

Small Ball: A Little League Story

a film by Louis Alvarez and Andrew Kolker

Transcript

Claudia McCauley: Sorry, hello? Yeah. Hi. The game is fine. We have somebody on third base, no outs. Uh huh, are you – who’s on third? Mark Lamothe.. You ok? Oh, it’s J.B. Okay, so are you staying there?..... Sure, I don’t care. All right. Well just have him come over and you guys can watch t.v. Okay. Honey, I really love you a lot but THIS IS NOT A GOOD TIME!!! YEAH!!!!!! All right!! All right!! We just scored another run, sorry. You have my attention now for another second or two.

Narrator: *Once upon a time, there was town in Northern California, which had a Little League team that could really play baseball.*

[Main Title]

Narrator: *It’s the fourth of July, the beginning of the All-Stars season and like hometown fans everywhere, the people of Aptos, California expect great things for their team..*

Narrator: *Who knows? Maybe this will be the year that their boys will go all the way to the fabled Little League World Series in Williamsport, Pennsylvania.*

Dave Anderson: Everybody smile, wave, you know, “Go Aptos All-stars!” Scream and go crazy, okay?

Dave: Right, Brandon? Scream and go crazy.

Narrator: *More than seven thousand teams from around the world will try to make it to the World Series. Getting there will take enormous skill and a lot of luck. For a small town like Aptos, the odds are astronomical.*

Dave Farmer: Going all the way to Williamsport!

Claudia McCauley, Aptos mom: It’s a little utopia here, yeah. The kids can feel fairly safe, all the teachers know you. Every parent knows what’s going on. It’s just unique. Besides the fact it’s so beautiful. The beach is right here. The weather is always pretty much the same and I’ve just never seen any place like it before so and it would just so happens the Little League experience is kind of tucked in there, and you know.

Claudia: It’s like when flowers bloom or something in the spring, you know, it pops out and it’s just wonderful experience, you know. That’s kinda how I see it. You know the kids all know each other. Its just right here in nice Aptos – and we all , you know, watched them grow up together.

Narrator: *We've come to Aptos because their All Star team had been seven years in the making.*

Ever since they played T-ball together, these boys have been groomed to do great things.

Now they're twelve. They're strong, and they're skilled. And they think that they're ready for prime time.

Question: Do you guys ever think about going to Williamsport?

Kids: Yeah. Yeah.

Andrew Biancardi: Yeah. That'd be cool, if we did. Cause I think we have a good team, and we could.

Kevin Farmer: And all we have to do is win twelve games to go. Well, not all, twelve games. (laughs)

Kyle Anderson: We just have to win all the tournaments, cause the team that we played last year, they beat us by a- a home run in the sixth inning. And they only beat us by one... and they ended up going one tourna- tournament away from the Little League World Series.

Andrew: Well, they would've won the game- they would've- they were like in the championship...

Kirsten Anderson: Everything's just baseball. Everything, everything is baseball.

Carolyn Farmer: That's all they talk about. Constantly.

Kirsten: Yeah. You walk into the room and that's all they talk about.

Alex McCauley: It's baseball ... I just walk out.

Carolyn: Baseball games on the TV...

Kirsten: Like we buy blankets that have baseball, they'll either be playing whiffle ball or then they'll go inside and play with their baseball cards. Then they go back outside and just do it all over again. And that's all they do.

Carolyn: I walk into Kevin's room and he'll be playing Nintendo baseball. I'll be like "How can you play that after you've spent the whole day playing baseball?" It's so annoying.

Kid: That was a strike!

Drew: Shut up!

Kid: Don't listen to him. We're 2 and 1.

Dave Anderson, manager: I think the expectations are pretty high on this team, you know, maybe warranted, maybe unwarranted. So this year, this should be their year because they are now as big as they're going to be- as big as all the competitors, they're strong, they've got two years, in some cases three years of intense all-star training. So I mean I think there are some people who think that this team is going to be better, I think more realistically every team is different. Um, I think it could be, I hope it is, but, you know, I'm not going to sit there and say that it most definitely will be. You don't know.

Dave Anderson: Alright, lets go do it, to it.

Kyle Anderson: Hey Dad.

Dave: Hey, buddy.

Narrator: *In Little League, it's the manager who sets the tone for the whole team. Dave Anderson's coaching style might be called 'California cool'. Focused and low key. It's more like a management seminar than a Little League pep talk.*

Dave Anderson: One of the things we never did was we we never gave up. We got behind, but the reason we won is cause we never quit. We kept thinking, "We can win," we kept thinking, "We got to do our best." When we did that, we won. I don't care if you fail, I don't care if you drop the ball, but I do care if once you do drop the ball, that you go in the tank- what is your job then? You continue to try, you never ever give up. Dedicate yourselves to this All Star team, right. Dedicate yourselves to Aptos. Learn from what we teach you, learn from the game...

Mark Eichhorn: I'm excited about this team here. We've got the talent, you know. The way I look at it, if we don't win it's the players, if we win, it's the coaches. I'm trying to keep a straight face. No, ah, I'm obviously just kidding.

Mark Eichhorn: Ok. This is my baseball room, and uh- let's see. If we can get this thing open. There we go. Just some of the teams I've played for now, twenty years- okay? Twenty years professional baseball, I've been around the block. This is my first professional jersey in Medicine Hat, Alberta, Canada, at the age of eighteen. Now, when I heard I got drafted by the Toronto Blue Jays, I thought I was going to Toronto to play with the Blue Jays. I went to a place called Medicine Hat, Alberta- Canada. They almost- the the mosquitoes there were so big, they almost

took me away. This here is Baltimore, I played with the Orioles. Here you go. This was my World Series jersey here, I believe. This is the actual jersey, famous Mark Eichhorn jersey 1993. And that says Mark Eichhorn, or something like that.

Mark Eichhorn: I think it's safe to say that it would be a major disappointment if this team didn't go far. I think it is safe to say that, but the thing is, and this is important, is you can't let the kids know. They know, I'm sure to a degree, but you can't you can't give them too much.

Mark Eichhorn: If we win 10 games, and we go into the third tournament and we lose, we can't be disappointed. You know, you did the best you could, and you can't, so you can't set those expectations too high and say if, you know, Williamsport or bust.

Mark Eichhorn: Strike one. Good angle Tyler.

Mark Eichhorn: I want you to think you're a power pitcher. I don't care where it goes.

Kathy Raymond: I think that winning in sports is a good ground work for winning in the rest of life. And I think that it's a great confidence booster for Tyler because I'm not always sure about his confidence level. Sometimes I I, he gets down. You know, he's, and I, and everybody does but I worry about that. So I'm I'm thrilled that he's on this team with all these boys and that there is that potential for winning because I think it will help him as a person as a as a young man growing up, so...

Q: You think that's true?

Tyler Raymond: Mmm-hmm, yeah.

Dave Anderson: Hey, that was that far outside. At least that far. Hey Bri, hey don't get discouraged. Come here, be, wait for a strike, even if you do strike out, if he's...if he calls you out on that pitch.... something wrong with him. That, that was at least that far out. Be a little bit more selective and when you go at it, go hard. Either go hard or don't go at all. One or the other.

Claudia: You know what, It'd be pretty special if we made it. A little farther than we went last year. It'd be nice for them and we'd be very happy too. . .(laughs).

Kit Anderson, Dave Anderson's wife: Well, yeah. And and I always, when I think oh that'll never happen, but somebody's gotta go and why can't it be us, I mean, that's the flip side of it.

Claudia: Yeah.

Kit: I wanna go really bad.

Claudia: Yeah, we do.

Kathy Raymond: I like to hold back a little bit and um and not antip- anticipate too much, just wait for it to to happen. But then my husband would say I'm being negative. I just worry, you know, they could go out and lose in two games, so all this pressure and all this anticipation, it it um, I just feel like sometimes it's too much.

