



Halton Hills Bulldogs' defenders Jamie Batten (left) and Mitchell Christopher had their hands full trying to slow down Gloucester Griffin Nick Finlay during Saturday night's game 4 of their OJBLL playoff series at the Alcott Arena. Photo by Eamonn Maher

Bulldogs to face Akwesasne

The Halton Hills Bulldogs will take on the Akwesasne Indians in the post-season for the third straight year as their series starts this weekend with the first two games on the reserve located near Cornwall.

Games 3-5, if necessary, would be played in Georgetown July 17-19.

Third-place Halton Hills was pushed to the limit in its opening-round Ontario Jr. B Lacrosse League series with the sixth-seeded Gloucester Griffins on the weekend, needing a comeback 17-12 victory at the Alcott Arena Sunday afternoon to take the fifth-and-deciding game.

Adam Charalambides helped key the recovery with five goals and five assists in the contest after the hosts trailed 4-0 at one point.

Second-ranked Akwesasne swept Newmarket in its East Conference quarterfinal.

In the lone regular season meeting between Halton Hills and Akwesasne this year, the host Indians rolled to an easy 14-6 win. The two teams also met in last year's East Conference championship series, with the Bulldogs pulling off a surprising series sweep.

Two years ago, the Indians downed the 'Dogs 3-0 in round two.

"Akwesasne is a really good team and they've been in the hunt for the last couple of years with us and the Green Gaels," said coach Blaine McCauley.

"It's going to be a good test for us."

In the other East semifinal, the top-ranked Green Gaels take on the fifth-place Oakville Buzz.

On the Pan Am Hill for Canada

By Eamonn Maher
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The lone participant from Halton Hills in this year's Pan Am Games, right-handed pitcher Shawn Hill, figures to be an important part of Canada's baseball team when the tournament begins this weekend in Ajax.

Hill, a 34-year-old from Georgetown, is expected to get the start Tuesday in a much-anticipated clash with Cuba at President's Choice Park.

The Canucks are the defending Pan Am champs after a stirring victory in Mexico in 2011 in which sinkerballer Hill was the winning hurler in a semifinal win over the host team.

Arm injuries, including two Tommy John ligament replacement surgeries, have plagued the career of the 6-foot-2, 180-pound Mississauga native, who has pitched in the Majors with Montreal, Washington, San Diego and the Toronto Blue Jays, but he hasn't given up on making his return to the Big Leagues, despite going 1-7 this season with the non-affiliated York (Pa.) Revolution.

Hill looked sharp in throwing three scoreless innings Monday in a 7-3 exhibition game loss in Cary, N.C. against the same U.S. team that's coming here for the Pan Am Games.

Residing in Florida with his wife Ashley and two daughters in the off-season, Hill was the 2012 Stubby Clapp Award recipient for his desire, competitiveness and never-say-die attitude, which he displayed again for Canada with a bronze medal-showing at the 2004 Summer Olympics in Greece.

Hill took time recently to answer some questions from the IFP on the eve of the Pan Am Games.



SHAWN HILL

IFP: Would you say the Pan Am gold medal in Mexico in 2011 was among the top highlights of your career, if not the greatest?

SH: The 2011 Games were definitely a highlight but for different reasons than other games/situations for me. It was more of a highlight for me because of what it meant to Baseball Canada as a whole. Personally the '04 Olympics are still probably my biggest highlight, although that may also have to do with my age at the time and the impact it had on me moving forward.

IFP: What's the difference between pitching professionally and for Team Canada?

SH: It's definitely different because priorities become different. Like it or not, in affiliated ball the game becomes more personal-results based, but with international competition it's

all about the team and personal results matter way less. I tend to prefer that style of play. It just creates a much better atmosphere to be a part of.

IFP: A lot of players who have gone through the injuries you've had would have quit long ago. What keeps you going?

SH: Stubbornness has a lot to do with still kicking at this point, but honestly I just don't feel as though I'm done. All of the surgeries that I went through derailed my career path hugely, and after finally fixing the problem we know that three of the surgeries and four years of rehab and headaches were unnecessary. So I almost feel as though I owe it to myself to keep at it now that I finally feel healthy.

IFP: Do you feel you can still catch on with a Major League team again now that you're healthy?

SH: I'm getting to the point where I feel I could help a big league team again. It's been a tough road for sure after the surgeries, trying to get used to the arm working again and the body adapting to the changes as well. This season I've started to see glimpses of the old me and that's why I'm still at it.

IFP: How difficult is it to ride the buses in the minors with two young daughters at home?

SH: The girls being at home with my wife definitely weighs on me big time as far as continuing to play or not, but my wife is one of the biggest people in my life who feels it's too soon to give up after what I've been through, so she's given me a little leash to try and see it through.

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