

SPORTS & LEISURE

Bulldogs a win away from return to national final

By **EAMONN MAHER**
Staff Writer

The Halton Hills Bulldogs are within one win of returning to the Canadian Lacrosse Association Jr. B championship tournament after handing the Six Nations Rebels a rare home loss Sunday evening.

Just like Saturday's 9-6 triumph in Georgetown, the Dogs took control of the game early and never relinquished the lead, pulling off an 8-5 win to take a 2-1 lead in their best-of-5 Ontario Jr. B Lacrosse League championship series.

Game four is set for the Alcott Arena Wednesday beginning at 8 p.m.

If a fifth game is required, it will be played Friday night at the Iroquois Lacrosse Arena in Six Nations.

Luke Laidlaw opened the scoring at the four-minute mark of the first period for the Bulldogs Sunday and would add three more on the evening, including a clutch effort with over six minutes remaining in the final frame to make the score 7-5 when the Rebels were pressing hard for the equalizer.

Halton Hills netminder Ryan Kelly was sensational behind a poised group of defenders, making 41 saves, while Six Nations' starter Don Alton was pulled after the visitors built a 5-0 second-period advantage.

Jordan Dance (2), Bradley Kri and Michael Licata also found net for the defending Canadian-champion Bulldogs, who improved to 6-1 during the 2011 playoffs away from home, with the Rebels losing two games in a row for the first time this season.

The winner of the series moves on to the Founders Cup in Saskatoon next week.

"Hopefully we can take it all back at



Halton Hills Bulldog Chris Haynes clangs a shot off the crossbar behind Six Nations Rebel goalkeeper Don Alton Sunday night at the Iroquois Lacrosse Arena. The Bulldogs dominated the first half of game three in the Ontario Jr. B Lacrosse League's championship series, yet had to hang on to an 8-5 victory to take a 2-1 lead in the best-of-5 matchup.

home Wednesday so we don't have to come back here," said Norval resident Laidlaw, who played Jr. A in Brampton last year before opting to return to the Dogs to play with cousins Seth and Peter Laidlaw.

"They won it last year and I want the ring this year. It's going to be a packed house Wednesday, really emotional, and hopefully we can come out on top."

In game two Saturday, the Bulldogs took a 3-0 advantage in the first period and a 9-3 lead into the third be-

fore the Rebels connected for three late goals.

Mike MacDonald (2), Kri, Peter Laidlaw, Luke Laidlaw, Brendan MacDonald and Chris Haynes also had goals for the home side, which outshot the Rebels 49-38 in front of about 1,000 spectators.

In game one Thursday night at the ILA, Halton Hills again had a good start and held a 9-8 lead 1:38 into the final stanza on a goal by Blake Kenny, but the Rebels reeled off five goals in a six-minute span to clinch the 14-11

win.

Dylan Gilbert (2), Luke Laidlaw (2), Mike MacDonald (2), Peter Laidlaw, Seth Laidlaw, Michael Licata and Jayson Crawford rounded out the offence in the series opener.

Kenny, who led the Bulldogs in scoring during the regular season, and 21-year-old defender Brad Mazzocato missed the weekend games due to injury. Head coach Blaine McCauley said their status was day-to-day.

"We're fortunate that when someone goes down, there's someone else right there to come in and we don't skip a beat," McCauley said.

"These are the two best teams in the Ontario league and you can't take a shift off."

NOTES: Canada is 2-2 in the preliminary round of the World Under-19 Women's Field Lacrosse Championships in Germany and Georgetown's Casey Lyons was named MVP in the Canucks' 13-10 victory over England with three goals and two assists. The 18-year-old attacking midfielder also had a hat trick in a 21-2 win over Haudenosaunee in the opening game. Terra Cotta's Samantha Cock, 19, is a defender on the Canadian team. Canada lost to the tournament favourites U.S. 13-6 and Australia 11-9...Two members of the Halton Hills Minor Lacrosse Association earned national championships over the weekend at the Ontario Lacrosse Festival in Whitby. Drayden Patey played goal for Team Ontario bantams, who edged B.C. 4-3 in the final. Mackenzie Entwistle, a forward for the provincial peewee squad, had nine goals and six assists during the nine-game round-robin and a pair of helpers in Ontario's 10-1 triumph over Iroquois in the championship game.

Photo by Eamonn Maher

Georgetown's Bathgate headed to Plymouth in OHL swap

Local resident Andy Bathgate is headed south of the border for his final season of junior hockey eligibility.

The 20-year-old centre was dealt by the Belleville Bulls last Thursday to the Plymouth (Mich.) Whalers in exchange for third-round draft picks in 2013 and 2014.

Two shoulder surgeries hampered the former Georgetown Jr. A Raider's three-year stint in Belleville, yet he still led the Bulls with 25 goals and 35 assists in 2010-11.

A fifth-round draft pick of the NHL's Pittsburgh Penguins in 2009, Bathgate played two games for their AHL affiliate in Wilkes-

Barre/Scranton, Pa. and spent six weeks with the team during their playoff run, but did not sign a contract with the Pens.

The 6-foot, 175-pound Brampton native was a 2007 third-round pick of Belleville, which had five overage candidates for the upcoming season to fill three spots.



ANDY BATHGATE



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