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The Inside Pitch

King ball teams play some tough matches against opponents from King

By Lee-Ann Brinovec

The hot, hazy, humid weather of the past week has made it feel like July instead of May, and our King Township Baseball teams felt the heat in more ways than one.

Starting with the junior rookies, our youngest players to have taken the field so far this spring, the Tile Source K1 and the Schomberg IGA K2 teams met in a head-to-head match-up at the beautiful Pottageville Park last Tuesday. It was a unique situation, as these neighbors, school buddies and even family members faced each other across the manicured infield, after both had traveled to Aurora the previous week and handed the Aurora teams resounding defeats.

The Tile Source team came up to bat full of confidence, but the sure-footed defense of the Schomberg IGA team matched every smashing hit with equally adept fielding. The batting practice of the Tile Source team is paying off with an increasing list of "perfect" games for batters at the plate, including lead-off player Gregory Long and Rory Paric in the clean-up position. Ethan Fisher, Nicholas Lauriola, Lucas Critelli and Emily Brinovec round out this group with their consistent performances at the plate.

Although Jake Hansen made contact only once, it was a whopping triple that cashed in three runs. The defensive highlight of the game belonged to Brinovec, as she took the mound in the final inning of the game. Her cousin, Nicholas Dicks of the Schomberg IGA team, approached the plate and put everything he had into a huge hit that had the crowd on their feet and cheering as it flew higher and higher. Brinovec centered herself on the task at hand though, settled under the fantastic hit and made the catch. This catch surprised everyone, including the base runner who had left second with an early lead. It gave Brinovec a chance to show her speed as she tagged out the runner completing a double play.

The game was a great showcase of young talent that holds a promising future for baseball in King.

Player of the game for Tile Source was Lucas "Big Swing" Critelli, who continues to step up to the plate and smash the ball deep into the outfield.

It seemed it was the week for King Township teams to meet each other as the senior rookie TVS Development Corp K1 team played their first game against home rivals Rona Cashway K2 at the Pottageville diamond last Monday. TVS may have won the game, but the Rona Cashway crew showed real determination in not giving up. In fact, they made a concerted effort to narrow the score in the final inning.

Danielle Pignataro led the way at the plate for TVS Development with a lead-off double and followed that up with the team's first triple of the season. Sean Beer continues to be very tenacious at the plate going two-for-three, and Myles Cook chipped in with two singles. Mathew Lancaster had a three-for-three night for the second game in a row. Rona Cashway just couldn't seem to get the big hits when they needed them. Their best hitter for the game was Zoë Cristante, who hit a huge double in the third inning to bring in much needed RBIs. Thomas Beckley led the defence for Rona Cashway at first base, catching a great throw from Matthew Iannucci and getting the out, and by Rachel Price who stopped a hard hit ground ball at second to hold the runners to single bases.

Player of the game for Rona Cashway was Zoë Cristante. Player of the game for TVS Development Corp. was Hunter Chantiam, who had two base hits supported with a strong fielding performance at shortstop.

TVS Development Corp. finished up their week with a

win over Aurora 15-3. Sara Valentini led her team both offensively and defensively. She connected for a double in her first at bat of the night. Playing first base, she tracked down ground ball after ground ball, and teamed up with Zachary Long to get the team's first out at home plate. Adam Cipollone was also a force at the plate with a double and two singles. In his first year of ball, Scott Cameron has proved his is a quick study as he continues to impress his coaches with strong fielding at both shortstop and third base and his confidence at the plate.

TVS Development Corp. player of the game was Sara Valentini.

Rona Cashway came out on the wrong end of the score as they went down 14-9 to the Aurora Royals last Wednesday, but not without a fight. Andrew Topp showed great speed as he reached base on an infield hit, beating out the throw to first. Cristante continued her dominance at the plate as she once again hit a long double to bring in a run. Rachel Price made a strong throw from the outfield to second baseman Julien Cristante, who tagged out the Aurora player who was trying to turn a single into a double.

Rona Cashway's player of the game was Price for her speed on the base paths and her fielding prowess.

Continuing the theme of King Cobra teams meeting on their home diamonds, Rhind Electric (K3) took on Royal Lepage (K2) with Rhind Electric ending up as the victors. The bats of Rhind Electric were more than Royal Lepage could handle as Zachary Schofield led the way with a perfect on-base percentage, cranking out two singles and reaching on a walk. Matthew Maloney maintained his perfect batting percentage for the Rhind Electric team going four-for-four with a single, two doubles and a triple. Dylan Love, new to baseball this season, is playing like a veteran as he came to bat with the bases loaded and smashed out a long double bringing in three runs.

