

By EARL WATT

• Leader & Times



Three local teams competed in tournaments over the weekend, and two of them have advanced to today's championship games.

The 10-and-under Cimarron River Rattlers traveled to Cimarron to play in the Cal Ripken district tournament.

The Rattler 10s started the tournament with a 20-3 win over Grant County Friday.

Saturday, the Rattler 10s knocked off Stevens County 9-2 to advance to the final of the winner's bracket.

The Rattlers faced a tougher challenge from Lakin Sunday afternoon, but Cimarron River was able to get a 12-8 win and advance to today's district championship at 6 p.m. in Cimarron.

The 11-and under Rattlers participated in USSSA this summer, and after earning a qualifying bid to the national tournament, traveled to Dallas to face teams from across the South.

The Rattlers struggled for wins but faced some of the best 11-and-under teams in the nation and played some close games.

The Rattlers suffered a 3-1 loss to open the tournament Friday against the South Texas Phillies.

The Rattler 11s then lost to the Houston Strike Force in another competitive game, 6-5.

Saturday, the Rattlers lost to the Greenbriar Arkansas Red Sox in another one-run game, 5-4, and then won their first game at the USSSA national tournament over the Spring Hill Texas Panthers, 7-6.

Sunday, the Rattler 11s against faced the South Texas Phillies, and in another one-run game, Cimarron River lost 2-1.

The Rattlers ended their run at the USSSA World Series with a 9-6 loss to the Arlington Texas Pirates.

Liberal hosted the 12-and-under Cal Ripken District Tournament at Rosel Field, and the hometown team quickly became the team to beat.

The Rattler 12s opened the tournament Friday with a 12-0 win over Grant County.

Saturday, the Rattlers faced Stevens County, and a strong start led to a fast finish. The Rattlers scored four runs in the first inning including a two RBI triple from Cesar Burciaga that landed just inside the foul line behind first base and bounced to the outfield fence. A throw to third

missed its target, and Burciaga was able to score.

Stevens County answered with a run in the bottom half of the inning, but the Rattlers continued to pound the ball at the plate, and the Rattlers earned a 22-3 win.

That set up a winners bracket match against the only two undefeated teams left in the tournament — the Rattlers and Scott City.

Again, the Rattler bats could not be silenced, and Cimarron River earned a 22-2 win to advance to today's championship at 6 p.m. at Rosel Field.