

Bantam keglers strike gold at youth nationals

First time that Markham Bowl teams representing Ontario have ever won a national youth five-pin bowling championship

BY MIKE HAYAKAWA
Sports Editor

Just call Markham home to the national bantam five-pin bowling champions.

Not just to one team, but two.

At the recent 2000 Youth Bowling Council National finals in Cambridge, two Markham Bowl teams representing southern Ontario at this year's championships staked their claim to the national title.

Joel Reyes, 11, Benjy Bigio, 11, Matthew Jones, 10, Christopher Meyer, 10, and Michael Wright, 10, were members of the bantam boys team that laid claim to this year's gold medal.

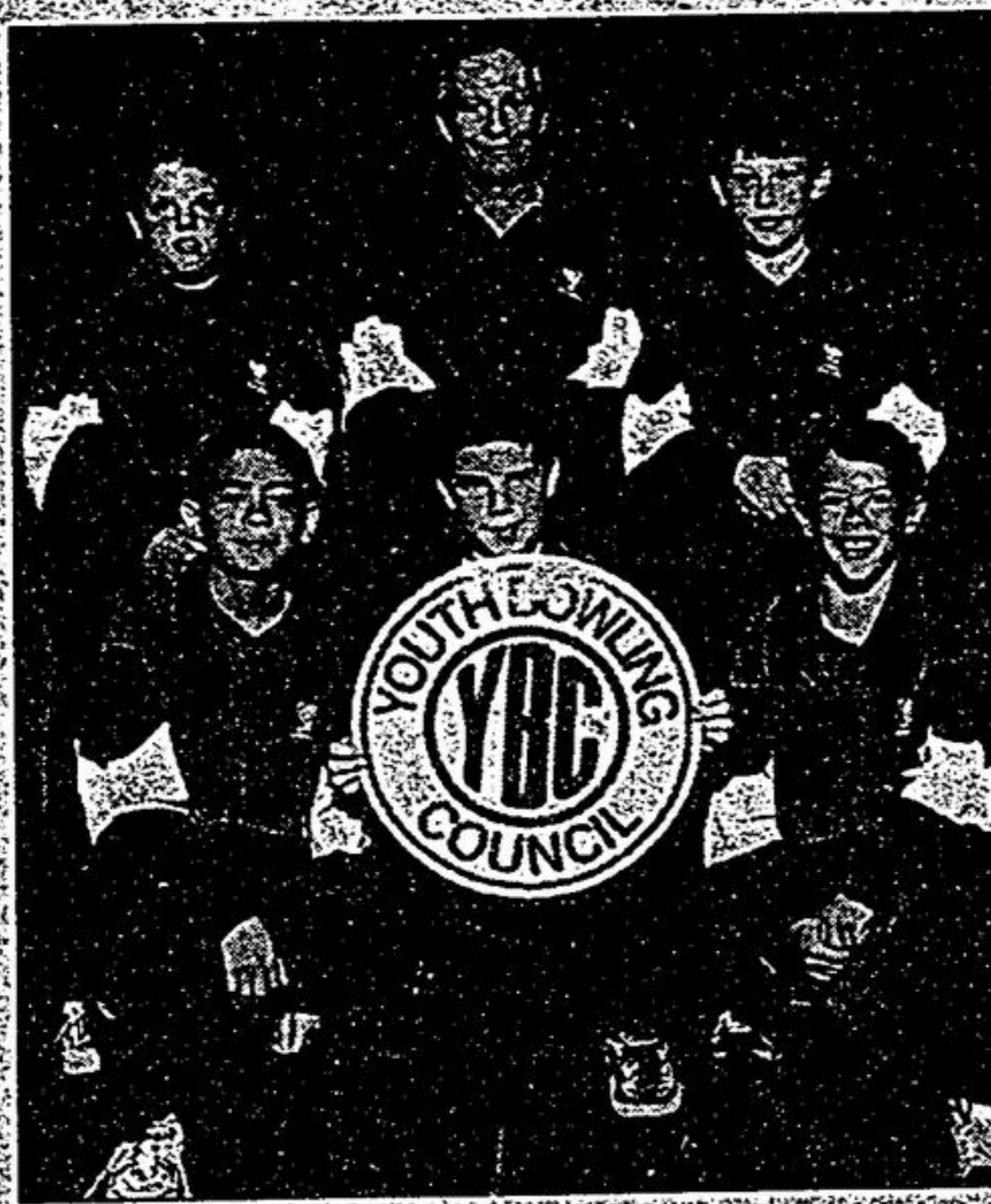
In the girls' field, the bantam contingent of Ashley Speed, 11, Kelly Coons, 11, Holly Foster, 11, Lauren Frizzell, 10, and Lauren Matunin, 10, claimed top honours in the eight-team field.

