

Essex Kinsmen Bantams compete for OBA crown

The Bantam Yellow Jackets traveled to Leamington on Labour Day weekend to defend their OBA "C" title. They joined five other teams from around the province who also came seeking a gold medal.

As luck would have it, our first matchup on Friday was with our neighbours from Woodslee who came in as the prohibitive favourites based on their regular season showing.

Our ace Adam Dunmore took the mound and gave us a solid four-inning start before giving way to Matt Pepin with the score at 4-2 against us. Unfortunately, Woodslee was able to push home four unanswered runs to hand us an 8-2 drubbing by the game's end.

Brooks Myer, who

reached base three times while playing a steady second base, was selected as our MVP of the game.

Zach Diloreto turned in another defensive gem in the 5th as he hauled in a fly to centre and fired a strike all the way to the plate to cut down a runner attempting to score on a tag play.

Game two on Saturday pitted us against another Sun Parlor team as we met Leamington for a late morning game under cool and rainy conditions.

Michael Rolens gave us a huge lift by pitching four strong innings while allowing just one run. Brooks, who had doubled in two runs early in the contest, pitched the final three innings as we held on to a 3-2 win. Andrew Klinard led the offence with



The Bantam Yellow Jackets delivered a silver medal performance in the weekend's OBA championships. Back row (l to r): Coach Paul Dunmore, Brent Loeffen, Jordan Vernuccio, Jacob Côté, Taylor Wigle, Jesse Breault, Nick Kigar, Coach Dale Myer, Coach Dave Kigar. Middle row: Robert Murray, Andrew Klinard, Michael Roelens, Matt Pepin, Brooks Myer, Adam Dunmore, Zach Diloreto. Front row: Batboy Josh Kigar. Absent: Derrick Rogers.

three hits. Once again Brooks was selected as the game MVP.

Our third game was against the Georgetown Eagles. Another gutsy starting pitching performance by Andrew staked us to a 2-1 lead after four innings. Late inning clutch at bats by Jacob Côté, Robert Murray, Taylor Wigle and Brent Loeffen helped us to push across three more runs. Jordan Vernuccio pitched the fifth inning before handing the ball over to Brooks who calmly slammed the door on an exciting 5-4 win. Adam, who collected two doubles and played well at shortstop earned the MVP

award.

This win, coupled with a bye sent us on to Sunday as one of the two teams still in contention for the title.

We met up with Woodslee on a beautiful sunny Sunday morning with the gold medal on the line. The Orioles had crushed both Georgetown and Leamington on their road to the final. The Yellow Jackets proceeded to play one of the best games of the year.

Our outfield consisting of Zach, Jordan and Jesse Breault made several great catches while Nick Kigar flashed some leather at first base and we found ourselves with a slim 3-2 lead after

four innings. That is when the long weekend caught up to our tired pitching staff and our opponents took the match by an 8-3 count.

Congratulations to our friends from Woodslee for a great season.

The players and coaches need to thank the parents who supported us through the long season. The coaches want to give praise to this group of young athletes who bonded together for a great summer that included two tournament wins in addition to this silver medal performance.

We all wish to show our appreciation to our scorekeeper and stats person,

Brenda Roelens, who kept our book in perfect condition. I personally need to thank coaches Paul Dunmore and Dave Kigar who gave their time and expertise to help the team while juggling busy work schedules.

Special thanks to Joanne and Dave Kigar for hosting a team party after our successful weekend.

Finally, we all wish to express our deepest thanks to our sponsor, The Essex Kinsmen Club, who always step up to the plate when local youth need financial support to chase their athletic dreams.

- Dale Myer

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