

# Bantam Vytis girls win provincial D2 gold

## Novice girls also win division title, atom boys claim bronze

Familiarity apparently breeds more than contempt.

The Oakville Vytis under-13 bantam girls team, formed four years ago, is enjoying its most successful season ever. The team won the Division 2 title at the recent Ontario Basketball Association provincials in Windsor, a few weeks after claiming gold at a prestigious tournament hosted by Hamilton's Blessed Sacrament.

Vytis head coach Stephen Merner said the team's improvement — Oakville was 37th at last year's provincials, and the Division 2 title makes Vytis ninth this season — is due to continuity.

"This whole group lives on Third Line. They're all friends. Most of them go to (neighbourhood elementary schools) St. Joan of Arc or Ecole Forest Trail," Merner said.

"When you keep a team together long enough, they either really love the game or it's a social thing. For them, it was never a social thing. They came to learn basketball and to get better at it."

At provincials, Vytis capped a 4-1 showing by defeating the Niagara Falls Red Raiders 41-35 in the final.

Oakville sandwiched wins over Advantage Titans (33-30) and Transway-Wilson-Blackley (45-31) around a 29-23 loss to the London Ramblers during pool play. Vytis silenced the Etobicoke Thunder 39-30 in the semis.

In the Blessed Sacrament tournament, Vytis lost its opening game before winning its next four — including a 55-45 win over Hamilton Transway-WB, the team that beat Oakville 42-39 in its opening game. Oakville's other wins at the tournament came against the Advantage Titans (43-30), London Ramblers #1 (41-17) and Tecumseh Saints (41-35).

Members of the U13 Vytis bantam girls

are Natalie Bot, Lauren Montanari, Avery Murray, Kali Pocrnic, Alexa Duric, Jordan Merner, Nikolina Vrcic, Kristen Abraham, Lauren Cross, Bryn Rutherford and Fiorella Granda. Ken Cross and Kelly Griffiths are assistant coaches.

### Other Vytis results at provincials

A couple other Vytis teams have also won medals so far in Ontario Cup tournaments, which began last month and continue until the final weekend of May.

The Vytis under-10 novice girls green team claimed the Division 3 title March 22-24 in Chatham, clinching gold with a 21-9 win over London Ramblers. Members of that team are Isabella Boyd, Chiara English, Abigail Kanalec, Madison Tu, Andrea Cappannelli, Victoria DaSilva, Madison Anton, Victoria Percival, Hannah Vosper, Madeline McWilliam, Ashley Elliott, Katie Hartman and Jessica Dougall. Coaches are Alana Juzenas, Vic Juzenas and Julia Mulligan.

Another Vytis entry, the under-11 atom boys, claimed Division 5 bronze in Burlington April 5-7, downing Grimsby Basketball 53-38 in its final contest. Vytis won its first three games at the tournament before a 50-39 loss to Whitby in the semis cost Oakville a shot at gold. Keegan Merner, Oscar Bruno, Adam Amour, Sean Tousaw, Daniel Rhooms, Alex Stephenson, Aaron Rhooms, Nicholas Byj, Nolan Kopecky-Duff, Victor Yatsenko, Tyler Milford and Colden Reay contributed to the win. Merner also coaches the U11 team, assisted by Linh Nyguen.

In other Vytis results at provincials, the under-14 major bantam girls lost the Division 5 bronze match on a buzzer-beater, falling 27-26 to Orillia April 12-14 in Ottawa, and the under-10 novice girls yellow team defeated Brantford CYO in the Division 4 consolation game.



The Oakville Vytis under-13 bantam girls (top photo) and under-10 novice girls green (left) recently won division titles at the Ontario Basketball Association championships. The under-11 atom Vytis boys added a Division 5 bronze (photo can be found online at <http://bit.ly/17Ki0j0>).

| photos submitted

Two more Vytis teams, the U16 major midget girls and the U19 junior boys, are expected to contend for Division 1 titles at provincials. The U16 girls' championships will be held this weekend and the U19 tournament will be held May 24-26, both in Kitchener-Waterloo.

Merner, who is also the president of Vytis, is content with how the organization has fared in provincial competition but said there are greater priorities as well.

