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THEY'RE OFF AN RUNNING A group of eager students from Willowbrook Public School broke for open ground as they embarked on the 5-10k walk on the run to raise funds for the Glenbrook Day Camp on Wednesday.

Photo by SJOERD WITTEVEEN

Burkholders stake Mennos to close victory over Mud Hens

The Aurora Mud Hens learned the hard way Wednesday night that a fastpitch game with the Stouffville Mennos is never over until the last Burkholder has swung the bat.

The Mennos' brother trio of Ryan, Rich and Chris Burkholder conspired in the seventh and final inning to give the Stouffville crew a come-from-behind 4-3 victory over the Campbell Division front runners in a Oshawa City and District Softball League game played on a chilly night at Memorial Park.

A two-run, two out home run blast by Chris Burkholder was the decisive blow for the Mennos, who came into the home half of the seventh trailing 3-1. The ball, which rolled all the way to the fence in right centre field, scored Rich Burkholder, whose two out single drove in Ryan Burkholder from second base just moments before.

Terry Reesor started the rally with a lead off single, his third of the game. He was forced at second when Ryan Burkholder's hard liner to the right side of the infield was momentarily dropped, then relayed to second base for the out. Ryan stole second before scampering home on Rich's single up the middle. Rich Burkholder then stole second, beating the throw by a hair before brother Chris ended it.

"It was a rise ball, right in the heart of the plate, explained Chris Burkholder of the offering he pounced on from Aurora pitcher Steve Fedak.

"It was beautiful," Chris and Fedak were teammates with the Uxbridge Bandits last season. The homer was Chris' third hit of the night. He had a double in the first inning and a single in the sixth.

The Mud Hens opened the scoring with a solo home run off Mennos starting pitcher Byron Bara-

nieski in the top of the second inning. The Stouffville squad came back to tie it on Reesor power in the bottom of the inning as Terry Reesor singled to drive in Rich Reesor, who had doubled. Aurora regained the lead in the fifth on two singles and a Mennos error, then added a third run on a double and a single in the top of the seventh off reliever Terry Reesor, who came on in the sixth.

The win was the second against three losses for the Mennos.

"Our guys are starting to go," said coach Howard Burkholder.

The coach said it's taken a few weeks to get back in the groove for some Mennos players who haven't been in uniform for several seasons.

"It takes time when you haven't played in a few years. But we're going to be okay."

The Mennos, who travel to Hanover for a weekend tournament, are home to the Claremont Rebels on June 11 at 8:30 p.m. Lefthanded pitcher Paul Koert, who played for the Stouffville midgets last season, will draw the pitching assignment for the Claremont crew. The Rebels have a record of four wins and two losses.

Rebels rout Markham

The Claremont Rebels unleashed a 14-hit attack to back the pitching of Paul Koert as they bested Markham 8-1 in an Oshawa City and District Softball League game played on a chilly night in Claremont.

Brent Bonner drove in three runs with a solo home run and a two-run double to key the Claremont offence. Koert helped his

own cause with a pair of singles and a double, good for two runs batted in and a run scored. The lefthander struck out 12 Markham batters while scattering eight hits.

The Rebels also used a tight defence, playing errorless ball while turning a game

■ Please see page 18 ■

Spartans win slow pitch title

BRUCE STAPLEY
 Correspondent

The Stouffville District Secondary School Spartans (SDSS) girls' slow pitch team managed to harness the wind on their way to the York Region Athletic Association (YRAA) championship Wednesday at Milliken Mills Park.

The Spartans proved equal to the windy, cold weather conditions as they staged a last-inning rally to edge St. Joan of Arc C.H.S. 6-5 in the title tilt.

The SDSS crew, who went into the seventh and final inning down 5-4, waited out a pair of bases loaded walks to prevail.

"It's not a great way to win, but you win any way you can," said SDSS coach Bill McKnight of the walk-a-thon that produced the victory.

McKnight said the swirling wind made it extremely difficult for pitchers on both teams to throw strikes.

"It was terrible for pitchers. I told the girls they had to get one strike on them before they were allowed to swing. The other team was doing that too."

McKnight said the difference was that Spartans pitcher Danielle Timms was better able to cope with the windy conditions, especially with the defensive support she received from her teammates.

"Danielle worked miracles with the wind. She pitched her way out of several bases loaded situations. And our defence was great. They (St. Joan of Arc) were a good hitting club, they had some big kids."

PRAISES DEFENCE

McKnight praised his outfielders for making catches on well hit fly

balls in the stiff wind. Third baseman Michelle Dulude also held a hot hand on a cold day, making an outstanding catch on a line drive.

Offensively, Amanda Crowder got things rolling with a first inning two-run home run.

After that the SDSS offence was spread throughout the lineup.

"They pulled together again," said McKnight. "It was a great team effort."

It was the first defeat of the season for the St. Joan of Arc squad, which captured the west division title.

McKnight, who took over from the team's regular coach Al Piette after Piette suffered a heart attack in May, said Piette called to wish the team luck before the game.

"That was a motivation for them."

The Spartans advanced to the final round with an 8-1 win over the north division champion Sutton D.H.S. team earlier in the afternoon.

Alison Crowder had a home run and four runs batted in to lead the offence.

Lisa Relf scored three runs as the Spartans came up with timely hits throughout the game.

The YRAA title, the second in the past three years for the SDSS slow pitch team, marked the first regional crown of the school year for a Spartans team.

The two playoff wins enabled the Spartans to go undefeated throughout the season with an overall record of six wins and no defeats. They outscored their opponents 68-17 along the way.

"That shows what a great defensive team they were," noted McKnight.

McKnight praised the Spartans for making his job as replacement coach easier.

"They were easy to coach. They really helped me out."

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