



STAFF PHOTO BY SAM BARBEE

Hermiston 11-year-old Trevor Wagner spins and fires at second base during the Tri-City Dust Devils Youth Baseball Clinic on Sunday at Gesa Stadium in Pasco.



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Tri-City Dust Devils Just Pacchioli (left) and Mitch Morales set up the infielder's drill at the Tri-City Youth Baseball Clinic on Sunday at Gesa Stadium in Pasco.



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Cade Smith of Hermiston rounds first base at Gesa Stadium as part of the Tri-City Dust Devils Youth Baseball Clinic on Sunday.

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game and be a part of it and be with all of us players," Smith said. "It's a good time."

Smith and France were two of 10 Dust Devils players who coached children in various baseball disciplines. Two pitchers worked with campers on base-running. Two players manned a couple tees behind home plate. Two more had a group at second base teaching how to take grounders and how to turn double plays. Still more were in the outfield throwing fly balls, and another group was down the right field line working on throwing mechanics.

The two-hour clinic was action-packed with little idle time. Hermiston 11-year-olds Trevor Wagner, Spencer Juul and Chase Elliott said they really enjoyed the pace of the clinic.

"They kept everyone going," Elliott said. "They kept us going. It wasn't like, 'Just stand here.' We were always doing something."

Split up into age groups, the campers rotated around the five stations in 20 minute intervals. The program was designed to get as many reps as possible while still allowing for some personal instruction from the players.

"I've been involved for 14 years now doing this, we've kinda learned over the years that kids don't have a ton of attention

time," President/General Manager Derrel Ebert said. "We try to keep it fun and keep it moving along."

About 30 of the 60 participants, Hermiston Parks and Rec representative Kate Greenough said, came from Hermiston or Irrigon, and, barring an unforeseen problem, Hermiston will continue to participate in the clinic.

"It's just done a really good job of bringing together all the different age groups, and it's not far from Hermiston," she said. "It's a nice asset that we have that a lot of communities don't. You get to be a Minor League player for two hours. That's pretty cool for a lot of these kids."

The clinic was an experience for everyone present. France said he got to act like a 12-year-old again, something he very much enjoys. For the campers, it's a chance to play on a professional field with professional players. The Tri-City Dust Devils team is the short-season Class A affiliate of the San Diego Padres.

For the parents, it's a chance to reinforce the concepts and skills already being taught by Little League coaches.

"These kids know that these guys are fighting for their dream," Chase's father, Chris, said from the Dust Devils dugout. "So to be getting instruction from someone who's still (playing the game), that's not something any of us (parents and coaches) can do."



STAFF PHOTO BY SAM BARBEE

Chase Elliott of Hermiston races Tri-City Dust Devils catcher A.J. Kennedy for a fly ball during the Tri-City Dust Devils Youth Baseball Clinic on Sunday at Gesa Stadium in Pasco.



STAFF PHOTO BY SAM BARBEE

Hermiston's Chase Elliott takes swings off the tee with Tri-City Dust Devils first baseman Ty France at the Tri-City Dust Devils Youth Baseball Clinic on Sunday at Gesa Stadium in Pasco.



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Following the Tri-City Dust Devils Youth Baseball Clinic on Sunday at Gesa Stadium, the 10 Dust Devils instructors lined up in the home first base dugout to sign autographs for the roughly 60 campers.



STAFF PHOTO BY SAM BARBEE

Hermiston's Cade Warner waits for a throw from his partner at the Tri-City Dust Devils Youth Baseball Clinic on Sunday at Gesa Stadium in Pasco.



STAFF PHOTO BY SAM BARBEE

More than 60 campers got personal baseball instruction from 10 Tri-City Dust Devils players at the Tri-City Dust Devils Youth Baseball Clinic on Sunday at Gesa Stadium in Pasco.

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