Andy Biancardi, hitting coach: The instruction has been there for weeks and weeks and weeks, I mean we've been at it since February. So, now its just, ok, relax. We we know you can do it. Now it's just a matter of relaxing.

Dave Farmer, assistant coach: These kids can hit the ball. So it's kinda fun to watch them uh come from behind. Yeah, these other guys, I made some notes the other day and they're tap to the second baseman, pop out to the first baseman. And we don't tap and pop, you know. We hit the ball.

Mark: Come on, come on, come on. Keep going, keep going, keep going. All the way hard.

Dave: So who's tired of practicing?

Boys: Me, me, me.

Brian: Every day is practice.

Dave: Not everyday. So tomorrow though the practice ends, huh?

Boys: Yeah.

Dave: Tomorrow's the game?

Boys: Yes.

Dave: Do you think we're ready?

Boys: Yeah.

Dave: I really do. You guys are looking very, very good. I mean, if we thought last year's team was good. Let me tell ya right now, from 1 through 12, this is a much better team. Alright? Everybody in? Okay, let's go.

Mark: Everybody have fun tonight.

Dave: What time will you be there tomorrow?

Boys: 8:45

Dave: Everybody wa chung, is it wa chung?

Mark: Wang Chung.

Dave: Wang Chung tonight. Everybody Wang Chung tonight. Okay, Jarred's got it.

Jarred: 1, 2, 3, APTOS!

Dave: Go get 'em guys.

[District Tournament, Aptos]

Mark and Mariann: Oh, say can you see, by the dawn's early light, what so proudly...it's not working.

Mariann: There it is.

Mark: It's a good warm up.

Mark: For the land of the free and the home of the brave.

Narrator: *If they want to get to Williamsport, Aptos will have to survive four tournaments over the next six weeks. If they lose two games in any tourney, they go home. For their first opponents, they've drawn the Gilroy All-stars.*

Mike Gustin, Gilroy coach: In Gilroy, our first baseman is our biggest kid by far and that team over there must have six kids bigger than him. I wanna know how they grow them there, cause we want to get a supermarket that they have. It's unreal. That's awesome.

Gilroy player: Oh my God.

Players: Dude, that center fielders pretty good...Dude, he's quick...He's tall...He's fast...He has long legs he's big, so he has bigger steps.

Mike Gustin, Gilroy coach: What I want to know, is this like one family. I mean is it like, they like all cousins and it just runs in the family, or...

Narrator: *As the games gets underway, the Aptos pitching strength is evident. On the mound today, is lefty Kyle Anderson, coach Dave Anderson's son.*

Dave: That a way.

Narrator: *Kyle's making it look easy, quickly disposing of the Gilroy hitters.*

Dave: That a way...Good throw buddy.

Mark: Way to get out front. Hey, we get behind two one always...

Narrator: *But as might be expected on opening day, nerves are a factor. And Aptos isn't doing any hitting either.*

Dave: No.

Gilroy catcher: I got it.

Dave: Okay, c'mon guys, hustle out.

Announcer: What a beautiful catch!

Narrator: *By the top of the fourth, Gilroy has broken through and has scored two runs. And since Little League games are only 6 innings long, they're starting to make plans.*

Mike, Gilroy coach: Hey, where are we going after this win today guys?

Players: Dean's Pizza.

Mike, Gilroy coach: And if we lose what do we get?

Players: Nothing... We get to go home...Macaroni and Cheese.

Gilroy coach: Macaroni and cheese.

Player: But we're gonna win for pizza.

Coach: Huh?

Player: We'll win for pizza. We'll win because we wanna win.

Claudia: We're not worried. Yet. I'll let you know come watch me in the sixth inning.

Kathy: They have it in them. They just have to hit the ball. Hit the ball now.

Dave: Come on, Kev.

Narrator: *Finally, Aptos gets down to business. In the fifth inning, they get two runners on base, setting the table for Kevin Eichhorn, coach Mark Eichhorn's son.*

Dave: Good eye, Kevin.

Dave: Good Eye, buddy..

Tyler Raymond: Let's go Kevin.

Dave: Yeah yeah, get out of here. Yeah, yeah.

Announcer: A home run by Kevin Eichhorn

Dave: Never give up, baby.

Narrator: *And that's how it ended, Aptos three, Gilroy two.*

Dave: Nice job guys. Way to hit the ball Curtis. Way to be, Kev.

Kathy: Oh my god, you just really nervous today weren't you?

Tyler: Yeah, then the pitcher just, it was a lot slower, and I was way out.

Kathy: You know what, you were, you were, you were reaching. When you struck out that time. . .and you were reaching. You know you would've walked.

Tyler: I know.

Mark: I just want to give you some kudos. Give me some kudos. That was phenomenal, give me a hug. Well, I'm proud of you, give me a hug. That a boy, Kevin. I love you, sweetie. You're real special, you're real special. That was exciting.

Dave Anderson: Yeah, I was a little worried, you know. Wasn't panicky, but a little worried. Good things happen to those who wait. Alright.

Narrator: *Perhaps their near loss was a wake up call. Maybe it gave the team the confidence they needed. Whatever the alchemy, things started to click and the boys were on a roll.*

Narrator: *In game two, Kevin Eichhorn proved that he was not only a clutch home run hitter, but also Aptos' equally dominant number two starting pitcher.*

Dave: Yes, yes! Way to stay in there, baby! Super job.

Narrator: *And the Aptos pitching strength didn't stop with Kevin.*

They also had six-foot tall center fielder Tyler Raymond available in relief.

Kathy: Relax, Ty.

Narrator: *Of course, for the anxious parent of a 12-year-old pitcher, a fast-ball can never really be fast enough.*

Tyler: I think the adults might be into it a little too much. Because they think they're in the game, but mostly the the s- the spectators, the, ma, the ma, mothers and fathers are just there and sometimes they think that they're a part of the team, which they are because they cheer'em on, but I think they're, they think they're too much of the team.

Question: D- does that, does that ever, do the other kids notice this too?

Tyler: I think they do, they just never talk about it.

Question: Yeah, so kids don't talk about that kind of stuff?

Tyler: No, no, no we don't talk about it.

Kathy: Let's go T.

OC: Come on defense.

Tyler: I think the parents might not know how hard it might be to get to Williamsport.

Kathy: You forget that they're kids and it should be a simple pleasure.

Question: Do you want to please your parents or do you wanna please...?

Tyler: Yeah, I want to please them, make'em happy from when I, from what I do.

Kathy: But, you, don't you feel like you need to be happy yourself....not just make Dad and I happy?

Tyler: Yeah, I want to be happy the same time, but I want them to be happy too.

Kathy: But don't you know that we're proud of you all the time.

Tyler: Yeah, yeah.

Kathy: Whether you win or lose.

Tyler: Um-hmm.

Dave: Nobody out..

Dave: Nobody out guys, turn two now.

Mark: Kyle.

Dave: Kyle.

Mark: Kyle, Kyle. Smooth'em out a little bit, smooth'em out a little bit.

Dave: That a way.

Mark: Kyle, much better!

Dave: Much better. Kyle, Kyle that was smoother.

Mark: Kyle, Kyle, good spot. Good spot, Kyle.

Dave: Turn two now guys, turn two.

Narrator: *As one of Aptos' top players, Kyle Anderson has often carried the team on his shoulders. He may be a veteran of three all-star seasons, but nobody's perfect.*

Dave: Kyle, Kyle settle down. Kyle, Kyle. Kyle, Kyle keep your head up.

Mark: Andrew, Andrew, Kevin in.

Dave: Come on, throw the strikes. Oh...he's driving me nuts.

Narrator: *Meanwhile, Dave is experiencing an age-old Little League dilemma - "How do you coach a player when the player is your own son?"*

Dave: That's it. Hey come here, come here, come here. Don't get mad, okay. What are you mad about. All, all -

Kyle: Kid roped it off me.