The titles delivered by the boys and girls entries marked the first time a Markham Bowl team claimed national honours.

"The Markham Bowl youth program was really strong this year," noted bantam boys coach Stephen Reid.

"It says a lot about the Markham Bowl program," added Laura Speed, girls coach.

Having coached a Markham bantam boys team that won a bronze at the 1996 nationals in Saskatoon, Reid felt the lessons learned



Back row from left; Matthew Jones, Steve Reid and Michael Wright. Front row from left; Joel Reyes, Benjy Bigio and Christopher Meyers.

from his debut four years ago were instrumental in this year's title run.

"I just tried to encourage the kids this time to win games at the start. You get a point for every game you win. You need to get up on the opposing team early and take the wind out of their sails. And it helps their adrenaline to keep going," he noted.

Pointing out that youngsters at the ages of 10 and 11 have a short attention span, Reid said he also tried to verbally interact with his team as often as possible and interject some humour.



Back row from left; Kelly Coons, Laura Speed and Lauren Frizzell. Front row from left; Ashley Speed, Holly Foster and Lauren Matunin.

After losing their first game in the grueling, 21-match set staged over three days, the boys reeled off eight straight wins before losing their second game. However, the boys rallied to win the next nine games to clinch the title.

It wasn't easy, though, as the Markham team met Alberta, its closest rival, in the final three games.

With Markham nursing a slim three-point lead, Alberta could have forced a tiebreaker with a sweep of the three-game final.

But the Markham team claimed the title

on the last ball thrown by Reyes, who was the final bowler.

"I couldn't breathe," Reid acknowledged of Reyes' final ball. "I didn't dare say anything to him. I just said to Joel that we need this and he rolled it off to make a spare."

The win gave Markham 17 points to Alberta's 13. Alberta won the final two games, but fell short 17-15 in the final tally.

In explaining the club's success, Reid felt the overall team chemistry and ability to make big shots when they had to were critical.

"The kids seem to work well together. They're evenly balanced. Even my weaker bowlers came through. Michael Wright who averages about 124, averaged a 160 during the tournament," he cited.

The girls had just as tough a task in winning the title.

Entering the final match of the 21-game set, Markham and Saskatchewan were tied with 15 points apiece.

Markham did what it had to do by winning its final game over Alberta. But the title did not become official until Quebec defeated Saskatchewan in its final game to give Markham a 16-15 win and the gold medal.

"Thank goodness for Quebec. It was exciting," Speed said of the drama surrounding the final.

Making her coaching debut at the nationals, Speed was confident her troops, all of whom were in their final year of bantam-aged eligibility, would come up with big performances.

Like the boys team, Speed said every member made a positive contribution at some point in the tournament.

"They bowled great. All five of the girls got along very well. They were cheering each other on. There was lots of spirit. And they were mature enough to handle the pressure."

Jorgenson keys big win for Denmark

Ken Jorgenson, a nine-year veteran of the Markham Rugby Football Club, firsts, played a major role in helping Denmark engineer a major upset of Germany 39-19 in a recent FIRA European Plate championship contest.

The 32-year-old Markham resident, who toils as a loose-head prop, also took to the pitch

for the Danish team in game against Russia.

