

Game Recap- GOLD MEDAL Team Japan Vs Roswell Invaders

The first team to ever go undefeated in the history of the World Baseball Challenge ended up taking home the gold medal in a thrilling final as Japan won by a score of 5-4.

Take away a few errors in the first inning by the Roswell Invaders and this game may have been theirs without a doubt. Japan was able to score two runs out of the gate as leadoff hitter Shunta Tanaka came around to score, along with Centre fielder Takuma Haegawa.

Japan received stellar pitching as Taisuke Yamaoka started the game deleting nine of their first ten batters faced.

That all changed in the fourth inning as the Invaders answered back in a big way. On a two out rally, Roswell stretched four hits in a row, including a two run home run from Catcher Jim Smith allowing them to go up 4-2 with an explosive inning.

Japan trickled their way back into the game, adding one more run in the sixth inning after a Tatsuyo Maruko double, which was followed by a line drive off the pitcher's glove, with the ball eventually being overthrown at first by the shortstop to bring Maruko in to make it a 4-3 game.

The tying run was added in the ninth after runners were put on base by a hit by pitch, a walk, and then a successful RBI single to the outfield.

The coaches, the players, and the fans in attendance were on the edge of their seat for the ninth inning of the gold medal game, all knotted up. You couldn't write it better if you tried.

Unfortunately for the Invaders, the 9th was not friendly to them.

Roswell started off promising, as the leadoff batter Kaohu Gaspar hit the ball hard to the left field wall, but was caught being greedy running to two for the first out. Two strikeouts followed, and up came Japan with a tie game, and only needing one run to win the game.

Bottom of nine started with a groundout, giving hope that Roswell would be given another opportunity to bat. Second batter cracked one to about the deepest part of right field with a stand up double, now in scoring position. Next batter took a walk, but Roswell released a deep breath as they received a strikeout from Tyler Steerwalt making it two outs. Another batter was placed on base with a walk, loading the bases and pressure was on th defense to get it to the closest bag. Unfortunately they didn't get that opportunity, as a pass ball was thrown allowing Japan to win the game and become the 2016 World Baseball Challenge Champions.

Not the way a team likes to lose a game in any circumstance, nor win it, but Japan now becomes the first team in World Baseball Challenge history to go undefeated as they take home the gold across the world.