

The Orleans Novice Select girls culminated their 4 months of hard work and dedication on Aug 26-27 weekend in Hamilton. The girls came into the tournament as a select team with 15 games under their belt – 8 wins, 4 losses, and 3 ties. Three of their losses came against boys' teams that they met in the Pee wee Boys Select Provincials the month before.

There were 9 teams competing in Hamilton for the rights to be crowned the Novice Select A champion and the Novice Select B champion. As the draw would have it, we were put into round robin play against Guelph and Whitby. The girls came away with two wins because of powerful pitching, good defensive plays, and timely hits. All of the girls made it on base in both wins. Zoe Hupman dominated at the plate by going 5 for 6. Victoria Landreville, Brittany Bellerdine Zomer, Ashley Sarazin, Jill Potvin and Amber Lee Sowa each hit 2 singles and a double and scored. Grace Adams went 3 for 6 while Kayla Seabrook hit a grand slam to put the Guelph game out of reach for Orleans.

With these two wins under their belt, it meant they would play their next game right away against Dundas. The fatigue of the girls started to show in this game, and mental errors seem to be the determining factor in the game. Amber Lee was pitching in her 3rd straight game (all but 1 inning) and still managed to come up with 8 strikeouts to her credit. The girls were eager as ever to play their aggressive base running and were credited with 8 stolen bases, but the bats weren't there to cash them in. The score remained 4-1 for Dundas until the top of the 7th inning when Dundas rallied for 6 unanswered runs. This game ended 11-2 and put Orleans in the running for the B championship medal.

Despite the strange format of the tournament – whereby teams did not have a chance to work their way back up to the A side like a true double knockout – the girls were determined not to let this game set them back, and Sunday was another day.

The Orleans Novice girls needed to win two games on Sunday to call themselves the B champs. Amber Lee pitched the first game and recorded 11 strikeouts, 2 hits, and 4 walks. The defence behind her did their job as well, and allowed only 1 run on 1 error. The final score over Whitby was 8-1. The second game saw Nicole Laidlaw take the mound for Orleans. After just 2 ½ innings Orleans was up 6-3. Amber Lee, suffering from blisters to her finger tips was put in on relief and was determined to give it her all, just the same. Each and every girl also took command at this point and decided to try and put the game out of reach in the bottom of the third. Orleans rallied with Grace, Brittany, Emma Huff, Nicole, Kayla, Meagan Pennycook, Zoe and Ashley all hitting. They came out of the inning now leading 13-3. After two more innings of play the Orleans girls ended the game with a 17-7 mercy and accepted the gold medal for their efforts. The girls finished the provincials with a 4 win and 1 loss record, the second best record in the tournament.

Great job Girls!