Dave: The only thing that was wrong was that the change up was right here, if it was on the plate, he's out.

Kyle: I always liked playing infield.

Dave: Kyle, Kyle please don't get mad, come on we need you right now.

Kyle: Well, I am.

Dave: Well, okay fine what is it, you want, you want the whole year for nothing. Is that what you want? You better settle down.

Dave: Kyle, stay calm, nice line drive, right now... Hands back stay closed, line drive hard, stay close.

Kit: Let's go, buddy. Hands back.

Dave: You need to figure out how to control yourself or else your I'm pulling ya. I will pull you in a heartbeat. It's okay. You're hitting the ball on the nose. That's, it will come.

Kyle: Dad, dad, I've stricken out and grounded out on the pitcher twice.

Dave: It's okay, Kyle, it's even better when you throw a one-hit game.

Dave: Uh, yeah baby. Get out of here, get out of here. Yeah, go now two, two, two, two. That a way, Marky! Yeah, baby!

Dave: Hey, it will come, don't worry about it. Alright, you gonna be this way... Stop it. This is a team game not about you.

Dave: Today Kyle really got upset with himself because his expectations of himself are very high, very high. He led the league in home runs. He led the league in pitching. I mean, he's just this guy. And on days, it just seems like, and he doesn't believe this, but on days when he's pitching, he doesn't seem to hit as well. Maybe there's just too much to do, too much to expect of somebody, but when he doesn't hit well he gets, you know, down on himself. And I don't want that to f-, to carry to the mound. I'd much rather have him focus on pitching because you've got eight other great hitters around you.

Narrator: *In the end, the skill of the Aptos boys proved too much for their opponents and they easily won the district championships.*

Claudia: We did it. We're going over the hill. (laughs) To the heat, on Saturday. Very cool, very cool.

Narrator: *So Aptos was officially on its way. Even the press was starting to pay attention.*

Max Kellerman, middle school sports reporter: I know you've won a lot of championships before, especially with this Aptos team, is this one any different, or does it make it any more special than the other times?

Andrew: Uh yeah, because we're twelve now. So it's a little different cause it's our last game on this field. We're never gonna play here again.

Max: In the beginning of the season your uh lung collapsed, right, and you had to miss a couple of games and your ribs broke, yeah, that was a tough loss your team had to take. And so you missed a couple of games and came back and then you had some trouble with your arm

Tyler: And my and my hamstring.

Max: and your hamstring, and...

Max: Do you get burnt out at baseball at any time?

Kevin E: No.

Max: Baseball, it's always fun?

Kevin E: Yeah.

Max: Feeling confident about this team? I know you've been on a lot of All Star teams and you've got to play with a lot of Aptos greats, is there anything different about this team?

Andrew: Uh, yeah, well there's more twelve year olds this year than last year, cause we had seven eleven year olds— most of'em came back. So, we got a lot of power.

[Sectional Tournament, San Jose]

Dave Anderson: No, get it out of here...yeah!

Narrator: *Over the following week, Aptos would build on its win in the districts and methodically mow down the opposition. The team was fluid and confident.*

Contributions came from the whole team....Andrew Biancardi, their most consistent hitter and stellar fielder. Soft handed Kevin Farmer. The anchor of the infield on first base and Claudia McCauley's son Drew, a battler at and behind the plate.

Dave: Nice job Drewby, great job a hitting and way to run

Narrator: *On the sidelines, the parents did what they could to keep the team on track.*

Donna Biancardi, Andrew's mother: I have to go sit in the outfield, I'm not allowed in the bleachers. Because we're we're two and 0 and I've been sitting out there so, I have to stay out there. We're two and 0, because wherever you sit when you win, that's where you sit the rest of the time. So I've been sitting out there, so I'm not allowed to go anywhere near the bleachers. All all the mothers say everyone has to sit in their same spot. This is how wacky we all are.

Joann Godoy, Brian's mother: I saw these shoes and I said, "Those are my lucky shoes." So, I've worn these shoes to every game, and I will wear these shoes to every game, from here to...where where these shoes are gonna go...to uh Petaluma this Friday, and then they're going to San Bernardino. And then they're going to...Williamsport!

Dave: Yeah, get out! Get outta here! Outta here! Way to go B! That a way, man!

Claudia: Yeah, yeah, over, over, yeah! Whoo...

Narrator: *In winning the three games in the Sectional tournament, Aptos had outscored the opposition 26 to 3; it was the farthest any Aptos team had ever gone.*

Dave: This is probably the best a little league team can look.

Dave: That was as good as a coach could ever hope his team could play. When the pitching was incredible, catcher never let a ball get by him, we didn't really have too many plays on defense to to really give you a sh-, you know, a a look at how good your defense is, but my god that was just total domination.

Dave: There is a uh core group of kids that two years ago as 10-year-olds, were one game away. Last year, were two games away and this year we made it. So this is a heck of a team and I hope everybody appreciates what they saw today.

Claudia: This is my dad in LA.

Dave: I think part of Little League is about the parents and the kids and all that and I can tell you right now the Aptos team has the greatest parents. I love you guys. The Aptos 2002 Section Five Champs - Aptos.

Claudia: You ok? Aww

Lynn: Aww honey are you ok?

Claudia: Well I couldn't tell, I thought something was the matter!

Lynn: Is she happy or sad...aww.

Joann: This is happy cry, this is happy

Joann: Ya know, I mean I'm 49 , and my husband is 56, and this is the first time in our life that I-mean-we're...we're just we're taking it in, it's it's...

Question: First time in your life what?

Joann: That we've won something this big. Well and when it when it's happening to your child....

Dave: Ya think about it, and sometimes we kind of talk about it but then you kinda go no, no, alright, we gotta go tonight, we gotta win tonight, we gotta do whatever. But ya can't help it, ya know it's a dream, it's like every kid has a dream, you want, and and ya just hope that uh this is it. So maybe it is. It'd be fun

Question: It's not just the kids?

Dave: Just, that's exactly it. Well look at us! We're all a bunch of big kids. It's fun.

[Northern California State Tournament, Petaluma]

Mark Eichhorn: If you guys get a little car sick let me know and I'll open the windows. Ok? Alright...

Mark: Win, lose, or draw I think we have the best club, all the way up to this point, so far, I mean I'm just being honest, and then things may change in Petaluma, we'll see.

Mark: Want me to put on you guys favorite? The one we heard yesterday?

Players: Nooo!

Mark: Aww man, you guys didn't like that?

Mark: We were jammin to it yesterday, I guess I guess uh it wasn't a big hit or something...so we'll go to a little uh..here we go....

Mark: Oh, I gotta get over there...

Donna: I, I'm packed to go for a month. Maureen, I brought a coffee grinder, my coffee beans, I've got, I'm, I'm...

Maureen Worden: I went and got coffee grounds I brought my Melitta filter.

Donna: Oh, yeah, you're the same as me.

Maureen: Yeah.

Narrator: *By the time they arrive at the state championship, the Aptos contingent is breathing rarified air. They're on their first road trip, a hundred miles from home.*

Mark: Hey, who wants a spray of water.... on the neck. Who wants a neck shot. Neck shot, neck shot, neck shot.

Narrator: *And even in the heat of Petaluma, there's entertainment to be had.*

Mark: What have I not done today? Here we go. "Well blows me down, Olives, oh how embarrassing, ach ach ach ach..."

Dave: Come Andrew, drive it baby. Come on, go, go, go, go.

Dave: Yeah! Go, Kevin go. Yeah!

Narrator: *By now, Aptos has developed a reputation as the team to beat. They've made easy prey of their first three opponents at the Northern California state tournament. In fact, they're starting to seem indomitable...*

Dave: Yeah! Get out of here, grand slam! Grand slam! Grand slam!!

