

# SPORTS & LEISURE

## Resilient Jr. B Bulldogs finally run out of miracles

**EAMONN MAHER**  
Staff Writer

The team that wouldn't quit finally ran out of remarkable comebacks in their best-ever playoff run during the 2008 season, as the Halton Hills Bulldogs were eliminated by the Six Nations Rebels with an 8-6 loss at the Alcott Arena Friday evening.

For the second year in a row, the Rebels won the Ontario Lacrosse Association Jr. B championship trophy and are strong favourites to claim their second straight national title this week in Guelph, although the Bulldogs feel they would have been a worthy Ontario representative as well.

After taking a 2-0 lead in the best-of-5 OLA final series, the Rebels lost a rare home game to the 'Dogs last Wednesday 5-4, and Halton Hills kept up the pressure in front of a capacity crowd at the Alcott Arena Friday night, owning a 6-5 lead midway through the final period in hopes of forcing a fifth game.

The OLA had ruled on Friday that a fifth-and-deciding match would have been played in Guelph on Sunday night, prompted by safety concerns resulting from a brawl at the conclusion of game three in Ohsweken last week.

But Six Nations equalized on a goal by Marty Hill, Rebels' all-time leading scorer Stu Hill potted his 33rd goal of the post-season for the series clincher, with the visitors adding an empty-netter in the last minute.

"We were up 6-5 and had some mental lapses and that was the difference in the series," said third-year Bulldog Nic Grasby, who scored two quick goals in the second period to give his squad a brief 4-3 advantage.

"In games one and two, we had the same thing happen to us and that's what changes the game. It seems like that through the entire playoffs, we didn't play our best until our backs were against the wall. But we tried our best and that's all you can ask for from our guys."

Grasby, 19, said he'll try out for the Brampton Jr. A Excelsiors next year as they'll host the Minto Cup Canadian championship tournament. If he doesn't make the team, he said he'd be happy to play for his hometown Bulldogs, who are expected to have several returnees in 2009.

Halton Hills has played in the

Founders Cup before as Georgetown hosted the event in 2002, but Grasby feels the team is ready to earn its way by winning an Ontario Jr. B title.

"We're really proud of what we've done, having such a young group this year, along with a few older guys," added the 5-foot-7, 145-pound Grasby, who's entering the Police Foundations program at Sheridan College next month.

"It was one big family that respected each other. There were a lot of 16- and 17-year-olds who are going to be bigger and stronger 17- and 18-year-olds next year and they'll be ready for the Founders. We went to the East finals last year, we went to the Ontario finals this year and next year we're going to the nationals."

The Bulldogs will be able to hang the 2008 OLA East Conference championship banner in the Alcott Arena thanks to their longest foray into the playoffs in the team's 14-year history. After sweeping Newmarket in the opening round, coach Blaine McCauley's side came back from 2-1 series deficits against Clarington and then Mimico in the conference final.

Mike Burke, Mike Brown, Evan Whillans and Pat Saunders also scored for the Bulldogs in game four. There were just two minor penalties called throughout the contest and no off-floor incidents like the ugly scenes that played out after game three.

Six Nations played its first game of the Founders Cup on Tuesday afternoon against Longueuil, Que. Four of the 12 teams entered in the tournament are from Alberta and the host Guelph Regals didn't make the playoffs this year with a 7-13-0 record.

"Do I think that the Founders Cup was decided last Friday? Yes I do," said McCauley. "To me, we're the second best team in Canada and we're not going to the Founders, but that's out of our hands now. When you sit down at the beginning of the season and set goals for the team, you always put the national championship up there first and although we didn't win it, we had a great year. Three years ago we put together a plan of what this organization wanted to accomplish and I think we're progressing towards that."

The Bulldogs, meanwhile, will start up their under-19 fall field campaign with a game on Sunday, Sept. 7 with most of the Jr. B roster that played through the summer.



Mike Brown (above, 44) of the Halton Hills Bulldogs was stopped on this third-period breakaway attempt during game four of the OLA Jr. B championship series against the visiting Six Nations Rebels on Friday at the Alcott Arena in Georgetown. The Rebels trailed 6-5 at the midway point of the third period but rallied for three unanswered goals for the victory to again claim the provincial title and earn a spot in this week's Founders Cup national championship in Guelph. For Halton Hills, the loss ended the franchise's farthest run into the OLA playdowns, which drew several hundred fans for each home contest. At left, Bulldog forward Kyle Davis expresses his dejection at the conclusion of the game.

Photos by Eamonn Maher

## Peewees open CNE play with win

Using seven different pitchers along the way, the Georgetown Eagles downed Niagara Falls 5-1 on Monday morning in their opening game of the 52nd-annual Canadian National Exhibition Peewee Baseball Tournament.

"We wanted to give our players the experience of playing at the Ex and everybody pitched well," said Georgetown coach Ian Stubberfield.

Jason Bridges of the Eagles was named player of the game after belting a two-run homer, while also adding a single and stolen base.

Georgetown's peewees will now face

Newmarket in their second game of the tourney tomorrow (Thursday) at 2 p.m.

Thirty-two teams from around the province are entered into the single-elimination event.

This past weekend, the peewee Eagles earned a berth in the Baseball Ontario AAA championships to be held on the Labour Day weekend in Vaughan after finishing as runner-up at the Central Ontario qualifying tournament in Brampton.

Georgetown lost to the Mississauga Twins 10-9 in the final but still qualified for the provincials.

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