

Golden A's repeat as national oldtimers baseball champs

By Ryan Glassman
SPECIAL TO THE BEAVER

The Oakville Golden A's 44-plus team has proven two things over the last two years: they can pitch, and they can win championship games.

After claiming the Tier 1 national oldtimers baseball title in Burlington last year, the A's captured the championship once again this season, defeating the Tracadie-Sheila Eagles 8-1 recently in Charlottetown, PEI.

"It's a pretty big deal because there haven't been a lot of teams that have repeated," A's shortstop Greg Macdonald said.

During the four-day tournament, Oakville shut down the opposition offensively, allowing one run or less in four of its six games and just 10 runs in total.

"Our pitching was unbelievable," A's manager Rich Knight said. "We really got some great efforts from our guys. Al Rutherford started most of the games, J.P. Soucie came on in relief and Kevin Cook closed it out at the end."

The Canadian National Oldtimers Baseball Federation (CNOBF) championships features over 30 teams from across the country. The clubs are spread out through three divisions (35-plus, 44-plus and 50-plus) and there two tiers for each division.

Games are seven innings in length and every squad's batting lineup features at least 12 hitters.

Rutherford says Oakville's ability to keep its opponents off the scoreboard in the first two innings of games played a large part in the team winning five of six overall.

"We'd usually go through the top of the other team's order pretty quick," he said. "By the time we're in the middle of the game in the third inning, they're still heading towards the bottom of their lineup. We're a couple of runs ahead and they're playing catch up now."

"That's how we won (the tournament). We got ahead and we stayed ahead."

Oakville managed to do just that in the championship game, scoring three runs on two hits in the bottom of the fourth to break a 1-1 tie.

Al Ogaki sparked the rally with a walk and two stolen bases. A's second baseman Greg McEachern scored Ogaki with a single to left and would later come around on a single by Kevin Greener.

"They started walking guys and made some errors... the wheels basically fell off for those guys," MacEachern said.

The A's bullpen took it from there and the team added four more runs in the sixth to make it 8-1. However, the outcome could have been far different for Oakville had Rutherford, the club's starter, not got out of a first-inning jam with Eagles runners on the corners and just one out.

The pivotal play began when Rutherford threw over to first base, catching the Tracadie-Sheila runner in a rundown. When the ball was thrown to shortstop Macdonald, the runner from third base tried to score and was thrown out by six steps. A groundout ended the inning moments later as the Eagles failed to score.

"I think they were totally deflated after that," Rutherford said.

While strong pitching is an essential part of Oakville's success, A's players say it is Knight who has laid the foundation for the team's back-to-back championships.

"Richie is great, we all love him," McEachern said. "He has the per-

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Sleep-rocking?



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PYJAMA PARTY: Claire Stoll sweeps a rock Friday during the Oakville Curling Club's annual junior camp. Curlers ages 9-15 dressed in their pyjamas for the camp's final-day bonspiel.

Local athletes earn medals at Ontario Summer Games

Several Oakville residents earned gold medals at the Ontario Summer Games, which concluded last weekend in Toronto.

Bronte Harbour Yacht Club member Dayna Hellmann finished first in women's radial sailing, Sam Pennyfather was part of gold-winning entries in the canoeing doubles 1,000-metre and canoeing fours 1,000m events, and Evan O'Dell, Ryan Bekker and Jasman Gill helped their Central West team win the boys' basketball championship.

Silver medals went to Jillian Perrone (women's canoeing singles 1,000m and 3,000m, and canoeing fours 1,000m), Michelle Olson (women's kayaking fours

1,000m), Simran Rai (karate 14-17 team kata) and Dominic Neukom (individual prone rifle international class men's 17 and older). Olson, Perrone and Noah Djurfeldt also earned silver in paddling relay events.

Bronze medals were earned by Sheila Merhvar (women's canoeing singles 1,000m and 3,000m), Rob Anderson and Djurfeldt (men's canoeing fours 1,000m), Perrone (women's canoeing doubles 1,000m) and Tyler Hipple (men's kayaking doubles 1,000m).

In team competition, Halton Field Hockey Club players Anna Jiang, Elizabeth O'Hara,

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