

LIVING THE DREAM - PLAYING AGAINST THE WORLD IN THEIR OWN BACK YARD



Last year fans of the Saskatoon Amateur Softball Association Men's League had the privilege to see three local players perform at the highest level and gain the opportunity to play in the World Championship right in their own back yard. **(Keith, Trevor and Dean are pictured to the left with the 3 members of Canada's World Junior team from Saskatoon)** A couple of years ago not many people would have thought that there would be three local guys on the Team to represent Canada for the 2009 World Championship. Even though Dean Holoien and Keith MacKintosh had been key performers on the national team in the past, they were both getting a little old and challenged by some real up and comers. Although Trevor Ethier was highly respected as an up and coming pitcher he was still seen more of thrower than true pitcher. As a result of a tremendous amount of hard work and a challenging Team Canada fitness program, the three of them worked their way onto the squad. Last year playing for the Aspen Interiors and Team Canada, the three of them got a

chance to showcase their skills in numerous big games and the hard work really began to show.

According to Team Canada Assistant Coach Don Bates, perhaps the biggest surprise was Dean Holoien. He always has been a great pitcher and a great team leader, but at the age of 39 he was forced to come back from a major injury and earn a spot on a very strong pitching staff. His performance last summer at the International Softball Congress World tournament in Kimberly Wisconsin, the 3 Nations Challenge as well as the Sr. Men's Nationals in Saskatoon where he was named top player of the tournament showed everyone he still has a lot left.

Keith MacKintosh was always known as a clutch hitter, a man every pitcher feared when the game was on the line, but at 40 he was definitely considered to be an older player and maybe too old. According to Bates "It was his determination to do what ever it takes to make the team that really set him apart. The fitness program he has been on has sped up his hand as a hitter and increased his range as a second baseman tremendously." If this is going to be his 'swan song' in softball he is going out on a high and continuing to get better.

Trevor Ethier is also a player that appears to have made the team as a result of his hard work. He has consistently been near the top of the national team's fitness testing. Bates says he has really enjoyed watching Trevor become more of pitcher than a thrower. It was at the Nationals in Saskatoon that Trevor secured his spot on the squad. He really dominated at times. The coaching staff really noticed how he got the outs the way he needed. If he needed a ground ball he got and he had command of all of his pitches. For his efforts he was named MVP of the qualifying round.



In his nine years as senior ball player **Trevor Ethier** has attended numerous ISC tournaments and has not missed a Sr. National Championship since 2000 including in 2004 where he was named the tournament's outstanding pitcher and 2008 when he was preliminary round MVP. He presently plays for the Saskatoon Aspen Interiors, which he helped lead to a Senior Men's National Championship in 2004 and 2008. He has been with Canada's National Men's Softball Program for five years as a pitcher, and at first and third base. He is a gifted multi-sport athlete. He played hockey for the Saskatoon Blades and went on to

fine career with the University of Saskatchewan Huskies. Even with his years of success on the ice, Trevor considers his most memorable accomplishment to be winning the Gold medal as part of Canada's National Softball Team at the 2003 Pan American Games in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.



Keith Mackintosh is now 41 and has been part of the National Team program since 1996, playing in Pan Am Qualifiers in 1998 and 2002, the 2003 Pan Am Games and the 10th ISF Worlds Men's Softball Championship in South Africa in 2000. His most memorable moment wearing the maple leaf came when he had just finished playing short shop for Canada in a thrilling 4-2 win over the U.S to claim the Pan American gold medal in 2003. Keith was co-captain with Craig Crawford of a team that was not supposed to win, as they were a team made up of "lesser known's" as many other players were playing for their club teams at the ISC's However, with the

help of his leadership they stuck together right up to the seventh inning of the final when Ron White drove a one hopper through the first baseman legs so hard it went all the way to the fence to score the two eventual winning runs. Winning was great but Keith's proudest moment as a Canadian took place during the playing of the national anthem to acknowledge the gold medal winners. About half way through the recording for the anthem died, but Keith and the boys belted out the rest of O Canada on their own in front of a very appreciative crowd.



Dean Holoien is a sold 6'0" 245 lbs. At 40 years of age he brings a tremendous amount of experience to the team. Dean has represented his country on many occasions over the years, including Pan American qualifiers for the ISF World Championships in 1992 and 1998. He played in the 2004 World Championship in Christchurch where he pitched and hit in the fifth spot. He pitched in the gold medal game, allowing one run on one hit and striking out two in the 9-5 loss to New Zealand. Dean has played in 15 Canadian Championships in his softball career. He has won three National championships, one with Edmonton in 1999

and two with Saskatoon Aspen Interiors in 2004 and 2008. A very charismatic person, Dean lightens up the people around him and keeps his teammates at ease. Although he is a pitcher, he also swings a heavy bat and has stepped up to the plate as a designated hitter on numerous occasions. Look for Dean to get some key at bat in the year's Worlds.