

SPORTS & LEISURE

Local man headed for Hungary after claiming national universities & colleges squash crown

Fifth time's the charm on court for Jones

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Staff Writer

Experience won out over rookie exuberance this past weekend as Georgetown's Andrew Jones captured the men's title for the Black Knight Canadian Universities & Colleges squash championships at the University of Toronto.

The 24-year-old Jones, a fifth-year University of Western Ontario student aiming to earn his teacher's college degree, defeated Mustang teammate Iain Crozier, a 19-year-old freshman from Winnipeg, in three straight sets in Sunday's finale. It was the fifth consecutive year that Jones had made the Black Knight championship match, having lost to Western teammate Rob Nigro the four previous occasions. The spectators on hand for Sunday's final were backing Jones to close out his university squash career on a winning bounce over the number-one-seed Crozier, who had beaten Jones during the OUA playoffs.

"I really surprised myself. There have been a lot of things going on outside of squash for me lately and I wasn't thinking about playing as much, which maybe helped me," said Jones, whose home base is the Georgetown Racquet Club. "I didn't train as much as I had planned, but I did do a lot of running and biking, and I think that helped me clear my mind. Sometimes I don't play well when I'm too focused on squash and I was able to keep control, just staying calm and confident."

Jones nearly crashed out of the tournament in Saturday's best-of-5 semi-finals as



Andrew Jones of Georgetown (centre) was congratulated by a couple of his mentors in the sport of squash after capturing the Black Knight championship on Sunday at the University of Toronto as the top men's singles player amongst Canadian universities and colleges. Jones' junior coach Rob Brooks (left) and University of Western Ontario coach Jack Fairs were on hand for the awards presentation. Thanks to his triumph on the national stage, Jones has qualified to compete at the World University Games this August in Hungary.

Submitted photo

he was down two games to none to a University of Waterloo opponent, yet rallied to victory, playing the best squash his mother Pat says she's seen from him.

He struggled somewhat in the first game against Crozier on Sunday, grinding out a 9-7 win, before taking control with 9-3 and 9-0 victories to clinch the title, retrieving shots from nearly every angle on the court to handcuff his less-experienced teammate.

With the victory, Jones earned the opportunity to represent Canada at the 2006 FISU World University Championships, to be held in Budapest, Hungary in August. He has played in previous world junior championships and would love to delve into the international experience again.

"It sounds very exciting. I will have to contact Squash Canada to get some more details about it," added Jones, who will complete his studies at Western at the end of April. "They're covering my accommodation and registration and we have to look after the flight, so we'll probably be looking for sponsors, but it all has been a lot of fun. To win the (Canadian championship) in my last kick at the can was really satisfying."

Jones credits his coach at Western, Jack Fairs, for helping him finally claim the title. The Mustangs have won an incredible 23 straight Ontario team championships in men's varsity squash.

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Members of the Halton Hills Gymnastics Centre who competed in the recent provincial qualifier in Ottawa are (front, from left) Jeremy Meneses, Sean Doherty, Andrew Pietras, Dawson Early, Ryan Dehrlein. Second row: Gabriel Shieh, Marc deLestard, Eric Olsen, Corey Gillies, Riley Dodds, Gregory Litster. Third row: Gabriel Reitz, Zachary Brautigian, Jesse Bydevaate. Back row: Adam Griese, Derek Rauwerda, Daniel Stepner, Alex Bowmer, coach Nistor Sandro.

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Four local gymnasts golden at the Capital

At a recent Gymnastics Ontario qualifier in Ottawa, Gregory Litster, Marc deLestard, Corey Gillies and Jesse Bydevaate of the Halton Hills Gymnastics Centre earned gold medals in "all-around" categories, vault and floor, respectively.

The remaining members of the team put in a good showing with Derek Rauwerda placing second overall; Alex Bowmer scoring a fourth on rings; Daniel Stepner and Adam Griese tying on Pommel in eighth place; Gabriel Reitz earning a third on rings; Riley Dodds placing fifth on floor; Zachary Brautigian came in 10th on vault; Eric Shieh placed fifth overall; Eric Olsen and Wesley Smith performed well in their categories.

This was the second of three qual-

ifiers for the 2005-06 competitive season. The third qualifier takes place in Newmarket later this month. The competitors must place in the top six for the Central Region in two of the three qualifiers in order to compete in the provincials in April.

Two Halton Hills' gymnasts, Alex Bowmer and Derek Rauwerda, qualified at the first meet in North Bay to compete at the Ontario Winter Games in Barrie.

The local beginner boys' competitive gymnasts took part in a recent interclub meet at the Woodstock Gymnastics Club, with Andrew Pietras placing first "all around," with teammates Sean Doherty, Jeremy Meneses, Ryan Dehrlein and Dawson Early placing fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth, respectively.

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