

SPORTS & LEISURE

Bulldogs' party put on hold

By **EAMONN MAHER**
Staff Writer

Fans of the Halton Hills Bulldogs might want to hold off purchasing their Founders Cup tickets after the visiting Elora Mohawks wrecked plans for an Ontario championship celebration in Georgetown Tuesday.

The Mohawks came into game three of the best-of-5 Ontario Lacrosse Association Jr. B final series trailing 2-0 and were in no mood to witness any trophy presentations, building a 4-0 lead before the contest was 10 minutes old.

Bulldogs' starting netminder Ryan Kelly, who was riding a five-game winning streak, was pulled at that point and although he returned to play well over the final 40 minutes, the Halton Hills' offence was ineffective in a 7-1 loss in front of about 1,000 spectators.

Game four of the series is set for the sauna-like conditions of the Elora & District Community Centre Friday at 8 p.m., with game five, if necessary, at Georgetown's Alcott Arena Saturday at 7:30 p.m.

"We came out a little flat and they jumped on us," said forward Nic Grasby, who had the Bulldogs' goal with three seconds left in the second period.

"It wasn't so much overconfidence on our part. (Elora) wanted it more tonight. We're usually the team that's down two games to none and we know what it feels like to play that way. They got all the loose balls, all the faceoffs and every rebound and you can't win games if you don't have the ball."

The Mohawks, who were swept out of last year's Ontario final by the Clarington Green Gaels, hardly resembled the team that allowed 23 goals in the

first two games of this series, with 20-year-old goalie Ricky McGarr stoning the 'Dogs, who were outshot 44-42.

Captain Brady Heseltine led the Elora attack with a hat trick and the Mohawks looked more like the squad that upset top-ranked Six Nations for the Western Conference title.

And while Halton Hills was due for a bad game after an amazing comeback over the Green Gaels in the Eastern Conference final and two hard-fought victories against Elora, Tuesday's loss was made worse when leading goal-scorer Brendan MacDonald and veteran rearguard Kody Lyons were tossed for the rest of the series due to suspensions stemming from third-period fights.

Rugged Mohawk forward Kyle Goss was also suspended for the series' duration.

So, instead of being able to



Kody Lyons (left) of the Halton Hills Bulldogs rattles the cage of Elora Mohawks' captain Brady Heseltine during the third period in game three of their OLA Jr. B final series Tuesday in Georgetown. Elora won 7-1 but is still down 2-1 in the series. Photo by Eamonn Maher

celebrate the club's first-ever OLA Jr. B title on its home floor, the Bulldogs are on the wrong side of the momentum heading into the weekend, with the Ontario berth in Tuesday's opening game of the Founders Cup national championship tourna-

ment in Etobicoke up for grabs.

"It's going to be hot in Elora Friday and the place will be packed, but with all those fans comes the fun part of it. We do play better on the road and we're going to have to match their intensity," Grasby added.

Nurse happy with getting taste of international rowing experience

By **EAMONN MAHER**
Staff Writer

Spending three weeks of her summer in Europe sounds like a great vacation, but there wasn't much sightseeing on the itinerary for rower Cristy Nurse on her recent trip to the U.K. and Switzerland.

The 23-year-old Georgetown native has no complaints, however, as she spent much of the time in the water as a first-time member of Canada's women's eights team at the British Royal Henley and a World Cup competition in Lucerne.

"It was all business and not much time for touring around, but we did get a couple of days to visit different places," she said.

Nurse, who earned her National Card funding status in May as part of Canada's Own The Podium program, had only been rowing full-time for a month at the London Training Centre before learning that she'd been named to the national team as a port spare for the eights' boat.

There wasn't much standing around as an alternate, though, as Nurse practised

with the eights when two members of that team raced in the pairs' competition.

"Definitely it was a different role than I'm used to but the team did a great job making us feel like you were close to the rest of the team and not just extras," she said. "You felt like you were making contributions to the team's success and every practice is important when you're competing at a World Cup level, especially because I was the rookie."

The 5-foot-11 Nurse was selected to the team after three weeks of grueling "seat racing" in London, where the top prospects for the national squad went head-to-head in singles' boats to determine who was headed for Europe.

And after the athletes returned to London to train for six days a week, consisting of three sessions per day that in-



CRISTY NURSE

cludes weights, rowing and pilates, Nurse was then chosen to row on the women's eights national team at the Royal Canadian Henley Championships in St. Catharines last weekend, and the team won the 2,000m race in 5:55.52, 14 seconds ahead of the runner-up U.S. boat.

Next up are tryouts for the World Championships in New Zealand, to be held in early November.

As well, the intense internal competition on the national team makes speculation about who might be on the final Canadian roster for the 2012 Summer Olympics in London, England pointless, from Nurse's perspective.

"I don't want to even comment about the Olympics because some of the team members who were in Beijing (for the 2008 Games) didn't go to Europe with us because of work or other commitments

and they'll probably be back to try to get their spots back. You never know. Injuries can happen and there can be a completely different cast of characters from race to race," she added.

"The nice part about getting my National Card status is that it solidifies your confidence that you belong here and have a future in the sport."

In 2008, Nurse teamed up with Burlington's Nora Griffiths to win the Canadian under-23 women's 2,000m pairs race in London. Most recently, Nurse was named the University of Ottawa's female athlete of the year in April for the Gee Gees' competitive club teams. A law student in Ottawa's graduate program, she has one more year to get her degree, but her rowing might put that on hold.

"I have the option to stay in school and finish up, or I can defer my final year to concentrate on rowing, but again I can't really predict what's going to happen. We're just trying to deal with things one step at a time and right now the focus is on rowing," the Georgetown District High School grad said.

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