

# Babe Ruth state tourney is coming to area

*From staff reports*

The 9-under Babe Ruth League baseball state tournament will be held this weekend in Davidson County.

And the locals are fielding a squad that would make the Bambino proud.

Ten teams from the western part of North Carolina will convene in the northern part of the county, beginning Friday, to play a four-day event, which features a round-robin format and then single-elimination tournament.

The first two rounds — Friday and Saturday — will be at the Arcadia ballfields, and the semifinals and finals — Sunday and Monday — will be played at North Davidson High School's softball field.

Davidson County was selected by the Babe Ruth state office to host the tournament. That distinction means the home team automatically gets a berth in the field. But then the Davidson County All-Stars went out and won their area 9-under tournament last weekend near Hickory, which

legitimized their spot in the state tourney.

"From the way we played last weekend, I like our chances," said Wayne Briggs, president of the Davidson County Babe Ruth League.

Briggs made a big push for Babe Ruth baseball and softball to come to the county.

Unlike county recreation ball, the Babe Ruth League allows youth teams to play for state, regional and even World Series titles.

This is the first full year the Babe Ruth League has been offered in the county, and 54 teams — baseball and softball — fill out age divisions from 9 to 15 years old.

"We were losing too many kids to other communities and other counties," Briggs said. "We offered this to every community in our area that was looking for a tournament trail and wanted to play further. We've got a lot of kids back who left the county, and this thing has gone better than expected."

The Churchland, Reeds, Welcome, Midway and Arcadia communities are involved in Babe Ruth ball in Davidson County. At the end of the regular season, tryouts are

held for all-star teams, which go on to compete in other tournaments.

Briggs said the Southmont, Linwood, Wallburg, Hasty and Pilot communities, among others, were invited to participate, but each declined. Denton has a Babe Ruth League that competes in Randolph County.

The 9-year-old Davidson County All-Stars are coached by Robert Mazur, Jeff Norman and Don Landfried. Their first game is Friday at 3 p.m. Each team will play a combined four games Friday and Saturday in the round-robin format, and then the top six will advance to the tournament based on win-loss record.

The championship game is slated for Monday at 6:30 p.m.

"It's a pretty neat thing that they are giving us this tournament," Briggs said. "The good thing with this also is that it will bring money to the county."

The two state champions — from the east and west — will advance to the southeast regionals, beginning July 22 in Charlotte.



## Champions

The Churchland Yankees were the pre-K champions with a 12-0 record. Team members are (front row, from left) Nathan Simerson, Josh Davis, Matt Baity, Dakota Hoy, Holden Lanier, Alyssa Clontz, Dylan Wright, Rance Orrell and Tanner Garrison; (second row, from left) coaches Rusty Orrell, Mark Simerson and Stewart Lanier. Not pictured are player Caleb Snider and coach Greg Snider.