"We're never about (if) we have enough medals or trophies. What I'm happy with is that many teams are repeat teams with repeat coaches. That just tells me people are enjoying the experience of learning the game and getting better," he said. "They always have a goal in mind, and medalling that final weekend (of provincials) is always satisfying. But we're growing, and that's what I love."

—Jon Kuiperij

## Eight titles for CheerForce Wolfpack at Cheer Evolution Spring Classic

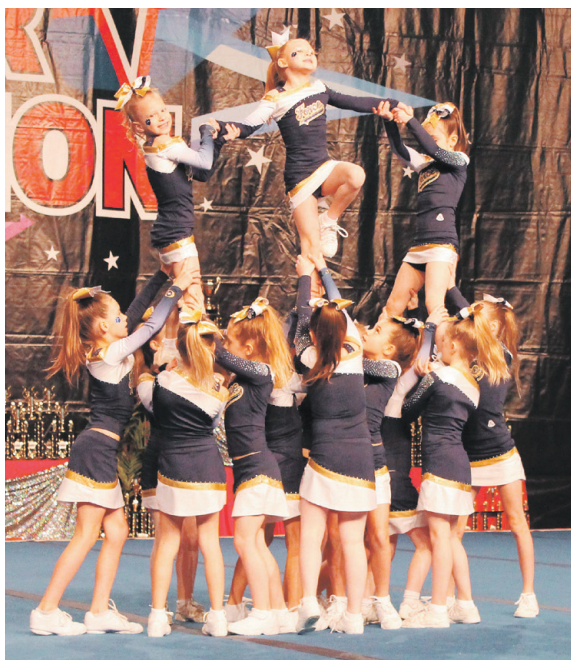
Oakville-based CheerForce AllStars Wolfpack teams won eight division titles at the Cheer Evolution Spring Classic cheerleading competition earlier this month at Brampton's Powerade Centre.

The Wolfpack's victories came in the Tiny 1, Youth A 1, Mini 2, Small Youth 2, Youth 3, Senior 5 R, Senior Coed 3 and Large Senior 4 divisions.

Other notable finishes for the Wolfpack included second in Mini Indy and Junior 4, third in Junior 2, Senior 2 and Junior 3, and fourth in Mini 1 and Junior 1. The Wolfpack's sister team, the CheerForce Jaguars based out of Georgetown, won the Mini 1 division and was fourth in Youth AA 1.

The CheerForce Wolfpack will soon be moving its training facility from the current Speers Road location to a larger venue at 1060 South Service Rd. W.

The new building will feature two fully-sprung floors, a tumble strip and 24-foot ceilings, allowing the Wolfpack to expand its programs and offer a greater depth of coaching and programming.



The CheerForce AllStars Wolfpack Mini Level 2 team performs a pyramid at the Cheer Evolution Spring Classic. | photo submitted

## 12U provincial ball team holding tryouts

Baseball players ages 12 and under (as of April 2013) are welcome to try out for a tournament team that will represent Ontario at the Canadian Cal Ripken Baseball 12U Major 70 Championships July 17-21 in Surrey, B.C.

Tryouts are scheduled for all weekends in May. For more information and a tryout schedule, email [crtournament@yahoo.ca](mailto:crtournament@yahoo.ca) or call 905-664-5582.

The champion of the Canadian Cal Ripken tournament will represent Canada at the Cal Ripken Baseball 12U Major 70 World Series Aug. 9-16 in Aberdeen, Md.

### OMBA 50th anniversary ceremony

The Oakville Minor Baseball Association will hold a special ceremony to celebrate the opening of its 50th anniversary season May

## REP BASEBALL

11 at Oakville Park.

Mayor Rob Burton will speak during the ceremony, which will begin at 12:30 p.m. OMBA president Dave Fulton will then declare the season officially open and Burton will throw the ceremonial first pitch. The festivities will be followed by a 1:30 p.m. minor midget AAA game between the Oakville As and Burlington Bulls.

"This season is very special for the OMBA and we would like to share it with the many children who love baseball in Oakville," said Fulton. "We are inviting boys and girls to join us and take part in the great season and all the events we have planned."