Joann: Oh, I love winning, like I am so happy. Woo (laughs). Hello? Georgia, we won! (Laughs)

Dave: So are we unbeatable? (Yeah) Hey, Kyle – way to hang in there today buddy. Way to hang in there today. JB. I wanna pay a tribute to JB today.

Mark Eichhorn: Get in the middle there. Dog pile!

Dave: Hey wait. Come here. JB came up to me today and said “Hey Coach, I’ll to whatever it takes to help this team win.” That’s big.

Mark: Way to go JB! Excellent! How ‘bout having you pitch, but we...

Team: Yeah! On three. One, two, three, Aptos!

Kathy: Is that yesterday’s or...?

Peyton Bachan, Jarred’s mother: It’s the paper.

Claudia McCauley: They are not showing the boys.

Kathy: Oh, is it the big one?

Claudia McCauley: “Lights, camera, Williamsport.”

Kathy: Oh my god! You just gave me the chills!

Claudia McCauley: On the Sentinel. The entire front page.

Kathy: Holy Smoke.

Peyton: Oh my god.

Joann Godoy:...for a group of Little Leaguers from Aptos the spotlight is al- already burning white hot. The Aptos Little League Major All Stars are one win away from becoming the best fielding, throwing, hitting outfit in all of Northern California. That’s the best single team out of four hundred leagues. ‘This is one of the those deals you dream about’ said Anderson, the Aptos

Manager.

Mom: Ok, you need to stop.

Joann: A win today over San Carlos, a team Aptos has already beaten...

Narrator: *But a winning streak can sometimes be a mixed blessing. At this stage of tournament play, the more you win, the longer you stay on the road. And everything else in your life gets put on hold.*

Donna: I think people that don't have kids that are involved in in sports and don't know the baseball, like my like my boss, I mean he plays softball, but he doesn't have kids, you know and so he doesn't know, and so they have no idea what family lives are, you know what it entails and what the sports.

Peyton: You wouldn't understand unless you were doing it because you do get caught up in that. And I started off with that feeling too you know it's just baseball. And you know as uh as as we get farther and farther along I'm joining the rest of the ranks of you with you know the upset stomachs and the nervousness.

Kathy: I mean, I just calculated really quickly in my head - this has been over a thousand dollars for this brief period of time, here. Not that it's not money well spent. It's just, um, it wasn't, it really wasn't what I ant- I anticipated this, I had never anticipated this. And Barry and I had talked about it would just be great if they won sectionals and then it wouldn't really matter to us what they did here and now that they're one game away you're just sucked that much deeper right back in and you want them to go on.

Claudia: We finally said to the boys this morning, Donna and I in bed, "Boys, we haven't asked much of you, you need to win tonight because us mothers are gonna have a nervous breakdown." You know, we can't go one more game and then start thinking about you know, "gotta start packing and all of that," so. . .this is big tonight. This is like amazingly big.

Andy Biancardi: Hey, everybody have fun tonight.

Team: Everybody Wang Chung tonight.

Mark: "If I were the king of the forest. Not Duke, not Earl, but King."

Player: Do the Donald Duck.

Mark: Alright that's it.

Brian: No, no, do a new one.

Dave: Look at Kev, he turns around and walks the other way.

Mark: “To all the girls I’ve known before...”

Dave: Little Willie Nelson

Mark: Kevin is hiding in the back..

Dave: Now you know what? Kevin can do voices, I just heard him.

Mark: “Who’ve traveled in and out my door. I’m glad you came along.” That’s it. They’re going ‘Who in the heck is Willie Nelson?’

Dave: That seemed a little high.

Dave: Thatta way!

Narrator: *At the outset of game four, it looks like the Aptos luck may be changing. They’re encountering something they have managed to avoid so far– a dominating pitcher.*

Mark: Everybody’s hitting the, everybody’s hitting them. Let’s go, pop out there.

Kyle: Fastball pitcher.

Dave: Well, that’s alright. You’ve been begging for fast balls for two weeks. You finally got it. Kyle, come on, Jesus.

Narrator: *Nothing that’s happening on the field seems to be going their way.*

Dave: Come on, come on Brian. No...Two, two, two, two!

Dave: Four, four, four, four! Cut it, cut it, cut it!

Claudia: I want to go home tonight. I don’t want to spend another night in Petaluma. Nothing personal, Petaluma!

Sister: Strike, come on.

Sister: Turn two Aptos, let’s go boys, let’s go Kyle

Dave Farmer, Kevin Farmer's father: Yeah, nice pit... This guy is terrible. His strike zone's about that big.

Lynn Farmer, Kevin Farmer's mother: The ump?

Dave Farmer: But we heard that. I think we heard that in the uh hotel that he had a small strike zone.

Dave: You know what, we, hey, we didn't get one of those calls. Not one.

Dave: He doesn't know where he has to throw!

Alex: Let's go, Kyle!

Dave: Wow...He knows those are strikes.

Dave: Unbelievable. Unbelievable.

Dave: Easy out. That'away. Great pitching, Kyle!

Mark: Way to go Kyle Anderson! Great game buddy!

Dave: Now we got to...right here, right here...it's out last at bats.

Kyle: Am I staying in?

Mark: Yeah, you are.

Dave: Yes! Hey, come here guys. Hey. What more would you want. 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th and 9th hitters coming up. This is it. Can we hit this guy?

All: Yeah!

Dave: Kyle can you start it for us?

Announcer: The batter, number seven, Kyle Anderson.

Dave: Thatta way.

Dave Farmer: It ain't over til it's over. You know, well, I'm still uh very optimistic that we can do these guys. We're ok. Piece piece of cake. We'll figure'em out.

Lynn Farmer: That's why I married him. He's so optimistic.

Dave: Come on Kyle, here we go.

Dave: That's a hit, that's a hit, that's a hit! No!!!!!! No!!! No, Blue! No, it's not his call! Time, Blue! Time, Blue! Time, Blue! I want to go out to him. Is that not his call?

Dave: You asked me to go to the guy who makes the call, it, isn't that your call? We could see it, we could see that bounce.

Umpire: No that was his call down there.

Dave: But you're the right field ump.

Umpire: That that was his call.

Dave: Can I go talk to him?

Umpire: Sure, please.

Player: Do you want help?

Dave: No, b-...Is that not his call?

Ump: Technically I, when he came in to the infield he w- his back was to the plate and and my j-, my j- judgement, he came up with it.

Dave: But we could see that clearly that he dropped that ball, he, the ball bounced. No, I'm serious! We wouldn't even be, we are not those kind of people.

Ump: But I know, I know that, but but I didn't see it bounce, my judgement...he caught the ball. I know, it's a tough call.

Dave: C'mon, baby! C'mon, Kyle.

Player: Come on, Blue!

Dave: Nice hit. Hey, hey, you don't say stuff like that. Hey, hey, good sportsmanship, no matter what happens, good sportsmanship.

Dave: Take your time, Andrew, take your time.

Dave: Hey, don't hey, settle down! Don't throw anything, just settle down. Hey good sportsmanship, no matter what we do, we are good sports.

Kyle: Can we get a new Ump next game?

Dave: Yeah, we'll have all new Umps.

Dave: Good eye Kevin. You know what? Hey. We'd have second and first now with one out. That hurt. He said from back here he thought he caught it. He didn't see that ball bounce. And the right field ump has his back turned to it. It's not his call.

Dave: NO! Everybody out, come on. Hey. hey. Come on, buck up. Hey! No one let anybody down.

Player: Yeah, the Umps did.

Dave: No, they didn't.

Player: They let us down.

Dave: Hey, good sportsmanship, they beat us. Regardless of what the Ump said, regardless of what happened. They beat us, two to nothing. We didn't score a run. Do you think that they're gonna have the same guy throw tomorrow? (No) They can't. Think we can hit the other guy? (Yes!) Are we still the team to beat? Yes. So we'll get them tomorrow. On three, San Carlos.

