

sports

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D-man thwarts coaches on way to title

Jason Peters
Citizen staff

At the expense of one of his own coaches, Colton Manning and the Flyers reached full altitude at the Under-16 B.C. Cup in Salmon Arm.

Manning, a local 15-year-old defenceman, helped his club to a 7-2 victory against the Canucks in Sunday's championship game of the B.C. Hockey elite gathering. The runner-up Canucks were coached by local residents Brad Crossan and Chris Bond. Andy Beesley, also from Prince George, served as team manager.

Bond, ironically, was Manning's bench boss during the Prince George Minor Hockey Association regular season.

On the drive home, in separate vehicles, player and coach had some fun sending text messages back and forth to each other.

"I said, 'Tough loss, eh?' and he sent me a message that I can't really repeat," Manning said with a chuckle. "I said, 'Don't be surprised if you pass us on the way back because all these gold medals are slowing us down.' He said, 'Were they slowing you down all weekend, because guys were burning you all weekend.'"

That wasn't actually the case. In fact, Manning was one of the top defensive blueliners for the Flyers during their four games.

In the final, the Canucks opened the scor-

ing just 30 seconds into the first period but the Flyers quickly took control. After 20 minutes, they were ahead 3-1. The Flyers extended their lead to 4-1 in the middle frame before the Canucks responded with their second goal. But, in the third, the Flyers deposited three more pucks into the Canucks' net to wrap up the tournament title.

In Sunday's bronze-medal game, the Avalanche beat the Stars 4-2. Forward Jari Erricson, a Prince George product who played for the Pursuit of Excellence Hockey Academy in Kelowna this past season, scored one of the Avalanche goals. During the tournament, he also chipped in with two assists. P.G.'s Matt Warner was another

forward for the Avalanche and contributed one assist in four games. Another local player, defenceman Curtis Bellamy, skated for the Stars. He scored one goal during the event.

Other Prince George players who competed in the B.C. Cup were forward Tanner Fjellstrom and blueliner Derek Volling. Fjellstrom was a member of the fifth-place Maple Leafs and fired two goals in his team's four games. Volling suited up for the sixth-place Wild. He finished the tournament with two assists.

The eight-team tournament, part of B.C. Hockey's high performance program, was held at Sunwave Centre and brought together 160 players.



LAST RUN OF THE SEASON — Quentin Haugland and Karen Haugland enjoying the final weekend of skiing at Purden on Saturday.
Citizen photo by Brent Braaten

Kodiaks bronzed at provincials

Jason Peters
Citizen staff

In the last tournament of their club volleyball careers, the 18-and-under Kodiaks bashed their way to B.C. bronze.

The Kodiaks finished third at the 16-team provincial championship tournament by beating the Surrey Eagles 25-19, 22-25, 17-15 Sunday afternoon at Burnaby's Simon Fraser University. After splitting the first two sets with the Eagles, and then trading points back and forth for much of the third, the Kodiaks cranked up their hitting game and eked out the victory. On match point, Dalton Jones fed a perfect pass to setter Colin Carson, who sent the ball into the air space of power hitter Adam Starzyk.

The six-foot-three Starzyk promptly ended the contest by hammering a ball to the floorboards.

"Both sides were tipping," Kodiaks coach Glenn Wong said in reference to the way the third set was being played. "I said, 'Guys, put the ball away. Make it so hard for them that they can't get to it.' That was the bottom line. It came to that, and when it did, we swung at the ball and put the ball away."

Carson, a Duchess Park student who will play for the Thompson Rivers University WolfPack next season, was selected as a first-team tournament all-star. Carson said he and his Kodiaks teammates were motivated to win bronze, knowing the match would be their final one together.

"It really made us focus and made us want to win a little bit more," Carson said. "Being named an all-star was really nice but it really didn't matter. I think that a medal was more important than that."

The Kodiaks were representing the Prince George Youth Volleyball Club. Earlier Sunday, they pulled the plug on the Abbotsford Lightsabres in a quarterfinal play-off match, 25-14, 26-24. In the semifinal round, the P.G. boys met the top-ranked Fraser Valley Blues and lost in three sets, 21-25, 25-22, 15-8.

Overall, the Kodiaks compiled a match record of 5-2. On Saturday, they posted victories against the Eagles (25-17, 16-25, 15-12), Vancouver Velocity (25-22, 26-24) and Fraser Valley White (29-31, 25-20, 15-11) and lost to the Kelowna Kannons (28-26, 12-25, 15-13).

The Kodiaks are rounded out by Steven Fowlie, Aaron Neumann, Danny Grant, Jan Bienkowski-Gibbs, Brian Horning, Josh Maciver, Justin Girard, Carson Dean, Brad Hahn, Spencer Reed and Jordan Brandon.

"Overall, I'm very happy with the boys," Wong said. "They played to their best. It was amazing play from everybody. Everybody helped out. We spread the attacks and it was great."

The national championship tournament is May 1-3 in Ottawa but the Kodiaks will not be in attendance.

"The boys have grad commitments," Wong said. "Because they come from four different high schools, it just came down to scheduling. We just couldn't get the whole team there."

Two other PGYVC teams attended provincials on the weekend. The 17-and-under boys placed fourth out of six teams in North Vancouver and the 17-and-under girls were seventh in a 24-team field in Nanaimo.

