Slow start costs Pomeroy chance at 2004 Games

By Jon Kuiperij
OAKVILLE BEAVER STAFF

One simple slip might have been enough to cost Laura Pomeroy a chance to compete at the upcoming Olympic Summer Games.

Vying for a spot on Canada's Olympic swim team, Pomeroy slipped off the starting block of Friday's national Olympic trials 50-metre freestyle final and made an awkward entry into the Etobicoke Olympium pool.

Deprived of nearly all her starting momentum, the 20-year-old Oakville resident continued the race to finish in a time of 26.54 seconds, almost a second slower than she swam in Friday morning's preliminaries.

> **"(The 50-metre freestyle) is like going to the casino – you're either having a great day or you're not."**
> • *Laura Pomeroy*

"I felt ready to go and focused on the blocks, and then it happened really fast," said Pomeroy, a member of the Oakville Aquatic Club. "I went almost to the bottom of the pool... at that point, you're wondering what you should do. You just swim to the wall and try not to embarrass yourself too much."

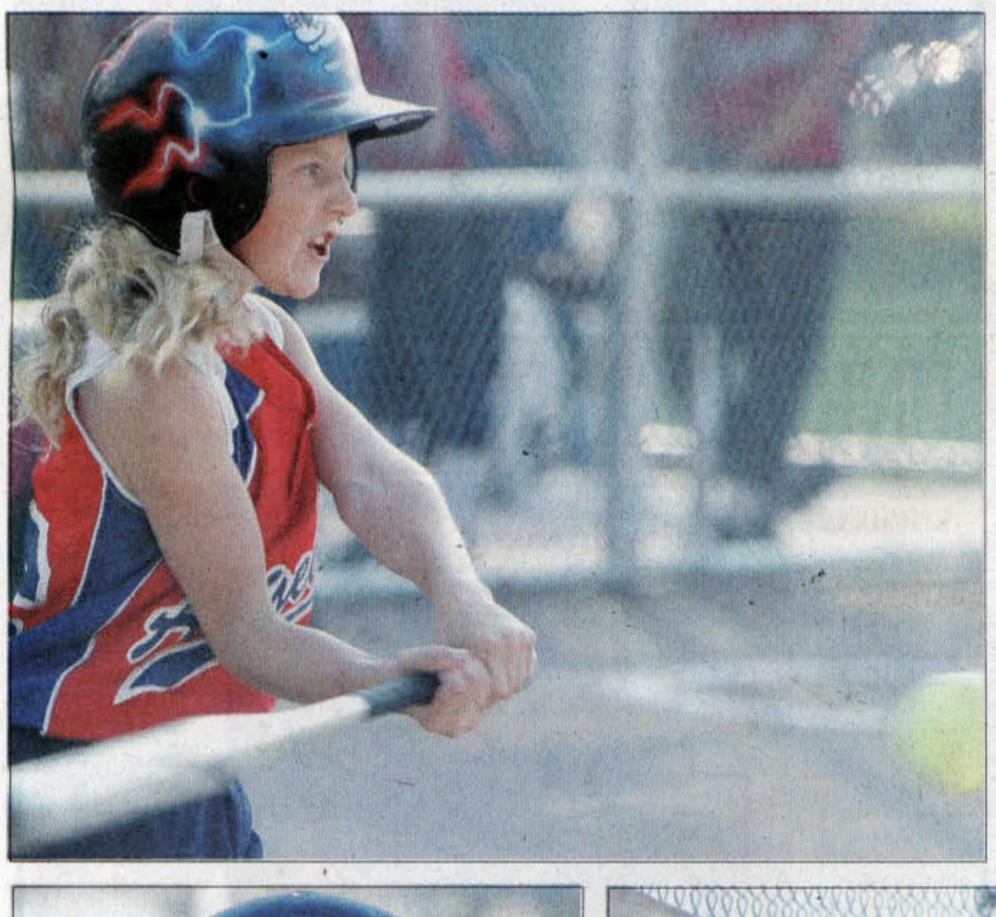
Having posted the fastest standard of her life in the preliminary heat (25.80 seconds), Pomeroy and coach Christy Fonseca were both optimistic about the young swimmer's chances of finishing in the Top 2, eclipsing the 25.52-second requirement and qualifying for next month's Olympic Games in Athens. Admittedly frustrated by Friday evening's turn of events, Pomeroy still managed to keep things in perspective and prepared for the following day's 100m freestyle event, where she finished fifth.

"(The 50m freestyle) is like going to the casino — you're either having a great day or you're not," Pomeroy said. "I could have dwelt on it and gotten down, but I had the 100 the next day. It was easier to move on and focus on that."

(See 'HURD' page C7)

Graham Paine • *Oakville Beaver*

Oakville's Laura Pomeroy comes up for air during Saturday's 100-metre freestyle final at the national Olympic swimming trials in Etobicoke. The 20-year-old, who finished fifth in the 100m race, slipped at the beginning of the 50m freestyle final the previous day and was unable to qualify for next month's Olympic Summer Games in Athens.



Mite Angels golden at Midsummer Classic Fastpitch Tournament

Losing their first game at the Oakville Midsummer Classic Fastpitch Tournament obviously did little to discourage the Oakville mite Angels.

The Angels rolled off five consecutive victories after dropping the opener to the Brampton 1 Blazers, claiming gold at their own tournament last weekend.

Oakville avenged the round-robin loss to Brampton 1 with a 5-3 victory in the championship game. Angels pitcher Alex Sagl notched her fifth win of the tournament, tossing seven innings of five-hit ball while fanning 21 Brampton batters.

Dana Ball drove in what proved to be the game-winning run with a single in the second inning to score Claire Steckle. Amy Cormier, Crystal Marentette, Nova Bozinoski and Sagl also scored runs for the Angels.

Bozinoski was named most valuable player in the final, walking twice and scoring a run while playing excellent defense at her catching position.

The Angels reached the final with an 11-2 pounding of Kitchener in the semifinal contest. Cormier belted a home run and Marentette collected three hits for Oakville, with right fielder Kelly Boxer playing strong defence and covering an errant throw. Hillary Dawe added a two-run double for the Angels.

In round-robin play, Oakville fell 7-6 to Brampton before rallying to mercy Kitchener (19-4) and Mississauga North (16-5) and downing Windsor 9-6.

Alyssa Page walked three times against Kitchener to fuel the Oakville offence, while Alyssa Duncan contributed a hit. Versus Mississauga North, Oakville scored eight times in the first inning and added five in the second frame to quickly put the game out of reach.

In the win against Windsor, Kelly Locke collected two singles and scored a pair of runs. Steckle clubbed a two-run homer for the Angels in the victory.

Oakville has now won three gold medals and two silvers in the five tournaments it has entered this season, and will look to add to its total this weekend in Stratford.

The Oakville mite Angels won their third championship of the season last weekend, claiming gold at the Oakville Midsummer Classic Fastpitch Tournament. Pictured in descending order, from left, Amy Cormier displays a menacing look as she takes a swing, Alyssa (Peanut) Duncan awaits her turn at bat, members of the Angels huddle around their coach to take a look at the lineup card, Kelly Locke breaks for third base, Alex Sagl keeps her eyes on the play as she runs the bases, and Alyssa Page records an out at first. All photos were taken at Friday night's game between the Angels and Brampton 1 Blazers, Oakville's only loss in the tournament as the team went on to win its remaining five contests.

Photos by Karen Newman and Barrie Erskine