All: One, two, three, San Carlos!

Dave: These guys are a one trick pony. You know what that means? They got one guy. And we've already seen him.

Dave: That Ump was terrible. He was as bad as we've seen. No he really was. Nice game guys. Nice pitching buddy.

Claudia: Alright boys. He's a little teary, let me go get him. Drew! He doesn't want me. It must be hard, some of these guys, first loss in 33 games. So, hey boys we're gonna play again tomorrow, ok? We're gonna play again tomorrow, ok? It's heartbreaking. You have to go to the bathroom, okay. You don't want to see me cry.

Question: This is the first loss in how long?

Kyle: What?

Question: This is your first loss this summer.

Kyle: Oh my god, it is!

Cesar: I don't consider this as a loss, I consider it as a bye for San Carlos.

JB Burns: It's true, the Ump's like strike zone has like got holes every where. His strike zone is like, there.

Kyle: Dude, that was the worst strike zone of the year.

JB Burns: It wasn't a loss, it was a... one blue team. God that guy sucked.

Claudia: You know boys, they don't want you to see them cry. Can you give him a hug honey, he's a little upset. Give him sister...

Dave: You knew you were going to lose sooner or later...

Dave: I mean, that was just inevitable.

Dave: Yeah you know it was inevitable, you're gonna f-, you know I, quite honestly I thought we would hit a guy who threw fast balls better than we did.

Mark: Yeah, the, the the key was, he did mix it up.

Dave: He mixed it up very well.

Mark: That that was it. He mixed it up, had a nice hook. Had he been strictly fast balls, with a few hooks, I think we'd have, we'd have touched him up a little bit

Dave: It was a good game, it was good baseball game.

Mark: Two nothing, you gotta like that.

Dave: It wasn't decided until the last swing.

Mark: The very last out. Yeah, the very last out.

Dave: I mean Kevin could've just have easily hit that ball over the left field fence and the game would've been tied.

Mark: Let's play it over (laughs).

Dave: Let's do it again, we're ready (laughs).

...

Donna: I'm relaxing while all the mothers are all stressing out, so I'm just sitting here relaxing, reading a magazine and enjoying some sun, which I don't do very often. So, it's very nice and calming and I'm not going to get all worked up.

Kathy: I'm not a good flyer and that's the feeling I have that horrible anxious anxiety ridden stomach clenching feeling I get on a plane is what I'm feeling now. But typically when I get on a plane and I have my drugs and my, my glass of wine, it'll go away. And like yesterday with the day off I didn't have it all day but the minute I woke up this morning there it was, I physically felt sick.

Kit: Yeah, and part of me is like, God, I wish I could enjoy it more, but, because, I mean I am enjoying it, but around game time, I just kind of want it to be over. And then you look back and the summer has just kind of flown by and you don't want to miss the ride. You know, but, it's, it's scary.

...

Mark: Yeah, there it is, yeah baby.

Mark: Don't leave me hanging, don't leave me hanging. Do not leave me hanging.

Dave: Hey, during the national anthem, let's be respectful. Don't be too goofy yet, you can sing but sing right.

Dave: Come on guys, hats off.

Dave: With respect, we're Aptos. Quit goofing around.

Narrator: *It's the final game in Petaluma and the opponent is once again San Carlos. The winner will go on to the Western Regionals in San Bernardino. The loser will go home.*

Dave Farmer: We all have our little superstitions. I'll get a... freshly cleaned ball, just something that I learned in White Sox two years ago, and you rub it down with some special spit, gum, whatever, and you hand it to the pitching coach who hands it to the starting pitcher. And that mojo right there, ensures the victory. Ball mojo. It's all in the chart. San Bernardino. San Bernardino.

Narrator: *And so the baseball gods were appeased.*

Mark: Om...Om...

Dave: Who's got first base?

Andy: Find your happy place.

Teammates: Let's go Kev.

Narrator: *Kevin Eichhorn pitched a two-hit shut out into the last inning. And the Aptos juggernaut was back on track.*

Dave: Yeah, baby!

Mark: One more boys, get ready. get ready.

Dave: We'll go popping out of here, huh.

Mark: I want to see a dog pile.

Dave: Yeah, a dog pile is right. Dog pile.

Dave: Yeah!

Team: San Bernardino! San Bernardino!

Donna: Hey, you guys, congratulations

Kathy: Are you so happy? I packed a nice clean bag of underwear for you.

Dave Farmer: And here's the man. He got a good hit. You got to work on that swing, you know, curve ball thing though. Alright...

Kevin: No, I hit it off a curve ball.

Dave Farmer: No, I mean the second one (laughs).

Kevin: Oh..

Question: So what is it going to take for you guys to make that trip to Pennsylvania?

Tyler: It will take a lot of hard work. All these teams have won their state and division, so they'll be just as good as we are....

Dave:Managers, coaches and team hosts will meet Friday at three forty five in the assembly room. We will try to be brief. It says we realize you're living with a group of eleven and twelve year olds,

Kathy: Yippee. So beer will be provided.

Dave: and that youngsters of this age group are not the neatest of housekeepers.

Kathy: Oh really?

Dave: However, we would appreciate all the help you could give us in maintaining an orderly complex. Yeah, check this out - at the conclusion of the evening, a meeting is scheduled for the northwest and West champions for their parents to receive instructions and information about Williamsport. . .oh, shoot. Um, this is for us. . . . have your kids there, you know 45 minutes before the game, line-up cards, gatorade...

[Western Regional Tournament, San Bernardino]

Player: There are 200 in left...yeah I know...

Mark Godoy, Joann's husband: Got nice sight lines and the grass, the dirt's a nice color. The cutouts are nice. They've really taken care of this field. Just a real good place to play, it looks like. I imagine it'll be a little frightening to have eight to ten thousand people watching you play. But that's just a challenge the kids will have to face won't they.

Narrator: *The Aptos boys have traveled 500 miles overnight to get to San Bernardino, the last tournament before Williamsport.. Here, they'll have to beat five other state champions for the right to represent the West.*

Dave: Oh, you're kidding!

Kyle: They're underground.

Narrator: *Of course, not all the challenges are on the field.*

Kevin: Can we go see the uh dorms?

Curtis: They stink! They stink. There's a room of showers with no curtains or anything. It's just like twelve showers with no curtains.

Donna: They have certain times that you can see your child on the patio, so you have to have proof. The official mom's badge, you cannot go into see your kid. They have certain times 10 to 12 and 3 to 5 and you can see your child on the patio area. At only those times and you have to have your proof that you're a parent.

Dave Bonham, Little League Official: We aren't going to allow any access in the barracks area at all unless they are properly credentialed individuals. And parents aren't properly credentialed. They can only have the kids.

Peter Worden, Curtis' Dad: It does feel weird. It's like your kid is not your kid now. d he's pretty young to be uh...It's like he's like a little adult. He's busy with his stuff and you see him once in a while. It's kind of weird.

Question: Guys, how are the bunks?

Drew: They're awful!

Curtis Worden: The pillows aren't that good..

Drew: I brought my pillow.

Cesar: They suck.

Question: What's wrong with it?

Curtis: They're rusty.

Drew: They're screwed up.

Cesar: They're old!!!

Drew: It seems like they didn't clean the mattresses.

Joann: When they first walked into the dorm they were all like, “This sucks! Aw, man, this sucks!” You know? And then Dave Anderson promptly said, “I know 399 other teams with 12 players that think that it sucks to stay home. So, that’s the last time I want to hear about how bad this sucks. What would be “sucky” is staying home.”

Narrator:

Dave Anderson: Everybody have fun tonight!

Team: Everybody Wang Chung tonight!!!