Wong will take a 14-and-under boys squad to Burnaby this coming weekend for provincials.

Diamond for Doll at Alberta fight

Ted Clarke
Citizen staff

In the heart of oil country, Alex Doll captured a gem of a trophy.

One he can use to hold up his boxing trunks.

The 22-year-old Inner City Boxing Club member took home heavyweight honours Saturday at the Alberta Diamond Belt championships in Slave Lake, Alta.

Doll, a first-year fighter, improved his amateur record to 4-0, scoring a judges' decision victory over a Drayton Valley, Alta., fighter.

"Alex won a split decision in a close fight over a giant from Drayton Valley," said Inner City coach Bob Pegues.

"He won a beautiful belt — the kids who didn't make the trip will be regretting it when they see it. The guy who bought those belts must have spent thousands on them."

Kenny Lally of Inner City turned down a Diamond Belt

fight against a bigger opponent, and Jag Seehra was unable to make it to the tournament due to work commitments.

In one other Inner City result, 14-year-old Megan Miller of Prince George lost a three-round decision to Rebecca Soares of Drayton Valley.

Miller and Doll are among seven Inner City boxers who will travel to Cranbrook for a fight card this Saturday. Doll is matched with 300-pound Teddy Crone of Peachland in what Pegues says will be Doll's final fight of the season.

Lally will be in the main event against Cranbrook Boxing Club coach Tom White, a former Inner City fighter.

Seehra is slated to take on Dwayne Orubour of Spruce Grove, Alta., in a rematch of their fight a year ago.

Inner City fighters Lori Homan (132-pounds), 11-year-old Elyssa Sande (65 pounds) and heavyweight Dave McLennan are also on the card.

Speirs spars to victory

Jason Peters
Citizen staff

Thomas Speirs fought a junior national medalist and won convincingly.

The impressive performance by the Spruce Capital Warriors boxer happened on the weekend in Slave Lake, host community for the Alberta Diamond Belt championships. Speirs, 18, scored a unanimous decision against Steve McGillvary in the 165-pound senior open class.

Earlier this year in Edmonton, McGillvary punched his way to a silver medal at the junior national championships.

The weekend bout was the 15th of Speirs' career, while McGillvary was making his 39th appearance in the ring.

"Thomas looked more the experienced fighter than what Steve did," said Spruce Capital coach Wayne Sponagle. "Thomas is very smart. He put his punches together really good and when he made the kid miss, he made him pay."

"He landed nice three-, four-, five-punch combinations."

Speirs did not compete in junior nationals because an age-change

rule applied by Boxing Canada made him ineligible.

Two other Spruce Capital fighters — 15-year-olds Taylor Sidsworth and Jon Green — also tossed punches at the Diamond Belt tournament.

Sidsworth, a 106-pounder who was in the cadet C division, battled to a unanimous decision against Edmonton's Durham Gaspie.

"The first round was pretty even — it could have gone either way," Sponagle said. "Taylor followed instructions and went out in the second and third rounds and had the kid moving all over the ring. He landed nice, fast, left-right combinations."

Green, meanwhile, came out on the wrong end of the decision in his 126-pound cadet C tilt against Clayton Leonard.

"Jon did very, very good," Sponagle said. "He lost a split decision and I thought he should have won. But it was very close."

"(Leonard) was a tall kid. He must have been about six feet tall."

Marcus Hume, an 18-year-old Spruce Capital pugilist, was supposed to fight at the Diamond Belt but his opponent was forced to withdraw.

Gymnasts land medals at B.C. championship

Citizen staff

Milan Knight and Mary Kate Dalla Lana have added provincial championship medals to their collection of gymnastics awards.

Knight won gold on the uneven bars and Dalla Lana secured silver on vault during the B.C. championship meet, held on the weekend in Langley. Both girls, members of the Prince George Gymnastics Club, were competing in the Level 3 novice category. Overall, Knight placed fifth out of the 47 athletes in the division.

Knight and Dalla Lana provided the highlights for the local club but several other P.G. gymnasts gave shining performances.

Other results were as follows: Level 2 tyro — Brodie Needham, 10th on vault; Level 2 novice — Scotia Hunter, ninth on vault, seventh on floor routine; Level 3 novice — Jessie Woodcock, eighth on bars; Level 3 open — Brittney Goetz, eighth on balance beam; Level 4 novice — Tesia Kerr, ninth on floor; Level 4 open — Katharyn Hanki, sixth on bars, ninth on vault, 10th on beam, eighth overall in the final competition of her career; Level 5 tyro — Lina Go-

to, eighth on bars and floor, ninth on beam, 10th overall; Level 5 open — Storm Garcia, eighth on beam, ninth on floor; Sarah Horswill, 10th on floor; Pre-national novice aspire — Brooke Unger, fifth on vault, beam and floor, ninth on bars, eighth overall. Unger will be part of Team B.C. for the Western Canadian championships, May 2 in Winnipeg.

Other P.G. gymnasts who displayed their skills at provincials were Taylor Stafford (Level 2 tyro), Faith-Hannah Dale (Level 2 open), Shayna McCormick (Level 3 novice) and Alanah McCormick (Level 3 open).