

Alton Junior Legion team captures Jim Medlock Memorial Tournament

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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HAZELWOOD, Mo. - Alton American Legion Post 126's junior team had a pretty successful Independence Day weekend.

The junior Legionnaires finished off a big performance in the St. Louis Amateur Baseball Association's Jim Medlock Memorial Tournament Sunday afternoon as Simon

Nguyen threw a four-and-a-half inning no-hitter in a 10-0 win over Maryland Heights, Mo.'s, junior Legion team in the tournament final. The win gave Alton its second straight tournament championship.

It was Nguyen, in fact, that stepped up and volunteered to pitch in Sunday's final after manager Dennis Sharp was worried about having run out of pitchers.

“We hadn't used him very much on the mound this year,” Sharp said, “and I had been looking for a pitcher for the final. Fortunately, Simon asked if he could pitch and I decided to put him in there.”

Nguyen used a variety of off-speed pitches to keep Maryland Heights off-balance. “He was using his forkball quite a bit,” Sharp said. “He was keeping them off-balanced all day, had them frustrated.”

Both Storm Coffman and Branden Droste had big days at the plate for Alton; Coffman was 2-for-2 with a double and three RBIs, while Droste was also 2-for-2 with three RBIs. Braden Flanagan was 2-for-2 and Bryce McKinney had a double and a RBI.

For Sharp, taking part in the tournament is a way to pay tribute to Medlock, who died several years ago and for whom the tournament is named. “Jim was a close friend of mine,” Sharp said. “We talked baseball all the time, and he was a good mentor to me.

“We were the only Illinois team to play in it at first; we beat Breese last year for the championship.”

In other junior Legion news, five Alton players were selected to represent Illinois District 22 in an all-star game set for 7 p.m. Tuesday at GCS Ballpark in Sauget against Missouri District 10. Steven Patten, Steven Nguyen, Tate Wargo, Flanagan, Coffman and Tyler Moxey were all named to the 22-player team.

The Legionnaires were scheduled to visit Smithton Monday night.