**Drillers Capture 10U Title!! Eagles Fly High In 12U!!  Newcomers Niles Nitro Mop Up In 14U!!  Young Elite Team Cream Of The 16U Crop!!**

Wow, were there some good softball players in town for the 2018 Northern Classic!  Home runs were flying out of ballparks in Traverse City so fast that the local sporting goods store experienced a run on replacement softballs.  Tim Weber's 12U Diamonds team hit three in one game!  Westside Softball's girls hit a few in 16U, as did players from the MBS Jets.  And word traveled fast about a rocket launch from a 14U Niles Nitro player that cleared the 230-foot fence at Traverse City West.

For those who prefer pitching and defense, there was plenty of that to see, also.  William Sebald's 16U MBS Jets collectively made play after remarkable defensive play, especially the Jets shortstop.  A few girls were hitting 60 mph from the pitching circle in the 16U division.  Overall, it was a great weekend of highly entertaining softball in Traverse City.

The tournament winners?  Lots of variety there, too.  In the 10U group, the Mt. Pleasant Drillers knocked off the 231 Fusion in the championship final.  In 12U, Bob Swierkos' Hartland-based Eagles team edged the Gaylord-based Sandlot Slammers, 3-0, to win the Northern Classic title.  The Drillers defeated Alpena's Thundercats to win the 12U consolation bracket.

In the 14U group, Rich Johnson's Niles Nitro team slipped by the 231 Fusion Fastpitch squad, 5-4, in the nailbiting title game.  For the Fusion, it was the second straight weekend in which they reached the championship final.  Mark Young's Niles Nitro squad captured the consolation bracket title with a win over the Northwest Wild.

And in 16U--perhaps the most exciting division of all--the young Elite 15U team edged the MBS Jets, 9-8, to win that organization's second Northern Classic title (the Elite 10U squad captured the crown last year).  Earlier, the Jets rallied in the bottom of the last inning of the semifinals to defeat the 231 Fusion, 7-6, and advance to the title game.

Congratulations to all of the 2018 Northern Classic title winners, and THANK YOU to all of the teams that participated this year!