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## Lamorinda Cougars Win USSSA Winter Nationals in Phoenix

Submitted by Anne McNally



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The Lamorinda Cougars punched their return ticket to the Elite World Series by capturing the USSSA Winter Nationals in Phoenix, Arizona in January. The Cougars will be looking to defend their 2008 travel ball national championship at this year's Elite World Series (12 and under) to be held at the Disney Wide World of Sports Complex in Florida this summer.

At the Winter Nationals, the Cougars defeated the Arizona state champion and previously undefeated Arizona Desert Blaze 1-0, behind the combined pitching of Joe DeMers (Pleasant Hill) and Matt Bicker (Los Altos). In the championship game, the Cougars defeated southern California powerhouse SGV Cobras 7-3 behind the complete game pitching performance of Daniel Slominski (Livermore).

Joe DeMers was selected tournament MVP both for his contributions on the mound, at the plate, and for his outstanding defensive work at catcher. DeMers hit .562, with 12 RBI's and 7 extra base hits to pace the offense. Other Cougars who hit over .400 for the tournament included: Mitch Hart .733 (Granite Bay), Daniel Slominski .500(Livermore), Conner McNally .461 (Moraga), Ryan Weisenberg .428 (Alamo), Jake Rider .400 (Moraga). The Cougars will return to Arizona for the Spring Nationals in late March.

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