief.

"It's all about who's throwing strikes," Kretschmar said. "Sammy started our first game — but that doesn't necessarily mean he's our ace. We've got four really solid pitchers."

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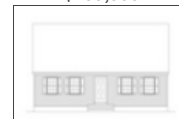
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"If someone is having an off-day, we'll get another guy in there to give it a shot," he added. "It's something we've all talked about, and everyone understands. Drew did a fantastic job today. He threw strikes, and seemed very relaxed."

Following Tazziz's second homer, Somersworth added one more run in the fifth. Michael Paquette picked up the RBI, as Colbert scored the final run of the game.

"Their line-up is explosive," said King of Somersworth. "Their lead-off hitter has a high on base percentage, and after him they've got three guys who can really smack the ball. I think everyone on their team can swing the bat pretty well — but the top of the line-up absolutely killed us."

Kretschmar — and his team — are hoping for more sunny skies as the summer rolls on.

"The kids have been so anxious to play," he said. "They've been practicing hard over the past three weeks, and they're all really excited about what the rest of the summer could entail. Now we just need the rain to go away."

Rye visits Laconia either Monday or Wednesday, while Somersworth hosts Laconia today at 5:30.

**Somersworth, 6-3**

Rye (1-1) 110 010 — 3 2 4

**Somersworth (1-0)** 300 03x — 6 6 1

**Batteries:** R-Shepcaro, King (5), Kendall (5), and King, LeCompte (5), S-Tazziz, Colbert (2), and Kretschmar. HRs: S-3 (Tazziz, 1st inning, 2-run. Kretschmar, 1st inning, solo. Tazziz, 5th inning, 2-run, GW.) WP-Colbert, LP-Shepcaro. LOB: R-5, S-4.

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