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PUTTING HER BEST FOOT FORWARD: Stouffville's Krystie Palmer (left), does not let the presence of this East Gwillimbury defender get in her way as she drills this shot on net for a goal during action in Monday's under-15 girls' soccer contest at the Rec Centre fields.

Photo by SJOERD WITTEVEEN

Stallions rule the ball diamond at qualifier event

It's on to the Ontario Amateur Softball Association (OASA) championship tournament for the Stouffville Stallions squirt boys' fastball team.

The squirts, whose roster includes numerous first-year players, were co-winners of the title at last weekend's Eastern Ontario OASA Qualifier in Belleville.

The Stouffville squad came back to win four in a row after dropping their second contest 3-0 to Cobourg.

In the championship final, the Stallions took two extra innings, but finally prevailed 10-7 over Cobourg to avenge the earlier defeat.

The win by the Stallions left each team with one loss in the double knockout tournament format.

The teams agreed to share the title, with each squad advancing to the OASA finals in Aurora from Aug. 16-17.

The tournament was marked by Stallions pitcher Kevin Hayward's no-hitter in the team's 12-1 win over Stittsville in the tournament semi-final.

The Stouffville crew started off with an 8-6 win over Orleans as Colin Rainford and Norm Fretz banged key triples.

Jay McNeil pitched a strong game in the loss to Cobourg, with Hayward pitching a 12-0 shutout win over Belleville in game three.

Rainford had four hits and Josh Spang three to orchestrate the offence.

Stouffville dumped Orleans once more in their next outing, prevailing 11-3.

McNeil was impressive on the pitching rubber, with Mike Root socking a triple and Fretz and Chad Wilson each picking up two RBIs.

Hayward hurled his no hit gem to advance the Stallions to the finals in the team's next match.

Matt Fowles drove in a pair of runs and Fretz had another triple.

In the final round match up with Cobourg, key hits by Root, Hayward and Michael Dambrosio, along with the daring base running of Rainford, contributed to the win.

Jesse Maillet and Taylor Lougheed both made outstanding defensive plays.

Timms believes women have a place on ball diamond

Fred Timms believes in amateur sport.

In particular, the co-coach of the town's Cable Tech midget girls' softball team - one of two midget girls' outfits in Stouffville - believes in women taking their rightful place within the varied world of amateur sport.

Blessed with a pair of highly athletic daughters - Shannon and Daniella - and a wife, Debbie, whose own sporting exploits go back to her younger days, Fred takes female athleticism for granted.

He still recalls how he and Debbie spent a good part of their honeymoon taking in the women's softball competition at the Canada Games in British Columbia back in 1973.

Fred is out to convince the people of Stouffville that women's softball is back, and that the future is looking bright as he and his co-coach, Dave Miller, set their sights on forming a junior level Provincial Women's Softball Association (PWSA) team next season.

The duo set out two seasons back to field a tier II midget girls' ball team which would challenge for the PWSA title.

After finishing sixth their first year and fourth in last summer's provincial showdown, they think they've got a strong chance of taking it all this year.

The team's nucleus has gone from being an awestruck collection of young and underage midgets to a confident, well honed outfit.

Fred feels that will make the difference at this year's PWSA finals.

"In 1995, just to finish sixth out of 12 teams was a tremendous accomplishment for a first year team," Fred told me. "Now, we're older, and we're not intimidated, we're the intimidators."

If Fred's Cable Tech crew, which includes daughters Danielle and Shannon, manage to advance from the regional qualifier Aug. 8-10 in Oak Ridges to the PWSA finals in Kingston Aug. 22-24, it will be the second straight year a Stouffville team has taken the title.

Last season, Mary Deveaux's midgets captured the provincial tier II crown, resulting in



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Bruce Stapley

their being elevated to the tier I level this season.

"It was good on them to win it all, we were happy for them," said Fred. "This is our year. We committed ourselves to winning it all in our first year as a team."

With a season league record of 10 wins and just two defeats, along with some impressive tournament showings, the Cable Tech unit would appear to be on target.

As for whether his midgets might want to merge with the other Stouffville midget girls' outfit in forming a junior team next year, Fred is guarded, and for good reason.

"If their players want to move up to our junior team, fine. But we're certainly not going to interfere with any plans Mary may have."

While Fred and Dave Miller look ahead to competing at this year's PWSA midget finals, then moving the nucleus of the team up to junior level next year, one of Fred's immediate goals is to draw people out to the diamond to watch the girls play their hard nosed brand of ball.

With home games being played on diamond two Wednesday nights at 8:30, they are forced to go head to head with the Betz Pools midget boys, who are on the main diamond at the same time.

"It's kind of like playing second fiddle to the boys I guess," offered Fred.

He said that overall, the crowds haven't been all that bad, considering.

"We've been pretty well filling the stands over on diamond two, but that's still not very many people. But the midget boys aren't drawing big crowds either. The ones who are coming to our games for the first time are telling us how much they enjoy it. The crowds are growing."

Fred suggests to those who have tired of watching the fat cat pro ball athletes that they come on out on Wednesday night to catch some exciting, entertaining amateur sport right in their own backyard.

"I've got some gamers," he says proudly. "That's why we're going to bring it home this year."

Mite selects downed in final

The Source Promotions Stouffville mite selects softball team were finalists at their own tournament held last Sunday at the town park.

The selects were victorious in their two preliminary games, finally falling 9-1 to Bridlewood in a well played championship match.

The Stouffville crew started off with a 10-6 win over Unionville as Dawson Peare pitched a strong game, supported by catcher Kyle Bassett.

Bassett was successful in holding opponents' base stealing to a stand still.

Game two saw the host crew hand Innisfil an 11-4 defeat as Jeff Bassett had 13 strikeouts in pitching the win.

Chris Rand and Damien Kudelski each hammered home runs for the winners.

The mites threw a scare into Bridlewood in the title tilt, with Lenny Wood standing out at second base. Scott Wittred was a power at the plate.

The tournament was made possible by the support of Stouffville, A & P, Jones Pools, Coffee Master and Pizza Pizza.

Stouffville coach Blair Bassett, who was assisted by Steve Trentadue, said the competition was a big success.

"The tournament was great. The boys and their families had lots of fun, and that's all that counts," said Bassett.