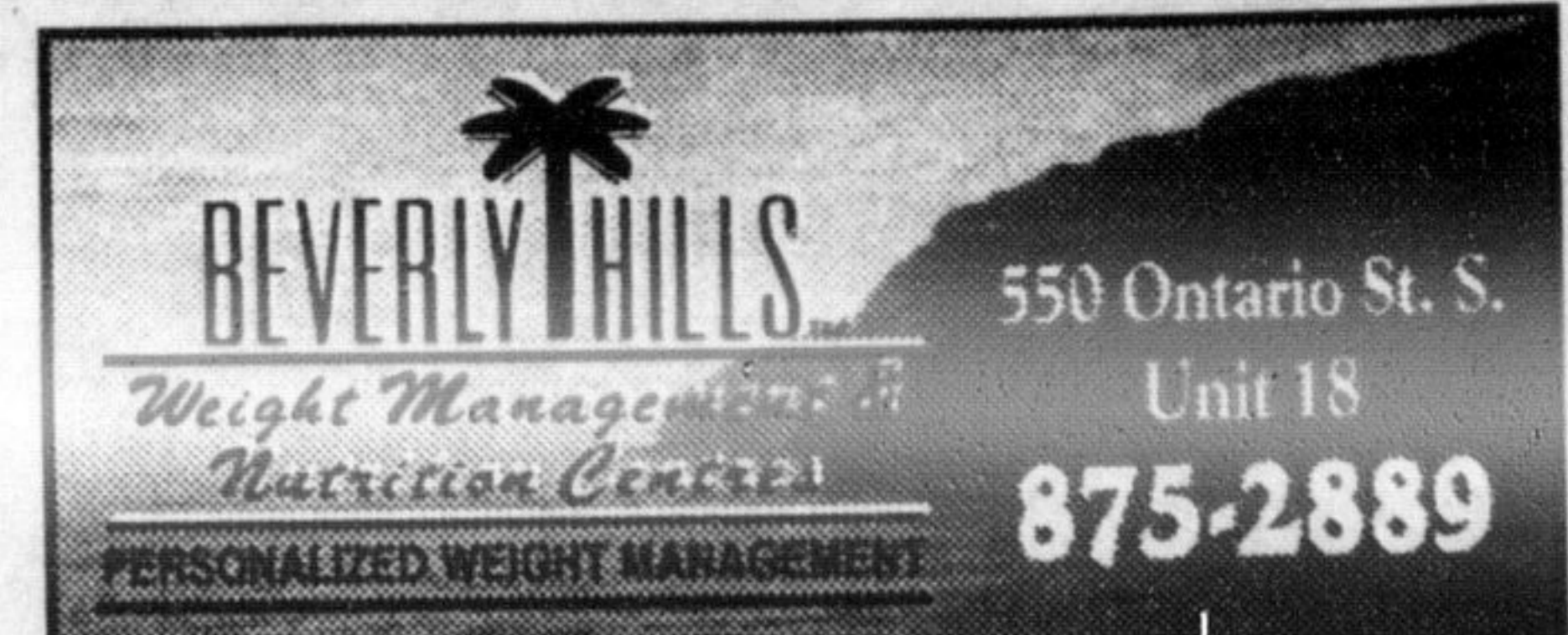




SPORTS



FRIDAY, AUGUST 6, 1999

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION



Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Milton Mystics' Jaime MacDonald slides safely into home plate after the London East catcher dropped the ball during first round play of the provincial qualifying tournament at Lions Sport Park Saturday. See story below for details.

Midget hot streak ends abruptly

Milton's midget girls fastball team went into last weekend's provincial qualifier on a remarkable hot streak.

However, their hopes of advancing to the main event hit the deep freeze awfully quickly.

The Expedite Plus Mystics, who'd lost only once in 13 games leading up to the double knockout tournament at Lions Sport Park, dropped games one and two for an early exit.

Manager Roy Harrold admits his club wasn't one of the favourites to place top three and move onto the provincial tier two championships, but thought that their recent run and subsequent momentum might have given them a shot.

"The way we'd been playing, I figured we had a chance," he remarked.

Unfortunately, lady luck had other plans for the local team — who drew eventual gold medalist London East for round one and were nipped 7-6 in extra innings.

