

Port Dover Bantam Rep Coastline Realty win the Brantford Tournament

Friday June 10th at 4:15pm Port Dover arrive at the Bill Little diamond in Brantford for their first game in the Brantford Tournament having only played 2 games in the season and were to face their fellow interlock opponents Dundas who were well into their season of games. This was a must win game to build confidence into the team for the tournament.

First up to bat was Port Dover who were eager to swing their new wooden bats that were mandatory for the first year at Bantam level.

Garret Walker is first to get on base and is stealing on every pitch that Josh Townsend faces who then gets a base hit to centre field and RBI with Garrett Walker sprinting in. Gavin Barnard the Port Dover pitcher is up next and hits big into left field bringing in Josh Townsend the short stop for another run giving two runs for the first inning for Port Dover.

Up next were the big bats of Dundas who faced a determined well-disciplined pitcher, Gavin Barnard. Time after time, the pitches came in with incredible accuracy frustrating the top of the Dundas order and with support of a quality infield taking catches at shortstop ended the innings with no runs scored.

The second innings brought base hits from Austin Lamb, Tanner VanZon, and Brent Tschirhart with a magnificent sacrifice bunt from Greg Acuna adding another run to the score line. Dundas face Gavin Barnard once again and looked determined but again were frustrated by magnificent pitching – three up and three down with no runs scored.

The third innings has Port Dover bats swinging hard with base hits from Josh Townsend, Gavin Barnard, Tanner VanZon and Greg Acuna adding a further 2 runs to the tally. Gavin Barnard strikeout, strikeout and strikeout, Dundas do not know how to handle this pitcher.

Confidence grows in the 4th innings and Port Dover come out all guns blazing. Nolan Erwin gets on base and steals to second but is left on base at the end of the innings. Runs scored by Garret Walker, Josh Townsend Gavin Barnard, Austin Lamb and Tanner VanZon with RBI's from Austin Lamb, Tanner VanZon and Brent Tschirhart.

Dundas try to respond and hit the ball furiously off the bat, however catches made at short stop and centre field supported the accuracy of Gavin Barnard to close out the innings without giving up any runs.

The final innings saw base hits from Josh Townsend, Colton Mcleod and Tanner VanZon with an RBI from Colton Mcleod sending in a further 3 runs for a final score of 13 – 0.

The MVP of the game was Josh Townsend.

Saturday morning arrives and Port Dover face Markham but appear to have lost a little of their spirit from the previous game probably due to the effort that was given in that win. The bats were not brought with the only run scored being from Gavin Barnard with base hits from Brent Tschirhart, Colton Mcleod and Gavin Barnard and an RBI by Colton Mcleod. The pitching could not match the previous game. Markham win 12-1. This was the game to put behind them and they did with a vengeance.

The MVP was Colton Mcleod

Port Dover meet Essex who had beaten Markham so the nerves were rattling as this was a must win to get to the semi finals and we had to win big. Port Dover loses the coin flip again and are up to bat first.

Base hits rattle in from Brent Tschirhart, Garret Walker and Austin Lamb. Essex who had watched Port Dover win the Dundas game were cautious and intentionally walked Gavin Barnard and Colton Mcleod and tried to keep these players out of the batting throughout the game. Four runs were brought in by Port Dover.

Garret Walker comes into pitch and shows his pitching qualities by striking out two batters and gets support from the second and first baseman for the third out. No runs scored.

The bats are brought again in the second innings by Port Dover who were determined to crush the memories of the previous game. Single base hits by Brent Tschirhart, Garret Walker and Austin Lamb with a double from Josh Townsend brings in a further 5 runs with RBI's from Josh Townsend, Colton Mcleod and Austin Lamb. Essex try to battle back and score two runs off the excellent pitching of Garret Walker.

Port Dover score another three runs in the third innings with base hits from Garret Walker, Josh Townsend, Gavin Barnard, Austin Lamb and Tanner VanZon and RBI's from Josh Townsend, Austin Lamb and Tanner VanZon.

The game continues but Essex only manage a further 2 runs, however Port Dover pushes forward with runs from Logan Stanley, Greg Acuna, Colton Mcleod, Austin Lamb, Josh Townsend, Gavin Barnard, Nolan Erwin and Garret Walker bringing the final score to Port Dover 22 – Essex 4.

The MVP was Garret Walker.

Another day over and Port Dover now know who they face in the Semi Finals, Corunna, a team with a very good tournament record. This was going to be a difficult game and Port Dover bring in their big gun pitcher, Gavin Barnard.

Its Sunday morning at 10:30am with a brisk northerly wind and cloud cover, this was a cold one with winds gusting around for the high balls. Port Dover eventually win the flip of the coin and take second bat. Corunna come into bat and its three up and three down with no runs scored.

Port Dover bat and have base hits from Brent Tschirhart and Josh Townsend who has an RBI for Brent the only run of the innings.

Corunna up in the second and suffer a barrage of pitches from Gavin Barnard whose accuracy pace and deception gives up two strikeouts and a line drive catch by the pitcher to end Corunna's batting. Corunna battle back with their pitcher putting them over the plate time and time again, no runs scored for Port Dover.

Gavin Barnard pitching in the third, Strikeout, Strikeout, Strikeout. The Corunna batters do not know what has hit them. Port Dover up with base hits from Brent Tschirhart and Garret Walker but no runs scored.

This game is so tense and so close, who was to get the edge to move forward?

