

# Healdsburg Prune Packers close a winning season at home

By Gus A. Morris Special to the Tribune | Posted: Wednesday, August 12, 2015 2:41 pm

## Tournament win a strong finish for The Pack

The Healdsburg Prune Packers have wrapped up another extremely successful summer campaign, finishing the year with a record of 37-13, and with a Wine Country Classic Tournament championship in their possession.

The Packers went 3-0 in this double elimination tournament, defeating the Fairfield Indians in the first round and the San Francisco Seals twice – once in the semifinals and again in the championship game.

For the Packers' first round matchup, they faced off against a team they had only seen twice before, the Fairfield Indians. The two teams split the regular season series one game apiece, but the Packers would not be stopped this game. After a scoreless first inning, the Packers offense settled in and scored five runs in the second inning.

Anthony Bender led things off with a leadoff walk, followed by a single from Dane Erbst and then another from Kenny Corey, which would score Bender from second, making it 1-0 Packers.

After a sac-fly from Marcus Still, which scored Erbst, Troy Anderson doubled in Corey, making it 3-0 Packers. A single and stolen base from Matt LoCoco, the eventual Tournament MVP, put runners on second and third for Jake Scheiner, who roped a triple into deep left, plating both Anderson and LoCoco, and putting the game even further out of reach for Fairfield.

On the other side, the Indians had no answer for Packers starter Steve Wilson who was absolutely dominant in his five innings of work. He struck out six, and only yielded three hits and a walk.

Following him out of the pen Anthony Bender and Robert Garcia combined for seven strikeouts and only one hit and a walk in their four innings of work.

The Packers scored two more in the eighth and took the game 7-0, advancing to the second round where the San Francisco Seals awaited.

The Seals were coming off back-to-back wins on Thursday against the Novato Knicks and the Bay Area



## Exultation

Members of the Prune Packers celebrate winning the Wine Country Championship tournament and concluding a winning season of summer baseball.

Tide and were hungry to play the Packers, who had beat them twice in the regular season.

The Seals struck first against Packer's starter Grant Gunning, getting a run in the third off an error. Healdsburg would answer back in the fifth with a run of their own thanks to a Kenny Corey double, making it 1-1.

The game stayed tied until the eighth where the Seals scored on another Packers error, making it 2-1 heading into the last few innings. The Packers needed a rally and a rally is what they got.

A leadoff double from Anthony Bender got things going in the last of the ninth, and a single from Jamey Smart meant something special was cooking for the Pack.

With runners on second and third, Kenny Corey would score Bender with a fielder's choice, now with the game tied at 2-2 and runners on the corners, Ross Puskarich would walk to load the bases for the Tyler Beets.

On the 126th and final pitch of the day for Seals starter Hidalgo, Beets knocked a blooper into center field, scoring Smart, completing the comeback and sending the Packers to championship game.

The championship game was much less dramatic than the previous for the Packers. Because of how the tournament was set up, if the loser of the semifinal game had not lost any games previous to that loss, they would automatically play in the championship game.

So the Packers found themselves squaring off with the San Francisco Seals for the second time in two days.

This time however, the Packers would not need a rally. They drew first blood with a Dane Erbst RBI single in the second inning to score Smart.

The Packers were not finished. Their bats came alive in the third inning once again, scoring four runs to put the game out of reach. They scored one more in the seventh to make it 6-0 and that's how the score would stand to end the game.

Packers starter Torgen Soderlund and four relievers combined to shutout the Seals, who only managed four hits in the game. Tournament MVP went to Matt LoCoco who batted .454 in the tourney.

The Healdsburg Prune Packers finish their season with an outstanding record of 37-13.