Dave A.: Okay go get ’em boys. Let’s go! Run to your base– sprint!

Narrator: *Aptos have managed to win the first two games of the tournament, squeaking by Wyoming and Nevada in close games. Now it’s game three against Arizona, another undefeated team.*

By the fourth inning, Aptos finds itself in yet another tight contest.

Dave: Safe! Safe!

Dave: Yes, over his head! Go, Tyler, Go!

Narrator: *With two runners in scoring position, Dave decides to go for the fences and sends up two power hitters to pinch hit.*

Dave: No! It’s alright.

Narrator: *He regrets it almost immediately.*

Dave: Ughhhh.

Dave: Come on Drewby. Just a base hit Drew.

Narrator: *Now with two outs and two runners still stranded on base, catcher Drew McCauley, the number nine hitter, comes to the plate.*

Dave: That a way Drew! Gosh Darn it! This is our, my loss. That was bad. That was really bad. Bad thinking. Dammit, I got sucked into the long ball. God-darn-it.

Dave: Yeah!

Dave: Thatta way, Drew!

Dave: Good eye, buddy!

Narrator: *It turns into one of those moments that baseball connoisseurs love about the game. A classic battle between pitcher and hitter.*

Dave: Thatta way! Come on, someone reward him, let him a hit. He's been so good up there. Fouling off everything.

Mark and other teammates: Let's go one. Let's go kid. Let's go Drew. Way to fight.

Dave: Come on! Thatta way! Thatta way. Thatta way! Come on, reward him. Keep it alive baby. Just line drive, Drewby! Line drive, baby!

Dave: Yeah! Yeah! Yeah! Yeah, Drewby!

Dave: Nice and smooth, Baby.

Dave: Nice job, Buddy. Nice game boys. Hey, nice play on that ball.

Dave: Drew, the hit of the game, man. Nice game, nice hit. That was the best at bat I've ever seen in my life. That's the best at bat I've ever seen.

Claudia: Well, if we can make Aptos famous at least...cause nobody knows where it is—Drewdles!!! Whoo...!

Mark: Good job behind the plate. Yeah buddy, scrap it. What a hack, bud. Congratulations.

Brian McCauley, Drew's Dad: I remember things from his age playing Little League that are as clear as a bell, they're as sharp as yesterday. Yet, on the other hand, I can't remember where I left my keys an hour ago. So, there are just things that happen during playing little league baseball that every kid remembers for the rest of his life.

Claudia: Well, okay, let's see, why don't you go shower—

Blonde Woman: You deserve a steak!

Claudia: We'll get you a steak tonight!

Mark Eichorn: Excuse me, can I have an autograph?

Joann: So, put a note up on the bulletin board at work, or on the chalkboard at work, that Brian's team is 3 and 0. They're the only team that's undefeated- right? Yeah... all the other teams have lost at least one game, so, yeah, so, who knows when I'm coming back!

Narrator: *To motivate the kids on their day off, Mark Eichhorn has arranged for them to take some batting practice at one of his old stomping ground. The kids seem to like it. The grown ups have a somewhat stronger reaction.*

Kyle: Hey, dad! They set it up for us.

Dave A.: Wow. Look at this. Come on, check this out! Okay, fly ball to right center— He's got it!!!

Lynn: I believe we're at Angel's Stadium in Anaheim. California. And we have our wonderful team. Probably getting the biggest thrill of their lives.

Lynn: Practicing in a professional baseball stadium. It's like— almost disbelief. Pinch me. It's real.

Lynn: Look at these two big boys over here.

Lynn: I'm pretty clear it's for the kids. My husband might have difficulty interpreting that information— look at him. Too funny.

Brian McCauley: Well, it beats working. Let's put it that way.

Dave: I could have played. I could have played. I could have been a contender.

Drew: Oh my god, Erstad! There's a jock strap.

Claudia: I guess I'd like to get in their heads almost right now and wonder what are they thinking? Do they really wanna go to Williamsport? Or is this enough? or...Cause they seem after the game, "okay what are we gonna do now? where are we gonna swim? what movie are we gonna see?" So...I don't know...

Mr. McCauley: They just communicate like twelve-year-old boys. I still can't get inside their heads to understand what are their aspirations, what are their dreams about this at this point, you know.

Claudia: I mean that's what's so fun about it they're just still who they are. I haven't really seen a change yet.

Narrator: *But that evening, the ride started to get bumpy.*

As they face off against downstate rival Southern California, the Aptos boys seemed to have misplaced the mojo.

Donna: We've got two outs...we should be out of the inning...

Kit: Help your pitcher!!! Let's go!

Donna: Come on guys! Keep your heads up.

Dave: We had a bad game. We got it out of our systems. We're still the number one seed. We are going to play again on Sunday. That's all that matters.

Player: We didn't play well.

Dave: Yeah, we just didn't play well. That's, sometimes, Mark, does that happen?

Mark: That's baseball. . .

Dave: That's baseball boys, some days it just doesn't happen. That was our one bad game, exactly right.

Kathy: Why don't you go change? Ok. He wants to hit. He feels, uh, like he's let the team down because he's not hitting, he's had one hit in this, down here, but I was telling him that he's contributed in other ways, he's made spectacular plays in the field and he did so well the other day, he wanted to pitch tonight, he thinks it would've been different if he would've pitched, but he'll get another chance and he'll hit again, I think, he's, ya know, they go in waves and he's just in a little bit of a slump now. He'll be ok. He's a big hitter.

Kathy: He's my little boy. I'm very emotional about it. So. I know he wants to hit, but it'll happen. It'll happen.

...

Mark: How's your arm?

Kyle: Five'll finish me.

Mark: Five'll do ya. We're gonna play that same game though. So you're goin' on five, we gotta air it out though. One for one.

Mark: Your ball is really jumping right now, and you're going into the wind to boot. Yeah, I know I should probably slide this fat dip I got in my mouth over.

Kyle: One more? One more, Mark?

Mark: Uh, two more. Two more.

Mark: We're getting back to a game we played last year.

Dave: Oh my God, Kyle. You didn't throw one pitch like that the other day- not one pitch!

Mark: No, you didn't. I told him he was throwing seven, eight miles an hour harder...

Dave: You didn't even come close to that the other day.

Brian Speciale, Santa Cruz sportscaster: I mean you look at a story like this and it's baseball and it's sports, but it's becoming big enough that it just transcends sports, I mean this'll be something that if they keep winning, if they go to Williamsport, this'll be the lead story on our newscast, on news, the first segment, the A block, so I mean this is bigger than sports, this is a community, a community type thing where the whole community is going to start rallying behind this, it could get really big, really big.

Mark: Did you hear Kevin?

Dave: Yeah, he says "whoa!" Kyle, you didn't throw one like that.

Mark: Where'd it hit you, Farm?

Kevin: (laughs) My knee. (Laughs)

Kyle: You alright?

Mark: I thought it got ya in the willy!

Kevin: Uh uh. Almost!

Mark: Ha ha! Look at his face guys- Look at how hot he is- Turn around. Look at that face.

Player: How ya doing?

Kevin: Just fine, just fine.

Brian Speciale: It's pretty cool. This is a great thing. I hope so much they win tonight, god I hope they win tonight. Ugh!

Dave: Yeah, I'm amazed. How can you not be amazed at where we are and what we have in front of us tonight. If we win one more game, you know, against a team we've already beaten- which doesn't mean we're gonna beat'em again, it certainly doesn't, but it gives us confidence going into it- you're going to a place that kids only dream about and parents dream about. Coaches certainly dream about. You've done something that, all but, what is it, all but eight leagues or teams in the nation didn't get done, so yeah, that's pretty amazing.

...

Kevin: Hi my name is Kevin Farmer, I play first base and my favorite player is Shawn Green.

Brian: Kevin Farmer

JB: No, no. My name is...my name is...awe, crap.

