

Letters to the

Fernando makes it home

It was one of the last Little League games of the season, but what a game! At the draft, back in late March, coaches Jules and Luke Bergeron chose Fernando to be on their team, a just-arrived 9-year-old from South America who understood little to no English, and had never before hit nor thrown a baseball. His coaches proceeded to teach him through pantomime.

The home plate umps, unaware of Fernando's story, were puzzled when Fernando could do nothing but stand there and look up at them while they shouted for him to "get back in the box." And although the playfulness and camaraderie of the dugout compensated for a great deal, Fernando still struggled to hit the ball, or know what to do with it on the field.

But this night, Fernando hit the ball, made it to first, and stole second and third. And then, with the bases loaded, his teammate at bat managed a walk, allowing Fernando to run home.

The place erupted. The umps couldn't contain themselves. Bounding toward home, moved beyond limits, Fernando roared out in Spanish as he crossed over home plate and into the arms of his teammates.

Nobody knew what he



Fernando bats at the American Legion Little League baseball field in Jaffrey.

PHOTO BY STEVE SCHUCH

said, except *su madre*.

Many thanks to all Little League volunteers, to my sons, coaches Jules and Luke Bergeron, to the parents working the concession stand who lovingly keep the hot dogs and hamburgers coming, to the scorekeepers, aged 10 to 75, keeping eyes on

every move; and especially to all of Fernando's Little League teammates, who welcomed him with open hearts from the very start.

Bienvenido a America, querido Fernando.

KATHRYN MANNING
Jaffrey

DNC goes too far

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