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K SPORTS



Mavericks catcher Danny Alvarado, who is a senior at South Salem High School, gets introduced during Opening Day festivities. Photo by MATT RAWLINGS of Keizertimes

Mavericks League kicks off inaugural season

BY MATT RAWLINGS

Of the Keizertimes

After months of preparation, the Mavericks League kicked off its inaugural season in front of over 1,000 fans at Volcanoes Stadium on Thursday, May 13.

The Opening Day game saw the Portland Mavericks, in their first contest in over four decades, defeat the Salem-Keizer Volcanoes by a score of 4-2.

"I want the boys to recognize after everything that has gone on is that playing baseball is truly a privilege," Mavericks manager Alan Embree said. "This is special and it's something I want to be a part of."

"It was a blast. I actually thought we played really well, just got the short end of the stick," Volcanoes skipper Tony Torcato added.

Regardless of the result, the evening served as a celebration of semi-professional baseball being played at Volcanoes Stadium for the first time in

nearly two years.

"It has been pure elation for us. It is wonderful to actually see some baseball here, and good baseball at that," Mavericks League CEO Mickey Walker said. "There were fans in the stands, cold beer being served and baseball being played. All-in-all, it was an absolutely wonderful day."

The Volcanoes got on the board first thanks to an RBI-single to left field by CJ Epperson. However, that would be the only run the Volcanoes would get off Mavericks starter Riley Newman as the Salem-native threw five innings for the Mavericks and gave up just one run on three hits while striking out six.

"(Newman) kept the hitters off-balance, which you got to give him credit for. I also think we had some first-game jitters. I know we are a good hitting team, I think we were a little too amped up and tried to do too much at the plate," Torcato said.

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Volcanoes catcher Xavier Ulrich rounds first base after sending a ball to the outfield. Photo by MATT RAWLINGS of Keizertimes