Kevin: Hi, my name is Kevin Farmer and I play first base and my favorite player is Shawn Green.

Cesar: Hi, my name is Cesar Zermeno and I play left and right field and my favorite player is Ichiro.

Drew: Hi, my name is Drew McCauley. . .

Dave: My guess would be that most of the kids are more excited about being on ESPN than they are the reality of what Williamsport is all about. But it's gonna be fun. It's gonna be fun knowing that all your friends and family throughout the country are watching this thing and they're all pretty excited about that. It's pretty cool.

Team: Stay tuned. The Little League Western Region Finals are next on ESPN Two.

...

ESPN Announcer: We started out with six teams in the West Regional at Al Houghton stadium in San Bernardino, California, and now we are down to two. Hello again everyone and welcome back to the road to Williamsport here on ESPN 2 in San Bernardino and the West Regional. Well, all eight international spots are filled. Seven of the eight U.S.A. spots are filled one more to go, and this year's Little League world series field is all set to go.

ESPN Announcer: Fellas from Aptos, California, and this is a big team. Biancardi leads the way with a lot of power. Team best- two home runs in 5 regional games played so far. I tell you what, he towers- he's getting pretty close to six feet tall, so he's very intimidating standing at the plate for these Little Leaguers. In towards short and over the head of Grande. Catch mishandled, and he'll go in to score.

Dave: Yeah! Hey, we scored in the first inning- Thattaway baby! Thattaway Itch, nice job, baby!

Question: What's the deal with the blue and red?

Boy #1: Ummm....Aptos' colors

Boy #2: Except for the red.

Dave: Thattaway! Wow- he's back! Ah- he's back, he's back!!! Wow, he is throwing good! Thattaway!!! Thattaway buddy, you're back! Nice job. Okay, guys.

Fans with glasses: Six more outs. SIX! Six more outs- woo- six more outs till Pennsylvania. Woo!

Dave: Hey guys, hey, we got the bottom of their order. We need good defense now more than ever. Just six seven and eight go get'em. Don't get behind'em. Just throw strikes and get ahead of them. Alright let's go guys, good defense! [the players run out to take the field]

Kit: Let's go Kyle, You're the Man little buddy!

ESPN Announcer: He was a pinch hitter against Kyle Anderson, and what a California team. First game they played on the set, he was 0 for 1. Chopped up high. Nice play there Biancardi. Can't do much with it. Infield hit Tyler Salesky. Here comes Glendale yet...

Dave: Most of the kids want so much to do well sometimes they do and sometimes they don't and when they don't, they naturally they get down.

Dave: You know, we've told them repeatedly seven out of ten as an example hitting, you will fail. That's what we try to focus on, but that's very difficult for a twelve-year-old to understand that failure is the way of the world as it relates to baseball.

ESPN Announcer: Top of the order. Grande. Bases loaded. Infield still in against Kyle Anderson. What an opportunity. At least tie the game here for Glendale. He sent it into right field, Dewan is in! Selesky is at home now- Score! Glendale takes the lead in the fifth.

Kit: He was pitching so good. He was pitching great.

Donna: Shoot.

Kit: Come on Kyle, baby!

Dave: Hey, not your fault. We've gotta go ahead boys, right now. What do we do now? We gotta get base runners. JB can bunt.

Wyoming team: Come on Aptos!!!

Question: Why do you want Aptos to win?

Wyoming team: Cause they're our buds.

Wyoming team: Cause they're the best.

Wyoming team: They're the best!

Wyoming team: They're Aptos!!!

Question: Did you guys play them?

Wyoming team: Yes!

Question: What happened?

Wyoming team: We lost!!!

Stadium Announcer: Leading off for Aptos Little League, Number 9, Andrew Biancardi.

Dave: Let's go Andrew!

ESPN Announcer #1: Biancardi, the last chance here for the Aptos squad. Lead off base hit belted to dead center. Good start for the folks from the Bay area.

ESPN Announcer #2: What a game for Chris Capper. He knows he has a two run lead, he just worries, he's not worried about the runner at first base, Andrew Biancardi, he's just worried about getting the batter right now.

ESPN Announcer #1: First plate appearance of the game for Burns. Worden had started in left field, struck out twice, against Chris Capper. JB's mom watching closely

ESPN Announcer #2: Little Chris Capper, he's very motivated out there. He's getting the ball rocket fire. It's a sign, he wants to keep goin'.

ESPN Announcer #1: There's the ball- walks Burns. The last chance possibly for Aptos. Look out. Runners at first and second, nobody out, and Tyler Raymond, all six foot, one hundred sixty-five pounds of him, coming to the plate.

ESPN Announcer #2: Tyler Raymond, he's their Dave Kingman so to speak. Big kid. He's got a lot of leverage with his swing.

ESPN Announcer #1: Big hack. He popped out to the shortstop in the first. A bloop single, Kathy can barely watch. See Chris Capper getting advice from Tim the manager. Trying to keep the ball low and get big Tyler Raymond to fish for it.

ESPN Announcer #1: Nice pitch. He got a hit with the fast ball and then he came right back with the change up.

ESPN Announcer #1: Big hit. Tyler's done it. Aptos has the lead in the sixth.

Dave: Yeah!!!!!!! Yeah!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Yeahhhhhhhhh!!!! Yeah! Yeah!!!! Yeah, baby!!! Let's go Aptos! Hey, hey guys- Justin Burns getting on base- Yeah! Hey, T-man big hit baby. You are the man. You were saying it, you told'em, you did it, you are the man. Oh, God bless you buddy.

Fan with glasses: Unbelievable. Unbelievable. Tyler. T.

Peter Worden: Not bad! Not Bad.

Crowd: T! T! T! T!

Kathy: I've got the ball. I'm on tv right now?

ESPN Announcer #1: Is she excited?! She's on the cell phone- "I've got the ball, I have the ball!" The emotions we might see her in Pennsylvania in two days' time.

ESPN Announcer #2: One out away from Williamsport.

ESPN Announcer #1: And of all people to come to the plate, it's Chris Capper, who pitched so brilliantly until the sixth inning when he ran into a buzz saw of Aptos hitters.

ESPN Announcer #2: He's one for two, he started the team's big rally in the fifth with a double.

ESPN Announcer #1: Toward first. Farmer- All by himself! Aptos is going to the Little League World Series!!!The first Northern California team in eleven years to make it to Pennsylvania; they are headed to Williamsport!

...

Dave: Kyle! You just pitched the game of your life, little buddy. That was an awesome performance.

Mark: Hey, way to step it up a notch. That was a major notch you went up to!

Dave: Hey baby, you're going to Williamsport.

Kyle: Oh my god.

Dave: You're going to the Little League World Series. Unbelievable. Go give mom a five, come on!

Player: This thing's so wobbly!

Dave: Hey, don't do that! Don't do that - Here, let me grab it, let me have it.

Curtis: Can I have it?

Dave: Hey, we'll just put it right here- how's that?

Curtis: I'll keep it at my house.

Dave: You're gonna keep it at your house, huh? Maybe we'll make it like a Stanley Cup- Shh, listen. Hey, guys, listen, listen.

Reporter: Did you ever in your wildest dreams ever think you would hit the game-winning home run in the sixth inning? Were you worried, pretty worried going into that inning? I mean, things didn't look too good for you there?

Tyler: Yeah, yeah. I was worried that we had to score runs to stay alive. Keep our season alive.

Reporter: When you went into the sixth inning what was going through your head?

JB Burns: I was just thinking, "We're a better team, and we're Aptos and we're going to Williamsport." I was just thinking, "I'm gonna get up and I'm gonna do whatever I can to get on base." And I got on base, and Tyler roped one to win the game.

Kyle: In the sixth I was like thinkin', "If like the next three people don't get hits, this could be the last, like, inning of my Little League career."

Reporter: So a lot was riding on them?

