

Burlington, Nepean golden in Aurora Silver Stick bantam tournament



By Jake Courtepatte

The quest for the highest honours in minor hockey culminated in Aurora over the weekend with 52 teams from across North America vying for six division titles at the 17th Aurora International Silver Stick tournament.

The belles of the ball were the Bantam AA Burlington Barracudas, who went undefeated in the marquee division of the tournament.

A late second period goal by Brynn Koocher gave the Barracudas the momentum in the final frame after fighting through a goalie battle early on, with Catherine Trevors and Rachel Carson adding the final touches to a 3 ? 0 championship win over the Oakville Hornets. Burlington went 5-0-1 in the tournament, outscoring their opponents 17 ? 5 along the way.

The Bantam AA Panthers were one of six Aurora squads entered in the tournament, but were the victims of some poor puck luck early on. A hard-fought matchup with the St. Louis Lady Blues on the opening day of competition had them on the wrong end of a 3 ? 2 score, despite spending most of the game in the American end.

They lost a close match with the Nepean Wildcats later on Friday, and were knocked out by the London Devilettes 4 - 1 the following day.

All six Aurora teams failed to advance past the round-robin stages.

Nepean was the victor in the Bantam A division, with a perfect run of their own to the finals and handing Oakville another silver medal in a 5 ? 2 win. Molly Henry was the MVP for the Wildcats, notching two goals in the championship.

Though the home teams didn't fair too well on the Aurora Community Centre and Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex ice, Central York Girl's Hockey Association president Mike Shields says he is happy with how the tournament has evolved since last year, with six American teams participating.

Last year, only one team came from the U.S.

In other divisions, the Bantam BB Syracuse Nationals topped the Nepean Wildcats 1 - 0, the Atom AA Barrie Sharks beat the Oshawa Lady Generals 2 ? 1, the Atom A West Huron Waves beat Markham-Stouffville Stars 3 ? 1, and the Atom BB Etobicoke Dolphins were the victors in a 1 ? 0 game over the Brantford Ice Cats.