

# LOMPOC RECORD

**The power of baseball: Nunez and Scott use the game to cope with loss**



Santa Maria's Chino Nunez, left, and Lompoc's Jordan Scott share a moment during last Thursday's championship game at the District 6 Tournament in Lompoc.

[BUY NOW](#)

There they were, just two boys enjoying a game of baseball.

The pain. The loss. They were nowhere to be found.

The chain-link fence and the lines of chalk provided a barrier to keep all things bad out, leaving nothing but the joy of the game within the diamond.

The two boys on that field weren't alone, but they may as well have been. They were Chino Nunez, from Santa Maria, and Lompoc's Jordan Scott, together at first base and united by indescribable hardship.

The game was a District 6 Babe Ruth 14-year-old championship at George Meyer Field in Lompoc.

The two met at Scott's first base after Nunez earned a trip there on a bloop single. The two shared a few words, a laugh and a smile. Those unaware never would've guessed all the two have been through.

Both Nunez and Scott know all too well the pain that comes with the loss of an older brother, though that loss came about in different ways.

Chino's older brother Ivan went missing the day after Christmas in 2015. His body was later found in February near an abandoned building in Nipomo. Authorities ruled the death a suicide. Ivan was 16.

Noah Scott, Jordan's older brother, was diagnosed with leukemia in the summer of 2016. [Noah passed in June of 2017](#) at the age of 15.

Both Ivan and Noah loved the game of baseball. Ivan was a standout catcher who would've played for Santa Maria High's varsity team the spring after his death. Noah Scott was just as talented, playing youth baseball in Lompoc and making All-Star teams.

Chino and Jordan have took on the mantel of skilled baseball players for the Nunez and Scott families.

Chino was a starter as a freshman on the Santa Maria High varsity team last spring. Jordan Scott has played for the Lompoc Babe Ruth All-Stars the last two summers.

The two have gotten to know one another quite well, says Jordan's father Chuck Scott.

Last summer, both Chino's Santa Maria team and Noah's Lompoc team advanced to the state 13-year-old Babe Ruth tournament. They will do the same thing as 14-year-olds this week with the state tournament in Madera.

Chuck Scott is a firm believer in the healing power of baseball.

"It's an avenue so they don't have to think about their losses and they can just focus on what they're passionate about," Chuck said after Lompoc beat Santa Maria in the District 6 14-year-old title game last week. "Knowing both of the boys like we do, I know that they use it as an outlet for their pain.

"They've become pretty good friends. We have a lot of friends on the (Santa Maria) team that supported Noah during his fight. It's special that we always seem to be going to state with them."

The local baseball community supported both families during their time of need. [The Santa Maria High baseball team hung Ivan's jersey](#) in the dugout of every game, even as they went on to [win a CIF title in 2017](#).

Babe Ruth teams and tournament organizers have donated funds to the Scott family in honor of Noah. Players wore orange in to raise awareness for leukemia research. Last summer, Noah threw out the first pitch to kick off the Lompoc Babe Ruth season.

The pain that comes with loss may return for these two once they leave the field and step outside those lines of chalk, but the baseball diamond will always provide some respite.

"Last year we went to state with the same Santa Maria team and we're happy for Santa Maria. We have a lot of good friends on the team," Chuck Scott says. "Baseball will always be a place where you can escape from what you're dealing with."

[https://lompocrecord.com/sports/baseball/the-power-of-baseball-nunez-and-scott-use-the-game/article\\_c9884a1c-2601-5634-837a-0190d8922cae.html](https://lompocrecord.com/sports/baseball/the-power-of-baseball-nunez-and-scott-use-the-game/article_c9884a1c-2601-5634-837a-0190d8922cae.html)