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Sports & Leisure

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CAUGHT STEALING? Although Stouffville novice infielder Andrea Hoover (left), caught this ball, she was a split second late in forcing out East Gwillimbury base runner Amy Menczen, who stole this base, during action in Saturday's Novice Select Girls' Softball Tournament at the Town Park diamond.

Photo by SJOERD WITTEVEEN

Stingers bring home silver from Napanee tournament

BRUCE STAPLEY
Correspondent

The Cable Tech Stingers midget girls' softball team copped the silver at a tournament in Napanee over the weekend, as they staged a rematch of last year's championship final.

The Stingers went undefeated in their three preliminary games before falling 2-1 to Belleville in a nail-biting title tilt which took only an hour to play.

The Stingers had managed a 3-2 win when the same two teams met in the final of last year's Napanee competition.

Stouffville pitcher Amanda Connolly threw an impressive two-hitter in the final, a defensive gem which was played in front of a large crowd.

Danielle Timms drove in Tia Saley with the lone Stingers run in the fifth inning. Belleville scored single runs in the sixth and seventh frames to steal the gold.

Amanda Crowder threw a two-hitter as the Stingers opened the tourney with an 11-3 win over Pembroke.

Shannon Timms had three runs batted in while Crowder helped her own cause with a

triple and two RBI.

The Stingers came back to edge the host squad 3-2 in their next outing as Connolly socked a two-run single in the bottom of the seventh inning to win it.

Connolly also carried the pitching load, throwing a four-hitter while striking out nine batters. Tia Saley had three hits and an RBI.

Danielle Timms had a triple and four RBI's to lead the Cable Tech crew to a 10-3 win over Brockville in game three.

Crowder tossed a four-hitter for the victory, while also going three for three with three RBI's. Angie Burke, Mandy Langford and Melissa Gilroy had an RBI each.

Stingers co-coach Dave Miller said his team shone throughout the tournament.

"It was a good tournament for all the players, with strong defensive performances from Danielle Timms, Tammy Craigie, Melissa Gilroy, and pitching from Crowder and Connolly," said Miller. "It was a pleasure to watch. Last year we beat them (Belleville) by one run, this year it was their turn. That's softball."

In recent league play, the

Stingers had their four game winning streak snapped when they were finally stopped 11-4 by Aurora in the battle for first place last week.

The Stingers, who led 4-1 until Aurora exploded for 10 runs in the sixth inning, got three RBI from Mandy Van Veen. Connolly drove in one run.

The loss left the Stingers in third place with a record of 12 wins and just three losses.

The Stingers started their winning streak with a 14-6 win over Bowmanville as Jenn Sheppard, Shannon Timms, Connolly, Craigie, Gilroy and Crowder each had two RBI.

Connolly pitched the win, then threw a four hit, nine strike out gem in a 9-1 win over Markham to run the streak to two wins. Craigie homered and had three RBI.

Van Veen also had a home run, driving in two runs. Burke also drove in two runs.

Crowder had nine strike outs in a 10-6 win over Oak Ridges, with Connolly socking her first home run since her T-Ball days as she drove in three runs. Shannon and Danielle Timms, and Sheppard each had two RBI.

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Canada rides Koert's arm to world bronze

BRUCE STAPLEY
Correspondent

Paul Koert was all set to change jerseys yesterday after helping lead Canada to the bronze medal at the World Junior Fastball Championships in St. John's, Nfld.

The 18-year-old Stouffville resident, who was to suit up with Napanee for this week's Canadian Midget Fastball Championships in Clarendville, Nfld., was in top form at the global show-down.



PAUL
KOERT

He pitched two wins in preliminary round robin play while coming within a two-run home run of taking Canada to the championship round Saturday.

The hard throwing lefthander was given the ball for Canada's crucial game with the New Zealand Black Sox Saturday night, with the New Zealanders prevailing 3-2 in 10 innings.

The win gave the Black Sox an automatic berth in the gold medal game.

Koert was staked to a 2-0 first inning lead, then pitched shut out ball until he surrendered a two-run homer in the fifth. He was taken out of the game shortly afterwards when he was shaken up by a line drive off the bat of a New Zealand hitter.

Canada's bats went silent Sunday as they were blanked 2-0 by Australia in a game to decide the second-finalist team. Koert's father Hans, who was in St. John's for the tournament, said the Canadians had the pitching, but couldn't come up with the big hit in the final two games.

"The pitching was good, it's just that the bats didn't want to work," said the elder Koert.

He said his son did himself proud at the event.

"Paul shut out the United States 7-0 in the preliminary round, then beat Argentina 7-4. He had a good tournament."

Canada and New Zealand each finished round robin play with nine wins and one loss, with the Canadians awarded first after edging New Zealand in their initial meeting. Australia and Argentina were third and fourth in the preliminary round.

Australia defeated New Zealand in Sunday's championship contest. Koert was to be joined by his Betz Pools midgets teammate Evan Boyd as the two were picked up by Napanee for the Canadian Midget finals, which were scheduled to get under way yesterday (Monday) in Clarendville, a two hours drive north of St. John's.

The pair return to Stouffville on Aug. 4, hooking up with their Ontario Rebels in Stouffville Aug. 7.

Koert, Boyd and the rest of the provincial under-19 team then travel to Brandon Man. to compete in the fastball event at the Canada Summer Games.

Betz midgets, Rebels to face Ontario's best under-19 fastballers

Ontario's best under-19 fastball players will take on the Betz Pools midgets and the Clarendville Rebels at another high profile exhibition twin bill which takes place Aug. 7 in Stouffville.

The Memorial Park double header will be a tune up for the Ontario Under 19 Youth Team as it leaves the following day to contest the national fastball tournament at the Canada Summer Games in Brandon Manitoba.

The provincial squad includes lefthanded pitcher Paul Koert and short stop Evan Boyd of the Betz crew. The pair are to join the Ontario team upon their return from this week's Canadian Midget Fastball Championships in Clarendville, Nfld.

Koert and Boyd were picked up by Napanee, one of two teams representing Ontario at the national event.

Siloam resident Bob Abbot, who is director of National Teams with Softball Canada, is a coach with the Team Ontario outfit.

Next Thursday's action gets under way at 6:30 p.m. with Team Ontario facing the Betz squad, with the Rebels providing the opposition in the night cap.

The Betz crew was part of a recent doubleheader involving the New Zealand national youth team which took the silver medal at the World Junior Fastball Championships which wrapped up in St. John's, Nfld. Sunday.