Into the fourth and the bats start to fly for Corunna with four base hits and one run scored, the score is now tied, but in the meantime Austin Lamb who has been magnificent as catcher takes a wild ball to the groin and goes down hard. He tries to walk off the injury and is about to be substituted when he indicates that he is fit enough to continue but obviously still in pain. He settles in and continues his excellent performance as catcher.

Now is the time to keep the nerves under control. Port Dover up to bat and a single gets Colton Mcleod on base and the next batter is out. Its now two outs with Tanner VanZon up to bat who hits a magnificent double to right field bringing in Colton Mcleod for a 2-1 lead.

Into the fifth and Corunna try to hit against Gavin Barnard but fail again to score. Port Dover up again to bat with Nolan Erwin up first. He swings the bat and foul ball and again foul ball, the next is a ball and then foul ball and then another foul and then another before eventually getting thrown out at first, what a way to battle and use up the pitches. Port Dover again fail to score. When is the breakthrough going to happen, which way is this game going to swing.

Into the sixth and again Gavin Barnard pitches another strikeout and is supported in the field with a line drive catch by Josh Townsend and a high ball being blown around in the high winds caught by Tanner VanZon, again no runs scored. It's into the seventh with a 2-1 lead by Port Dover.

Corunna up to bat and are extremely aggressive in their base running desperate to get the tying run. Their first batter is thrown out from shortstop to the first baseman Dawson Heron and their second man up gets a single, this is their chance and then the next batter is hit with a pitch and now they have two on base.

The battle continues and the man on second tries to reach third but is thrown out. There is two out and Port Dover's hopes are high, one more to go to the end of this tense game. Then the inevitable happens Corunna score and tie the game and the top half of the innings end with the score at 2-2.

Port Dover come up to bat for the last time in the game, is this going to go to another innings to break the tie. The first two batters get out and in comes Dawson Heron who keeps his eye on the ball and gets a walk to first base. Brent Tschirhart is up next and gets a single and advances Dawson to second. A pinch runner, Logan Stanley, is put in for Dawson who has been suffering all weekend with a back injury. Next up is Garret Walker, the first ball strike! The next a ball, and then it comes, the ball he is waiting for and whack! A magnificent hit way out into the outfield brings him a double and off goes Logan Stanley with wheels blazing around third and into home plate for the winning run. It also allowed Brent Tschirhart to coast in to home plate with the game over.

The MVP of the game was Gavin Barnard

The final was now set to commence at 2pm against the tournament favourites, Ancaster. Ancaster are fellow opponents in the Intercounty league to Port Dover and are second in the league and had won every game in the tournament to reach the final. Port Dover were looking tired after the battle with Corunna, whereas Ancaster coasted through their semi final to win 11-2. This was Port Dover's toughest challenge yet.

Again Dover lose the flip of the coin and are up first to bat so the first advantage is lost but they have got this far so its all to play for. The bats are made ready and the nerves settled. First up is a flyout to right field. Next, is Garret Walker and the first ball is a strike, the second was in the channel and a huge line drive to right field secures a double. Next up Josh Townsend who wastes no time and smashes a line drive to left field securing another double and RBI for Garret Walker.

Gavin Barnard and Colton Mcleod are next to get on base who are batted in for RBI's by Austin Lamb and Tanner VanZon. The top of the first ends with four runs to Port Dover. Ancaster up to bat and face the pitching of Garret Walker. First batter thrown out by the pitcher to first, the second a line drive caught by the pitcher and the third a strikeout, Garret was helping himself out to finish the innings.

The second innings had Josh Townsend getting the only base hit and no runs scored. The crowd was anxious and were waiting for Ancaster to respond with their bats so every opportunity missed was hard. Garret Walker continued to throw them in and although two got on base, the score was held at Port Dover 4 Ancaster 0.

Into the top of the third and a single base hit from Austin Lamb and a sacrifice bunt by Tanner VanZon to advance Austin still failed to give further runs – the tension grows. Bottom of the third and the pitching of Garret Walker and support of the field secures another innings without Ancaster scoring.

The top of the fourth is a similar batting experience for Port Dover – no runs scored and again Ancaster is held.

Into the fifth and Gavin Barnard gets a walk and steals on every ball pitched to Colton Mcleod. In comes Austin Lamb who flies out a ball to left field and is out but not before he gets an RBI for Gavin Barnard's run. There is a single by Tanner VanZon but the top of the fifth ends with the score at 5-0.

Ancaster get into a huddle and come out to bat with renewed energy and start throwing the bats getting three base hits and two runs. Is this the start of the end for Port Dover – the score now is 5-2.

Into the sixth and Port Dover do not get on base, the crowd is shouting support for both teams and the noise is intense, can Port Dover hold on. Ancaster up to bat and Port Dover's pitcher Garret Walker is coming to the end of his count. Ancaster then get on base and stole aggressively bringing in a further run, but Garret fights back getting two batters out. One batter to go and Garret Walker is replaced by Josh Townsend to close out the innings. Ball one, ball two – the crowd for both teams are screaming their support – strike one, strike two and strikeout and that's the end of the sixth. The score is now 5-3 in Port Dover's favor, what will the seventh bring.

Port Dover up to bat, flyout at left field, flyout at second and thrown out at first. Wow, this is crazy, the noise is intense. Ancaster another group huddle and then into bat for the last bat of the game. First batter gets base with a vicious ground ball bouncing up over the grass toward second base. The second batter, ball, ball, strike, ball, strike – strikeout and the Port Dover crowd go wild. One down and two to go. Second, batter – strikeout. The last Ancaster batter comes up and the pitches fly in – he's out!!

That's the game with a fabulous team effort by Port Dover securing the Championship.

MVP for the game was Garret Walker