

Mosquito Knights showing some bite

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Last all-star season, the Mosquito Knights won a single game. This year, the Prince George Youth Baseball Association team is challenging for tournament titles.

The Knights, formed by the top 10- and 11-year-olds in the city, have made tremendous progress and will look to continue along that path at the Valley of Champions tournament, which runs today through Sunday in Kelowna.

“The amount of drive that these kids have put into their ball-playing, their personal skill level and commitment to the team is just beautiful – it’s awesome,” said manager Darren Heggelund, whose club competes at the triple-A level. “The majority of the players are the same as last year and we have three new players this year.”

The newcomers are Matt Hart, Garrett Feeney and Mitchal Heggelund and they are fitting in well with the returnees – Nolan Peterson, Krystien Aldana, Adam Leslie, Nolan Cousins, Noah Pears, Thorne Fox, Aidan Heggelund, Levi Knezevic, Jacob Mclean and



Starting today, the Prince George Mosquito Knights will be swinging their bats at the Valley of Champions tournament in Kelowna. In their most recent event, the Knights earned silver medals.

Bevin Williams.

Two of the strengths of the team are pitching and defence, which, in baseball, is always a key to success.

Pitchers include Peterson, Aldana, Leslie, Cousins and Pears. Together, they give the Knights the necessary depth to stay within the strict pitch-count rules in the mosquito division. In tournament

play, a pitcher can only throw on two consecutive days if he has tossed no more than 25 pitches on the first day. If he has thrown 26 to 40 pitches, he must rest for two days, and the wait times increase from there. In a single day, no pitcher is permitted to deliver to home plate more than 75 times and that would have to be fol-

lowed by a five-day rest.

As per the team strategy, Knights pitchers try to keep the ball in the strike zone and let the players behind them record the outs.

“We really want our defensive players to pick up the hits then make the plays,” said Darren Heggelund.

In their most recent tournament

a couple weekends ago in Kamloops, the Knights followed their game plan to near perfection and came home with silver medals. In the championship final, they had an 8-3 lead against the Parkland Twins of Sherwood Park, Alta., but the Twins battled back for a 9-8 victory.

At the same event, the Knights beat the Vernon Canadians 11-6, downed the Central Okanagan Sun Devils of Kelowna 7-5, fell 14-8 to the Red Deer Braves and, in the playoff semifinal round, dumped the Kamloops RiverDogs 11-4. Offensively, some of their key hitters were Hart, Mitchal Heggelund, Peterson, Leslie and Cousins.

The Knights will see some of the same teams at the Valley of Champions and have set a goal of playing in Sunday’s final. Later this season – from Aug. 3-6 – they’ll be in Cloverdale for their age group’s provincial championship tournament.

In Kelowna this weekend the Knights will be in familiar company because four other Prince George all-star teams will also compete for titles. Local clubs are also registered in the peeewe single-A, peeewe triple-A, bantam double-A and midget divisions.

Tandy likely entering final competitive season

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“The last few years have been a little bit rough but I feel like I’m in a pretty good place now – I’m healthy and training has been going well,” said Tandy.

Tandy’s six-year-old son Predo was born in Germany, where she shares custody of him with her ex-husband Illmar Heinicke. Now fluent in German, Tandy trains in Klingenthal with German coach Erich Aste, who has coached Olympic athletes. After the national program budget was slashed, she has the support of the Canadian team only during races, not for off-site training. Her son is a permanent German resident attending Grade 1 classes this September and leaving him behind so she can train with the team in Canmore is not an option for Tandy.

Klingenthal has a nordic combined facility and has a roller ski track but lacks a biathlon range, so Tandy practices her rifle shooting indoors. The closest biathlon centre is in Oberhof, about a two-hour drive away.

Tandy, who turns 29 in September, has been studying sport management in Germany but has put off her masters studies this year to focus on getting back to the Olympics. She says this will very likely be her last kick at the Olympic can.

“I’m looking at this as probably my last season,” she said. “It’s never over until it’s

over and if I had enough financial options and had improved results enough I could keep going, but at this point I’m relatively prepared (to retire).

“There are other challenges – travel and having a child and everything – but if I had the financial opportunity to say this is not a hobby, this is my job and I could afford my lifestyle and support my child and invest in my future doing this, then I would keep going. I definitely love it, it’s my biggest passion.”

Her biggest sponsor, G.K. Software, provides her a car, among other perks, and Tandy credits that sponsorship with keeping her on the World Cup circuit.

- Sarah Beaudry of Prince George, 23, is also on the senior team to start the season. Coming off a 2015-16 season in which she won an IBU Cup medal and competed at the world championships, Beaudry began last season with three World Cup events last December, but dropped down to the IBU Cup circuit. She raced one more World Cup event in March, a sprint race in Oslo, and finished 75th.

Crawford, Lunder, Beaudry, Julia Ransom and Megan Banckes are all in the mix for the four Olympic team spots. The men’s senior team announced in June includes Nathan Smith, Brendan Green, Christian Gow, Scott Gow and Macx Davies. Smith, 31, a two-time World Cup silver medal-



The Canadian women’s biathlon relay team celebrates a fourth-place finish at a World Cup race in France in December 2013. Team members are, from left, Chandra Crawford, Megan Imrie, Megan Tandy and Zina Kocher.

ist who also won silver in the sprint at the 2015 world championships, was limited to just one race in 2016-17 before he was sidelined by a virus. The World Cup team will be picked following trials races in November in Canmore.

Canada’s team rankings in the Nations Cup standings took a hit in 2016-17, with the women dropping from 11th the previous season to 15th. The men are ranked 13th,

dropping down from 10th. Canada will have four World Cup spots for each gender, the same as in 2015-16. As a result, Biathlon Canada lost a good chunk of its funding from the Canadian Olympic Committee.

- Former Prince George resident Eric de Nys is no longer Biathlon Canada’s high-performance director and has been replaced by women’s national team coach Roddy Ward.



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Boschman sharp in horseshoes

Citizen staff

Ida Boschman beat the boys. In fact, she beat everybody.

Last Sunday at the Prince George Classic Open horseshoe pitching tournament, Boschman went a perfect 5-0 and won the mixed division championship. Her closest rival was the always-tough Vic Vallee, who finished with a 4-1 record. Mike Cunningham (3-2)

placed third and was followed by Helene Boudreau (2-3), Phil Erickson (1-4) and Herb Boschman (0-5). On the way to victory, Ida Boschman had a ringer percentage of 48.5.

A day earlier, Ida Boschman was second to Helene Boudreau in the senior ladies class. Other winners were Vallee (senior men A), Herb Boschman (senior men B) and Mike Cunningham (senior mixed).



Driving for charity

Dan Hamhuis tees off during the 2016 Prince George Cougars Alumni Hospital Charity Golf Tournament. This year’s event, once again a fundraiser for the Spirit of the North Healthcare Foundation, goes today and Saturday. Today, there will be a meet-and-greet, open to the general public, from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. at CN Centre. A buffet dinner for golf participants will follow at the Prince George Golf and Curling Club and will include live and silent auctions. The tournament itself will start Saturday morning.