Milton stayed competitive throughout

the lengthy morning contest, which was delayed three times because of the rain, and held a 6-4 lead after four frames.

But all the weather related interruptions and overpowering opposition finally caught up with them.

Suggested Harrold, "I guess it's hard to tell for sure, but the delays seemed to take away our edge."

London East tied the game in the seventh inning and posted the winning run in the eighth. The Mystics nearly prolonged the festivities, but couldn't cash in their one base runner in the bottom half of the extra inning.

Lindsey Harrold worked a complete game and enjoyed four scoreless innings — due in part to superb defence, especially from catcher Kathleen Beniuk and short-stop Laura Smuck.

Leading offensively was Jaime MacDonald, who amassed four singles and scored three times. Smuck and Sherylene Leslie also had multi-hit efforts.

Dejected after such a heart-wrenching first round loss, that put them on the brink of elimination, the tournament hosts delivered a lacklustre performance in their next outing and were thumped by Maryhill 10-3.

"Defensive errors really hurt us in game two. We booted the ball around a lot," explained the local skipper.

Melissa Morrison took the pitching reins in the second game and went the distance while Leslie offered the only offensive highlight — clobbering a two-run double down the stretch, when the final outcome was all but decided. Pandora Lewis contributed a pair of hits.

London East, London South and Windsor earned berths to the provincial showcase.

Meanwhile, Milton continues Golden Horseshoe league play, in which they currently sit third. Their next home game is Monday, Aug. 9 at Lions Sport Park against fourth place Burlington.

Fatigue trips bantams after a heroic tussle

By **STEVE LeBLANC**
The Champion

Call it the crowning jewel to a sparkling season.

Milton's bantam lacrosse team staved off elimination three times en route to securing silver at last weekend's double knockout Ontario "B" Championships in Guelph.

The Mavericks were no doubt pleased with their splendid overall performance — but a measure of disappointment must certainly have been mixed in with the team's post provincial emotions.

This after being trimmed by the Whitby Warriors 11-9 Sunday evening in the finals.

Milton's bantams — the most accomplished local lacrosse team in recent memory, with a recent zone championship win plus a title triumph at their own tournament this past spring — dominated the gold medal match but hit five posts and couldn't find their usual scoring spark.

Also, Robert Lee Beaulieu finally succumbed to fatigue and had trouble maintaining his topnotch netminding.

"Whitby used two goalies but we had only one, which hurt after such a long weekend," said head coach Randy Novak. "Bobby did a terrific job getting us to the big game but was just too tired by the end. Being able to give him a break may have made the difference. We'd played three times that day — he and everyone else were hurting."

Remarked Novak, "It was disappointing to come that close, but overall the guys played outstanding. This team had high expectations this year and basically met all of its goals."

Leading offensively during the championship clash with two tallies each were Derek Blanchard, Lee Frittenburg and Kyle Goertz.

Singles went to Matt Decaire, Lane Moodie and Michael Novak — who along with Brett Lewis recorded a pair of assists.

Milton's provincial highlight came just a few hours earlier in the semifinals, when they gutted out an 8-6 victory against the favoured Fort Erie Hawks.

Providing the heroics was Mark Galick — who sank both the game-winner and insurance marker late in the final frame.

Also standing out with two goals in this highly physical and spirited showdown were Blanchard and Moodie.

Novak played a strong set-up role with three helpers.

The Traders Custom Brokers sponsored squad managed to fend off elimination two other times following a 5-3 loss to Oakville in round three.

They rebounded with convincing wins over Nepean (6-2) and Akwesasne (8-1) to reach the final four.

In the first of these wins — which was closer than the final tally would otherwise indicate — Lewis and Nole Coutrouzas were particularly impressive on defence and at retrieving loose balls.

Milton ran roughshod over their competition during day one of the provincials, blasting East Gwillimbury 9-1 and Gloucester 13-4.

Decaire and Moodie each turned a hat-trick over this initial stretch. They were the only three-goal efforts of the weekend — which illustrated the club's scoring depth.

Overall they outgunned their provincial competition 56-30.

Making up the rest of this year's silver medal team are Brent Cavanagh, Rory Johnston, James McIntosh, Jonathan Ram, Ian Robertson, Adam Rutz and Daniel Wetselaar.



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