



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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ACADEMY NOTEBOOK

12U Athletes Developing at Academy

Evan Smith was the first player to represent the Texas Rangers MLB Youth Academy at Mercy Street Sports Complex, Presented by Toyota, as the MLB Youth Academy Youth of the Year, attending Game 4 of the 2017 World Series between the Los Angeles Dodgers and Houston Astros.

On Wednesday, Smith was at the Academy working towards yet another opportunity.

The sixth grader at Barack Obama Male Leadership Academy was among the 30 Rangers Academy participants running through drills on Kershaw's Challenge Field.

Academy athletes who have distinguished themselves in various Academy programming were invited to attend the workouts to be considered for future opportunities, including the Academy's 12U tournament team that has already competed at the Rangers Youth Ballpark in Arlington.

Smith was a member of the teams that played at the Youth Ballpark.

"I like it. I get to meet the players on the team and then I also learn more," Smith said.

Smith was not the only wood bat tournament veteran among Wednesday's athletes.

Santos Salinas drew praise from his fellow 11 and 12 year olds during the hitting round of Wednesday's workouts. The sixth grader at Zan Wesley Holmes Jr. Middle School also put on a show playing on the wood bat team at the Youth Ballpark in September, when he connected for two homeruns.

"It was fun. I had a good time...It was just a random thing that had happened. I wasn't aiming for the fences. I was just really trying to make contact. My dad told me, 'if it happens, it happens. If not, as long as you get a base hit,'" Salinas said. "I think of myself as a contact hitter and maybe a power hitter every now and then."

There were also newer faces on the field Wednesday.

Aden Mares's older brother, Jonathan, has already played on the Academy's wood bat team. The younger brother now hopes his time is coming.

"This is my first tryout for the wood bat tournament. I'm excited," Mares said. "My older brother has done it before and made it, so I really want to accomplish that goal that I really want to make it. So I'm trying my best."

No matter how long the athletes had been participating in programming at the Academy, each appreciated what they've learned so far.

"I like the coaches here because whenever I'm struggling doing something with my baseball, I can just talk to the coaches and they'll help me during practice," Smith said.

Fall RBI

The Academy's fall RBI softball season came to an end on December 7, as the Panthers took home the championship after a perfect season (10-0).



The 2019 Rangers Academy RBI softball champion Panthers

Keep Training

The Rought Odor Weight Room is available each week, Monday through Thursday, between 4:30 and 6:00 p.m. by registering in advance at rangers.com/academy.

Winter Academy Training Program

The Winter Academy Training Program begins January 13 and runs through February 27.

Monday and Wednesday sessions will be for 18U baseball and softball players. Tuesday and Thursday sessions will be for 12U baseball and softball players. All sessions run from 6:30-9:00 p.m.

Registration is available at texasrangers.com/academy.