Ranked the seventh-best European team, the Russians won the game by a convincing 80-point margin.

Despite the loss, the Danish team's win over Germany enabled them to remain in the B Division of the FIRA European Plate championships.

Becoming the first Markham Rugby Football Club player to earn an international cap, Jorgenson's performance impressed the Danish team, which in turn requested that he return to play with them this fall.

"Both games were tough," Jorgenson cited. "But it was a fantastic experience. I felt that I played well and did my job."

McKnight is happy with chemistry of team this year

From page 20

"The kids are well coached. A lot of them play for different teams both in and out of Stouffville. We're just trying to blend them all together."

Splitting the coaching duties with Elaine Alexiou, McKnight said the only area where the team could stand to improve is running the bases.

"I like to run. That's our weakest area. We need to pick up our speed. But they're coming along well. We're working on the hit and run."

A gauge of how far the Spartans could go took place earlier in the week when they took part in the annual Grand Slam Tournament in Richmond Hill.

The Spartans, who were the defending tournament champions, advanced to the semi-finals before bowing out with a 6-4 loss to defending YRAA champion Newmarket High School.

The Spartans won their first two games over Bayview 13-0 and St. Peter's (Barrie) 9-3 before suffering an 11-7 loss to Dr. J.M. Denison in pool play.

Despite the loss to Newmarket, McKnight expects his team to be in deep once the playoffs begin in early June.

"The top two teams in each division advance to the next round. I would expect it would be Markville and us who go on."

"And there are several teams in the North Division that are very competitive."

McKnight said he's more than

happy with the attitude shown by the team members.

"The kids are keen. If you make it interesting for them they'll come out. They're willing to give their time. They're pleasant kids."

Wolves win table tennis title

The Unionville High School Wolves table tennis teams made their presence felt in Monday's YRAA championships at St. Robert Catholic High School.

The Wolves devoured the opposition en route to claiming the senior boys, girls and junior boys and girls titles.

For the junior boys team, it marked the third straight year they won the YRAA title. For the three other teams it was their first team title.

Members of the Wolves senior girls team included Wendy Yu, 18, and Daphne Wong, 18. Ranjeet Hira, 18, and Karim Tharani, 18, were on the senior boys team. The junior girls team consisted of Jamie Tan, 16, and Priscilla Chung, 16. On the junior boys team were Kinson Chung, 16, and Jason Chung, 17.

John Wong, a student coach for the Wolves, was confident his team would give a good account of themselves.

"A lot of the players were nervous because they didn't know what to expect. But I knew they could do it. The team worked really hard this year. Everyone was committed."

Wong noted 10 other schools took part in the one-day tournament.

IBM WAREHOUSE OUTLET

A great price and Internet access!

Ispirati 1135E

Includes a 15" Monitor, Lexmark 3200 Colour Jetprinter and 1 year of Internet Access through iSTAR

- AMD® K6-2 processor with 3DNow!™ technology 475MHz
- 32MB SDRAM
- 5.0GB hard drive
- 56Kbps V.90 modem
- 48X max CD-ROM
- TV Output
- Lotus® SmartSuite® Millennium
- 1 year limited warranty

\$999



Mon. - Fri.: 10:00-6:00
Sat.: 10:00-5:00



VISIT OUR WEB SITE AT:
www.ibm.ca/store

IBM

IBM, the IBM logo, and iSTAR are trademarks of International Business Machines Corporation. AMD, K6 and 3DNow! are registered trademarks or trademarks of Advanced Micro Devices Inc. Lotus and SmartSuite are registered trademarks of Lotus Development Corporation. 1. Viewable image size measured diagonally. Varies by model. 2. Variable read rate. Actual playback speed may vary and is often less than the maximum possible. Offer valid until May 31, 2000. Offer not valid with any other IBM offer, promotion or discount. Offer with iSTAR cannot be used in conjunction with any other Internet offer. Long distance charges may apply. Additional conditions may apply. See in-store coupon for details or visit www.ibm.ca/store