

Friends team up to lead Ontario to U14 national soccer title



TEAM LEADERS: Marlee Maracle (left) and Veronica Bosco played key roles in Ontario's gold-medal showing at last week's Canadian under-14 girls' soccer championships. Maracle allowed only one goal in four games while Bosco led the tournament in scoring with six markers.

They're best friends, but Marlee Maracle and Veronica Bosco are polar opposites when it comes to their strengths on the soccer pitch.

Maracle, a keeper, excels at keeping the ball out of the net. Bosco, a striker, thrives at putting it in.

The talents of both girls were on full display at last week's under-14 nationals in Laval, Que. Maracle allowed only one goal in four games while Bosco earned the Golden Boot as the tournament's top scorer, leading Ontario to a 5-0 record and Canadian gold.

Ontario outscored its opposition 23-1 in its five games, clinching the title with a 4-0 blanking of Quebec.

"It was an amazing experience," the 14-year-old Maracle said. "Working hard all throughout the winter really paid off in the end, all the blood, sweat and tears. To get gold was amazing."

Coached by former Mexican national team player Ruben Flores, Ontario practiced four times a week for nine months, including a training camp in Florida, in preparation for the tournament.

Even at nationals, while other

teams were shopping or swimming in the hotel pool, Ontario was all business.

"We were always focused 100 per cent on the games," said Maracle, who will attend T.A. Blakelock in the fall. "We went there to win, and we won."

Maracle, whose involvement with the provincial team was sponsored by the Dreamcatcher Fund, played in four of the five games. The lone shot that beat her came against Prince Edward Island on a play that Ontario felt was offside.

Bosco scored three goals in Ontario's opening game, a 5-0 win against New Brunswick, and finished the tournament with six markers. Making the feat even more impressive was the fact that Bosco is only 12 years old.

Playing up an age group is nothing new for the Mother Teresa student, who does the same for her Oakville Hurricanes under-14 rep club.

"When Veronica puts her mind to something, she can do anything," Maracle said.

— Jon Kuiperij

Golden in Gloucester



The Oakville boys' under-11A soccer team defeated Aylmer to win the recent Gloucester Hornets tournament. Team members are: Ryan Collins, Michael Pupulin, Tim Gibson, Connor Martin, Aidan Wood, Peter Mazur, Seihun Kim, Henry Luel, Ben Perrais, Josh Widman, Quin McCleary, Marko Vidovich, Alex Zis, coaches George Zis and Jerry Mazur, managers Tracey Luel and Tanja Vidovich. Missing from the picture are players Nicholas Casola, Bailey Newton and Joaquin Torres.

U10 Little League provincials begin Saturday

The top 10-year-old Little League players in the province are coming to town this week to compete in the Little League Ontario Minor Baseball Championship.

The tournament, hosted by Oakville Little League, will begin Saturday and conclude Aug. 6. All games will be played at the Oakville Little League Field of Dreams at Cornwall Park, located on Cornwall Road east of Trafalgar Road.

Teams competing will be representing the eight districts in Little League Ontario: Ottawa West, Ottawa East, Ottawa Valley, Lanark Seaway, Windsor-LaSalle, Timmins-North Bay, Thunder Bay and Hamilton-Toronto. The host minor all-star team, the Oakville Whitecaps, will be hosting a banquet for all teams.

As of yesterday (Wednesday), the tournament schedule had not been announced.

OAK's Van Beilen to compete at English swimming meets

Oakville Aquatic Club swimmer Tera Van Beilen has been named to Swimming Canada's Senior B team that will compete in England next month at the Tri-Nations Meet and the British Grand Prix.

The 38-member team will go head to head against Great Britain and Russia at the British Tri-Nations competition Aug. 1-2 in London.

Each nation will be permitted

two swimmers per event at that meet.

The team will be joined by Canada's world championships team for the British Grand Prix Aug. 6-9, where Canada's best will go up against Britain's top swimmers.

Selections for Canada's Senior B swim team were made at the 2009 Universiades in Serbia and the World Championship Trials in Montreal.

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