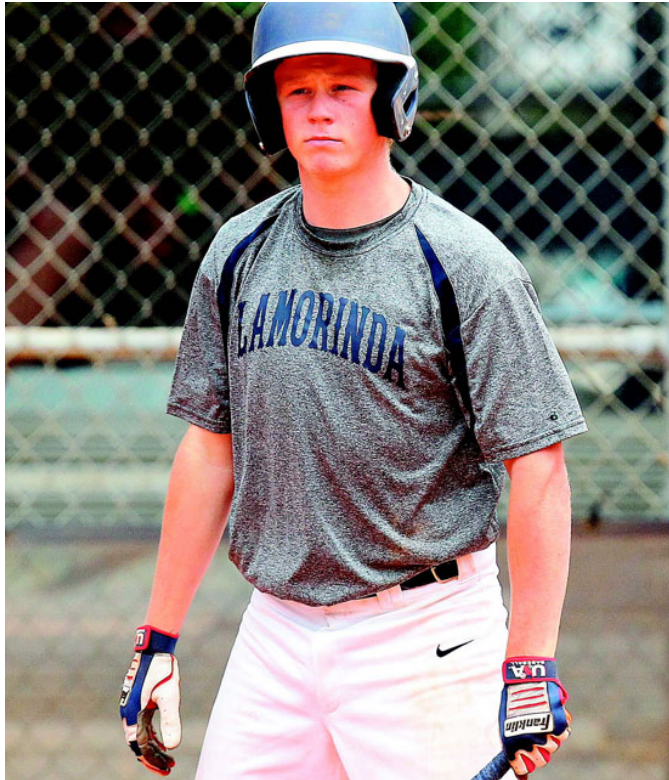


Published October 21st, 2015

Lafayette Little League Standout Set to Star on Big League Stage

By Karl Buscheck



Jake Delaney Photos F8sports

Thirteen-year-old kids aren't supposed to hit 350-foot home runs. But Jake Delaney, the star of the national champion Lamorinda Knights, is no average 13-year-old kid.

"I've seen Delaney hit and he's pretty special," said Brian Domenico, the president of the Power Showcase, which is an annual event featuring the best middle school and high school players from around the nation and across the globe. "The ball comes off his bat much differently than any other 13-year-old that I've seen in a long time."

Domenico, who was selected by the Oakland A's in the 19th round of the 1992 MLB draft and who spent six seasons in the minor leagues, has seen a ton of rising stars over the years. The upcoming edition of the Power Showcase, which will be held Dec. 28-Jan. 2 at Marlins Park in Miami, Florida, will mark the 10th time that Domenico has put on the event.

During the 2009 Power Showcase, Bryce Harper - the heavy favorite to win the 2015 National League MVP award - put his name on the map by crushing a 502-foot home run at the Power Showcase Home Run Derby.

Delaney put his name on the map back in August when the center fielder-catcher helped lead the Lamorinda Knights to 2015 Travel Ball Select National Championship in East Cobb, Georgia.

Domenico had the chance to watch Delaney play in the tournament and that's when he knew that the Stanley Middle Schooler needed to take part in the upcoming Power Showcase.

"I saw Delaney hit a home run down in East Cobb and just the way that he moves, the way that he runs, the functionality and the strength. I mean, he's like lightning in a bottle," Domenico said.

Winning a national title wasn't the only headline-worthy moment from Delaney's busy summer. After delivering a game-winning hit while playing for the Lafayette Little League All-Star team, Delaney was ejected from the contest for celebrating. As a result, he was forced to sit out the final game of the tournament when Lafayette lost to Petaluma and missed out on its chance to play in the Little League World Series.

Delaney will represent California during the Home Run Derby and play for the West squad in the Future Stars Game. Delaney will be pitted against other 13- and 14-year-olds in those contests, and the Power Showcase also has competitions for the Rookies (10-, 11- and 12-year-olds), high school freshmen (15U) and sophomores through seniors.

While the home run derby highlights the event, the Power Showcase also provides all the players with an opportunity to learn about mental strength training, and for the high school players to work out in front of MLB scouts.

"What separates us from everybody else is there's no other organization on the planet that puts 10-, 12-, 13-, 14-year-olds in a major league stadium and wets their palates for greatness,"

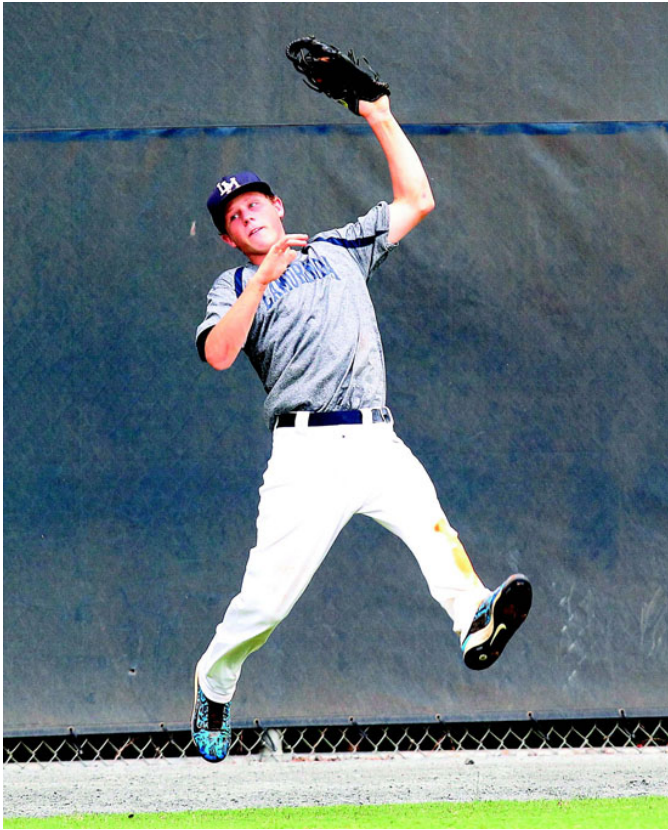
Domenico said.

Delaney is looking forward to getting the chance to take the field with some of the most promising prospects when he travels to Miami in a couple of months.

"[It's] exciting that I get to have a fun time with other great players from around the nation," Delaney said. "I hope to learn how to compete and at the same time have as much fun as I can."

The Power Showcase also includes a philanthropic aspect, as all of the players who take part in the event must also work with the Home Runs That Help program, which partners the players with kids from local hospitals to raise money for the young patients.

"I think it kind of plants the seed for them to be a role model," Domenico said. "And it teaches them what it's like to give back to the community."



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