



SPORTS

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 11, 2001



Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Milton catcher Haley MacDonald lays down a tag on a North York baserunner during bantam girls league championship play at Brian Best Park Saturday. Milton was hammered 10-2 and came up short in the two-game, most-runs-wins series.

Bantam girls' hopes for gold quashed again

By STEVE LeBLANC

The Champion

Championship heartbreak once again reared its ugly head for the local bantam girls baseball team

Milton was vanquished in the provincial playoff finals three weeks ago and relived that painful ordeal late last week during a two-game, most-runs-wins league championship series with North York. Though 3-1 victors in the opening clash at North York Thursday, Nick Wollaston's charges were offensively suffocated during the return engagement at Brian Best Park Saturday.

Managing just two hits throughout the morning contest — and none past the first inning — the local ladies were hammered by North York 10-2, to put the finishing touches on an always-the-bridesmaid-never-the-bride season.

Both Milton runs came in its initial at-bat when an infield chopper by centre fielder Richelle Hannah was misplayed, allowing Katie Wollaston and Nicole Gooding to score.

From there, however, it was all North York.

Suffering through a pair of brief but costly collapses, the hosts surrendered four runs in the second and another five in the sixth. The latter scoring burst was highlighted by a bases-clearing double that essentially sealed the deal.

Milton was hardly at its best defensively in game two, but a lack of pitching prowess was just as much a stumbling block. Gooding, Ali Stoffels, Ashley Beehoo, Laura Wellstead all saw duty on the mound and none of the four could get into a sustained groove.

About the only bright spot in game two was a second-inning shoestring catch by Hannah that saved at least one run — and probably two. She made an even more impressive play two nights earlier on the road, and that time it equaled victory for Milton. With North York threatening to tie things up in its final at-bat, the crafty outfielder snagged a fly ball on the run and then doubled up a runner at first to clinch game one.

Wellstead, Beehoo and Wollaston combined for a much stronger pitcher performance on the road — collectively allowing just three hits and six walks while fanning half-a-dozen batters.

Erin Baker led at the plate with a double and a single.

Milton reached the league finals with a convincing semifinal sweep of Ajax. Wollaston's four-hit, three-run clinic paced the locals to an 11-4 victory in game one while a 12-2 series clincher was due largely to three shutout innings by Beehoo. Jan Wollaston had a 4-for-4 performance in the latter win.

Making up the rest of this season's team — that finished second in the regular season as well as in both sets of playoffs — were Haley MacDonald, Alana Petrie and Justine Williams.

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