Kyle: Yeah.

Reporter: What'd you think when you saw Tyler's hit?

Kyle: I was like, I couldn't even talk when he hit that. That was...that was...that was so...I dunno...that was just crazy.

Reporter: Gonna go set your alarm clock now?

Dave: Gotta go set the alarm clock. I gotta call in to work and get some more time off.

Reporter: Thank you, sir.

Dave: Alright buddy. Hey, thanks for all your help you guys. Thanks, Murph, appreciate it.

Woman: So, are you ever going to go home and go sleep?

Dave: I haven't been home in three weeks, why go now?

...

Curtis' Grandma: I love you, I love you. Ha! I told you, you would go to Pennsylvania!

Kathy: I couldn't have asked for a better ending for him than to hit that home run. I just wish I could be at the pizza parlor at home where they were having the party and just see the people come off the wall. It was the game winner. I'm always afraid to say that out loud cause everybody contributes. But, without that, we wouldn't be sitting here. So, I'm truly thrilled for him- and the team. It's just wonderful. I just worry about them, cause they're supposed to be going to school!

Brian McCauley: Do you know how many thousands of kids play Little League baseball, and you guys are representing the Western Regional. Hey, hey, what did I tell you in the letter that I sent you down here?

Drew: What?

Mr. McCauley: Grow as a person, not just as a ball player. You know? When you are in Williamsport, get out and meet some of these kids. I'm sure you did that here right?

Drew: They can't even speak English!

Mr. McCauley: You'd be surprised, I bet a number of them speak very decent English...cause I know you know no foreign language, that's for sure. Okay?

[Little League World Series, Williamsport PA]

Narrator: *And so, after seven years of playing organized ball, the Aptos team finds itself at the Nirvana of youth sports.*

Dave Anderson: Well, here we are in Williamsport in the dorms. Here's the coaches' quarters.

Dave Anderson: The coach is gargling. Coach is napping. Coach is sleeping. Coach is taking it easy.

Mark: Coaches are exhausted!

Dave: Coaches are tired.

Mark: Hey, we're in Williamsport, guys. How is it?

Dave: Over here, we'll see Curtis.

Curtis: I'm cleaning my bed.

Dave Anderson: Curtis is playing in his bed.

Curtis: I'm cleaning it

Dave Anderson: Oh! He's cleaning his bed! Well, there you go.

Dave: And here's the clothes. Most of these are clean clothes, believe it or not.

Dave: This is the T-man up there. T-man, you playing a little Mario?

Tyler: Um hum.

Dave Anderson: Beautiful.

Dave Anderson: Here we are playing the whiffle ball game. Kev's up, Curtis is Ump.

Dave: There's Itchy over here.

Drew: Dave, should I show ‘em my bruise?

Dave Anderson: Let’s see the bruise, Drew. Let’s zero in on it. Ohhh! That is foul!

Narrator: *For the boys, living in a world without mothers is like an endless summer. For the coaches, it’s just sort of endless.*

But for all of them, things are certainly different. There are new uniforms, and a new identity: the West. There are TV cameras that broadcast their every move to a national audience.

And unlike Major League baseball, it really is a World Series.

Aptos has made it to the Big Show, and they’re savoring every minute.

Dave: Hey, guys, come here. Quick quick! Come on Drew!

Dave: Everybody have fun tonight.

Team: Everybody Wang Chung tonight. 1, 2, 3, West!

Narrator: *Unfortunately, the good vibes do not carry over onto the field.*

Their first game is a loss. But the next day they rally

Dave: Get outta here! Get outta here. Yeah baby!

Dave: Andrew. Andrew. Andrew. Yes! YES! Unbelievable.

Dave: Yeah! Get outta here! Grand Slam!!! Grand Slam! Grand Slam!

Narrator: *Aptos had pulls itself back from the brink with a stunning 11 to 8 victory. It’s just like old times.*

Claudia: Oh, there she is, the mother of the grand slam, the grand slam king...is that the ball?

Joann: This would be the ball and this would be where the bat hit the ball.

Donna: Show, show, show the guys your bruise. You’ve got to show’em your war wound from yesterday.

Mr. McCauley: Are you tired? You gotta be exhausted. You got to be totally exhausted.

Drew: Uh uh.

Mark Eichhorn: So far this experience is right up there with, uh, you know the, the two World Series' with the Toronto Blues Jays. Now, if we were to get to the final game, which is straight up a hill, you know, there's some players, there's some teams here, tough teams. It would surpass playing in two World Series' championships in the Major Leagues, there's no question about it.

Dave: Unbelievable.

Mike: It was great.

Dave: This is unbelievable. You know, now we got a chance.

Mike: We do we're pumped up.

Narrator: *Their third game is against Harlem, a Cinderella team that has become a crowd favorite.*

Dave Farmer: They're one and one. We're one and one. So the winner of this game will face New England on Thursday. So this is indeed, winner takes all. It's just what you wanted.

Narrator: *Aptos draws first blood. But this is Williamsport. The competition is fierce, and there's very little margin for error.*

All it takes is one swing of the bat.

This time, there would be no Aptos magic.

There would be no late rally...

No game-saving catch. No dramatic sixth inning home run.

The Aptos All Star season had come to an end.

Dave F: We had a great run, and uh, you know, they just hit it out. There's no uh, there's no defense for that. I wish we had Tyler Raymond out there in center field, he could of reached up and caught a couple of those, but that's the way it happens.

Kathy: And I was proud of Tyler, he had a great hit. He pitched well the other day. I'm very happy for him and I'm happy for Aptos. And I'm ready to go home. Got a soccer tournament this weekend.

Joann: What a way to end his Little League career. Grand slam home run. Pitching the final inning in the little league World Series for Aptos. This doesn't get any better. Look at this boys face.

Dave: And the four coaches sat out in left field a couple months ago, you know, we all kind of said oh, gee whiz, you know if we can just win the district we're happy, and last year we came in third in the sectional's. If we could just do that we'd be thrilled. To, to realize you not only did that, but then you went on, and then you went on again and you're at, you know, in the granddaddy of them all, if you could probably steal a phrase from football. I, I mean it's just way beyond any expectation we had and it's been the most fun you could imagine.

Barry: Dave, I nominate you for mayor of Aptos. Nice job. I think we just voted, too!

Dave: No thanks.

Barry: You don't have to do anything, but ride in floats.

Dave: I need a vacation, oh wait a minute, I don't have any.

Barry: You don't have any, that's great.

Dave F: I hear there's a nice resort community called Aptos. Let's go there!

Kit: Maybe we can get a free room from Bert or something at Seascape.

Dave: Maybe we can get a room for a night.

Dave F: But, the team has to come too!

Dave: The team has to come too?

Kit: And you have to babysit them again!

Title Card:

"Little League baseball is a very good thing, because it keeps the parents off the streets." - Yogi Berra

Max Kellerman: This film was produced and directed by Louis Alvarez and Andrew Kolker. This editor was Peter Odabashian. The coordinating producer was Sandra Zweig. The cameraman was John Chater.

Brian Speciale: Look who's joining us right now, everybody. We've got the entire Aptos All-Star Team. Look at this, all of'em, all the parents. All the coaches. They've made the central coast proud. Let me tell you what, and we're going to talk to a few of'em right now. Drew McCauley I noticed before we started talking to you signing a few autographs, what was that all about?

Drew: Uh, the kids just love me. (laughter) No, uh. . .

Brian Speciale: Now, I'll ask Curtis Worden over here. Curtis, what's the main reason you don't want to go back home to Aptos quite yet?

Curtis: I'd have to say school. Yeah.

Max Kellerman: The Executive Producer was Tracy Vosburgh. Play ball!

[end of film]

©2004 THE CENTER FOR NEW AMERICAN MEDIA & PENN STATE PUBLIC BROADCASTING