Royal Lepage showed that they could also hit the long ball as Josh Baird was two-for-two with a triple on his first at bat of the game, and an in-the-park home run on his second. Brandon D'Amato was also trying to help his team get on the scoreboard as he went two-for-two at the plate. The pitching for Rhind Electric was outstanding as Travis Brinovec and Scott Rhind combined for the win. Brinovec threw seven strikeouts in three innings, including a scoreless 10-pitch second inning. Scott Rhind came in as the closer for the fourth and fifth and did not allow a run. In fact, only two Royal Lepage players made it to base.

Player of the game for Rhind Electric was Matthew Maloney, who was a home run shy of hitting for the cycle. Player of the game for Royal Lepage was Josh Baird, who crushed the ball both times he stepped to the plate.

Shaky starts in two games doom Cobras

Starter Ryan Forletta had good reason to wonder if he deserved the support that he received from his defense last Tuesday evening in Nobleton.

Toronto Bloordale came into town following an opening day loss themselves. But the Cobras acted as gracious hosts and gift-wrapped two easy runs in the first two frames and the local boys never recovered.

Forletta ended up going two innings before being replaced by Brady Boccia for the third. The final two innings, before darkness and inoperable diamond lights cut short the game, went to Steven LaVerde, who pitched quite well, considering his opening day outing, and established a sense of calm for his teammates.

Defensively, the team appeared extremely nervous, and it will take a few more games for them to feel comfortable

playing rep opponents. Offensively, Josh Lipscombe continued to shine with a one-for-three night at the plate and the Cobras' first RBI of the night. Catcher Danton Brinovec had the only other hit, with Cobras on every base due to a series of walks; he proceeded to cash in two runners. LaVerde was given Player of the Game honors.

Two nights later, the team visited North Toronto, and despite suffering the third loss of the season, came away from the game a much-improved squad.

Lipscombe was once again fairly effective on the mound, with most of the runs he surrendered being due to fielding errors. The real pitching surprise came from reliever Stephen Leonard, as he pitched for the first time this season, and gave notice that he can be counted upon to deliver valuable innings. Effective performances were also turned in by Christian Shorthill, solid at second base and continuing to show that he can be effective in the lead off spot in the order; Ryan Forletta behind the plate, whose confidence as a catcher is growing each game; and Taylor Joseph, who filled in for one of the starters who was late arriving, and despite being in the States all spring, showed the coaches that he is ready to contribute.

Slowly this team is starting to realize what it takes to play the game, and play it at a high level. With a few more games under their collective belts, these boys will be ready to execute the way we all know that they can.

The player of the game for May 31 was Lipscombe. The Cobras welcomed a new addition to the club last weekend when Markham resident Joel Winer was signed. His arrival gives the coaches much needed flexibility when it comes to juggling the line up.

Player of the Week

The King Township Player of the Week award goes to Josh Lipscombe from the bantam rep Cobras. Josh was a leader at the plate for his team this past week when runs were hard to come by, going two-for-six, including a triple. He has started one game on the mound, striking out three batters, and is rounding into a team leader on this team of players who are new to the rep level.

Sponsor of the Week

The Sponsor of the week is King City Auto Service, who the sponsors the mosquito 2 team. Thank-you, we appreciate your generosity.

It is last call for any parents wishing to purchase tickets for OBA day at the Rogers Centre to see the Blue Jays July 7. If you are interested in attending this fun-filled day, and would like more information, please contact Tom Ellison at (905) 939-2985 or e-mail him at tom.Ellison@zing-net.ca.

Diamond Dreams baseball camp is now taking registrations for the summer sessions. July 9 to 13 for ages 12 and up, and July 16 to 20 for ages 10 to 12. If you would like to register, please ask your coaches for registration forms, or contact Tom Ellison.

Wayne Dove golf tournament coming

The Schomberg Cougars junior C hockey club will be holding the third annual Wayne Dove Alumni Golf Tournament June 24.

It will be at Innisfil Creek Golf Course, starting as noon. The cost will be \$65 per person.

You can book foursome by e-mail to schombergcougars@post.com