

Sports & Leisure

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Three heads are better than one

The action was a little off the ground as Chris Froggett (front) and Matt Eagleson of Georgetown District High School Rebels senior boys' soccer team battled a Loyola High School player in mid-air to head the ball during their Halton Secondary School Athletic Association match Thursday. Although the action was fast and furious, Loyola dominated the Rebels by posting a 5-2 win.

Photo by Ted Brown

Top-seeded Jans claims third national squash title

Partway through her seesaw Canadian women's squash championship semifinal match against long time rival Marnie Baizley Friday, top-ranked Melanie Jans of Georgetown remembered something: "You're number one for a reason."

Steadying herself mentally, Jans went on to dump Baizley 6-9, 10-8, 9-5, 6-9 and 9-5 and advance to Saturday's final at Toronto's Mayfair Parkway squash club where she downed fourth-ranked Margo Green of Ottawa in four games (9-6, 9-4, 5-9, 9-3) to claim her third Canadian title in four years.

"There's more pressure when you're number one," said Jans in a telephone interview from the Adelaide Club in Toronto where she is the squash pro. "I had high expectations."

Jans, 27, admitted she may have taken Baizley, who has not played a lot this season, a tad lightly.

"I've been playing a lot and playing well," said Jans, who was coming off a win in the Saskatchewan Open. "Marnie has not been playing as much. I also beat her three straight last year (in the final) so I may have been a little overconfident."

Jans said she had a hard time controlling the ball in her gruelling match against Baizley but credited a recent training session with number-three ranked world player Sarah Fitzgerald.

"It was really intense," said Jans. "Every rally."

Jans used the mental toughness she picked up in that session against Baizley and Green.

"Both have different styles and strengths," said Jans, a six-time national junior champion. "So, I changed my targets, stayed calm and stuck to my game plan."

The five-time Ontario champ, who is coached by Mike Way, had little time to savour her most recent Canadian championship as she flew to San Francisco yesterday (Tuesday) for a Women's International Squash Players Association (WISPA) event.

"I play about 10 WISPA events a year," said Jans, who is ranked 34th in the world.

After San Francisco, Jans will travel to British Columbia for the B.C. Open which will be followed by a trip to Birmingham for the British Open in June.

Then there will be time for a break.

Jans says she intends to keep a busy squash schedule for the foreseeable future and would like to improve on her world ranking.

"I'd like to get into the top-10."

—By John McGhie,
staff writer



Melanie Jans walks off the court with her national women's squash championship medal and a Rotary watch Saturday after defeating Margo Green of Ottawa 9-6, 9-4, 5-9, 9-3. The win was Jans' third Canadian title in the past four years.

Photo courtesy Murray Jans



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