

Badger News

Sims Leads American Squad to International Title

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On Saturday, July 17, Spring Hill College Head Baseball Coach Frank Sims directed the American International Sports Tours (AIST) squad to its first ever championship of the prestigious Prague Baseball Week Tournament in the Czech Republic.

Along with Sims, several current and former SHC players were on the team including second baseman Pat O'Malley of Ormond Beach, Fla., pitcher Nick Clapper from Mobile's McGill-Toolen Catholic High School, first baseman Jared Bonvillain from Geismer, La., and pitcher Joe Carter of Theodore, Ala. Joining the Spring Hill players and coaches were 11 other players from around the nation.

In previous years, AIST teams have finished second, third, and fourth at the tournament, but it took a rare tripleheader sweep by the Americans on Saturday to secure their first title.

O'Malley led the AIST team to a 9-3 opening round victory over Croatia earlier in the week with two triples and a double at the plate, before the Americans dropped a heartbreaker to Russia 6-5 in the second round. Carter took the tough-luck loss to Russia in the second game as AIST was up 3-1 after five innings, but a three-error, five-run 6th frame doomed the US squad.

Now finding themselves fighting through the losers' side of the bracket, AIST bounced back with a 6-1 victory over the CR AAA team followed by a complete-game 12-6 win by Clapper over Austria.

AIST took a 10-2 early morning decision over Israel to open Saturday's marathon performance and then won a spot in the championship with an afternoon 6-5 victory over the host Czech squad.

Appropriately, AIST faced Russia in a championship game rematch and O'Malley shined once again at the plate with a two-run double in the 9th inning that broke open a close contest as the Americans won 7-1.

Sims has spent his summers coaching and traveling with the AIST organization since 2001. AIST provides high school, collegiate and adult athletic teams opportunities to travel to 22 different countries in various sports.

For photos and more, visit the AIST website.