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Local Youth Collection Used Baseball Equipment

By Phil Hoffman and Laura Traxler



OBA players (left to right) Will Richardson and the Shepherd brothers, Kevin and Steven Photo Laura Traxler

MBA and OBA families came to Opening Day ceremonies with gently used baseball gear that will soon hit new fields of play beyond Lamorinda.

Campo varsity baseball player Michael Hoffman spearheaded the equipment drive at MBA's Opening Day. Those equipment donations, with an estimated (if new) value of \$10,000, are bound for Richmond, Oakland and Rodeo athletic programs. Enough to uniform and equip 3 teams with baseball shirts, pants, cleats, mitts, bats and more, including some catcher safety gear. An idea Hoffman had when remembering playing summer youth baseball against those leagues, including one team whose players wore t-shirts with numbers hand-written in Sharpie.

Meanwhile, at the OBA 25th anniversary opening day festivities, three OBA players - Kevin and Steven Shepard, and their friend, Will Richardson, prepared for spring break in a slightly unconventional manner. They collected used equipment and sold baked goods to buy game-day balls, things they will pack for their spring break vacation to Puerto Vallarta. A gift for Puerto Vallarta's Little League, in its inaugural season this spring. The boys' families have been working with Bob Cohen, a sports reporter for the Banderas News in Puerto Vallarta, who is the "go to" guy for the new Little League there. Laura Traxler, Kevin and Steven's Mom, made the initial contact with Cohen while looking for a charity to help support

while they were on vacation. The boys made a great start on Opening Day, but there's room for more. "We welcome all donations of gently used mitts and bats for 9-14 year old boys," says Traxler. "I can assure you they will be delivered to the Puerto Vallarta Little League children in late March." Contact Laura Traxler at lauratrax@comcast. RSFox



Campo varsity baseball player Michael Hoffman with equipment collected at MBA's Opening Day
Photo Phil Hoffman

Reach the reporter at: info@lamorindaweekly.com

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