

## Barbarian women continue to dominate the field



**By Jeff Doner**

The Aurora Barbarians women's rugby team continued to assert their league dominance in a whopping 61 - 10 win over the Oakville Crusaders on Sunday at Fletcher's Fields.

The win has helped them improve their season record to 9 - 0 and has given them a win streak of over 20 games dating back to last summer when they posted a perfect season and won the OWL Cup.

More importantly, the victory clinched first place for the squad, something head coach Paul Loader said is an impressive feat.

"I think winning the league is tougher than winning the cup," he said. "The cup is two more games, winning the league is a big deal. It shows that you've beaten everybody and there is more consistency, so that's a big thing."

Gill Hall, Barbs player and director, said although the win is important and a bye in the first round of the playoffs, the team hasn't been counting wins.

"We don't talk about it," she said. "We always just say we have to win today. Every game is different and we have to take care of what's at hand."

Judging by Sunday afternoon's match, that's definitely the approach they took, as the team looked focused and ready for the last place Crusaders.

The Barbs struck early to take a 7 - 0 lead. Oakville tried to fight back - and got close - but the Barbs defense stood tall, constantly pushing back any Oakville advance.

Refusing to quit, Oakville had their chances, but it would be the Barbs that would take a comfortable 35 - 0 lead into the second half.

The Crusaders came out hard in the second half looking to get on the board. The Barbs would add another try, but after a grueling few minutes of crashing and banging, Oakville finally broke through to get some points on the board.

Shortly after, the Crusaders would score another try, but as always the Barbs had the answer and added a few more of their own in the second half to seal the victory.

Coach Loader said his team should have been able to handle the two tries given up.

"Defensively there was a couple weak tries we let in and a couple other moments we weren't doing what we were supposed to do,"

he said. ?We were supposed to be working on a new defense system today, which we didn't do (not well anyways) but you can't argue when you win 61 ? 10.?

Despite the fact that the team's roster is constantly in flux with players coming in and out to participate in other tournaments like the upcoming Nation's Cup, Barb Tyson Beukeboom said things are coming together at the right time. She also said that has helped some of the younger players on the team grow and expand their roles on the team.

?We have a very young team and I think the average age is around 21 or 22. Obviously we have a lot of experience mixed in with that youth and we have a lot of extremely dynamic players. If you look at our forwards, we don't have very many big, bulky forwards like you typically see in rugby. We have very tall, lean, quick forwards.?

Beukeboom added that the Barbs were successful at using their speed to get in behind Oakville's defense.

?They have improved a lot since the last time we played them,? she said. ?Their intensity was a lot higher and they worked hard. I thought that was the best run game we played, we got a little messy at points, but we didn't get panicky like we have in some other games, we kept calm and nobody got frustrated and we played as a team.?

The Barbs also got offence from a variety of sources on Sunday. Caitlin Beaton scored two trys and Beukeboom added two of her own. Michelle Saabas, Ali Barbarlinardo, Megan Lowry, Jacey Murphy and Saffara Whitely all scored one try.

Mackenzie Higg was another bright spot for the Barbs, converting eight kicks.

The Barbs will play their final game of the season against Waterloo on Sunday and then won't see any action until the semi-finals in a few weeks' time.