

# OIWFA UPDATE

On December 11, 2016, the OIWFA membership held our league Annual General Meeting at the University of Toronto to review our 2016 season and plan for the upcoming year. We hope you enjoy these key messages from the 2016 OIWFA season as we close out the year.

## **2016 Highlights**

The 2016 season brought big changes to the OIWFA, highlighted by a 13-team regular-season schedule for the very first time with the addition of Ryerson University. 2016 also saw the OIWFA Executive host the OIWFA Championships for the first time. Championships were held at the scenic Innerkip Park in Innerkip, Ontario, which boasts some of the best diamonds in the province. Thank you to all our volunteer scorekeepers, announcers, grounds crew and Innerkip Minor Softball Association who assisted in ensuring the entire weekend ran smoothly. We were lucky to have some of the best Championships weather in recent league history. We were pleased to continue our partnership with SportsCanada.TV who provide our live-streaming services at Championships. This year we were able to offer live-streaming on both diamonds with play by play from some of the game's best on the main diamond.

The OIWFA was pleased to honour Steve Bottoms as the second-ever recipient of the OIWFA Outstanding Contribution Award. Details of Steve's accomplishments can be seen on the homepage of [www.oiwfa.org](http://www.oiwfa.org).

Amelia Keech, head coach of Queen's University, was the recipient of the Coach of the Year award. Amelia's improvement of her student-athletes' skills, her growth of the Queen's fastpitch program, her positive influence on athletes on and off the field, her organization and her respect for all league stakeholders were just some of the reasons making Amelia so deserving of this award.

The OIWFA honoured student-athletes with outstanding performances in each week of regular season play with our Athlete of the Week award. These student-athletes were recognized on social media and awarded a Softball Canada sweater at the Championships banquet. 2016 OIWFA Athletes of the Week, along with a recap of their on-field accomplishments, can be found here: <http://www.oiwfa.org/wb/pages/awards/athlete-of-the-week.php>.

Our annual partnerships with the You Can Play Project and the Student-Athlete Mental Health Initiative remained strong in 2016. We dedicate a day of the season to recognize each of these important causes, and to let our student-athletes know that our teams and league are safe spaces to be open with their coaches and teammates.

We are proud to recognize our 2016 OIWFA Provincial Championships medalists:

- Gold: Western University
- Silver: Brock University
- Bronze: McMaster University

The Provincial Championships gold medal game was hard-fought, with Western taking a 4-0 victory over a Brock team that burst onto the scene and had an exceptional playoff tournament, after entering

the weekend as the 7<sup>th</sup> seed. McMaster took home the bronze medal with a 2-0 win over the University of Toronto.

We also congratulate Western University for their silver medal finish at the CCSA National Championships, hosted by the University of Saskatchewan in an indoor golf dome due to the multiple feet of snow on the ground in Saskatoon over Thanksgiving weekend. We are excited to say that in 2017, a team from the OIWFA will be selected to host the CCSA National Championships for the first time since Western hosted the Nationals in 2013. Bids are currently being accepted from all teams and the host will be announced in the new year.

We can now officially announce that Laurier University will host the 2017 OIWFA Provincial Championships. Details will be rolled out throughout early 2017.

### **League Executive**

Matt Allen was re-elected into his 6<sup>th</sup> term as OIWFA President, joined by Steph Manson as Vice-President in her 4<sup>th</sup> and Lisa Ryerson as Treasurer in her 2<sup>nd</sup>.

We extend our huge appreciation to Amelia Keech who stepped down as Secretary as she also moves on from her role coaching Queen's to explore exciting new life ventures.

We're thrilled to welcome Elissa Sivel, assistant coach and student-athlete alumni of the University of Ottawa, to the Executive as our new Secretary.

We're pleased to continue to have 3 former student-athletes who have moved onto coaching positions involved in our league Executive.

### **Upcoming in 2017**

The biggest change for the 2017 season arising from the AGM is that we will be rolling out a double-knockout format schedule for the Provincial Championships. With all teams being guaranteed 3 games by including 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> place 'seeding' games, all teams will have the opportunity to play on Championship Sunday. Since the bronze and gold medal games will now take place consecutively, this will also allow both medal games to be broadcast with commentary. This double-knockout format will be as a 'test-run' in 2017 and will be re-evaluated at our next AGM.

The schedule for the 2017 season will be available by April, and opening day of the season will be Friday September 8, 2017. We are currently seeking a Presenting Sponsor for the 2017 Provincial Championships. For more information on this, please contact Matt Allen.

Applications for the Outstanding Contribution Award will be open until September 1, 2017. Awards criteria and submission information can be found here:

<http://www.oiwfa.org/wb/pages/awards/outstanding-contribution-award.php>

The 2016 season undoubtedly saw some of the best competition ever across the board from all 13 teams. The Executive will be working hard throughout the next 8 months in preparation for the 2017

season, and we hope you will continue to join us in following along online or out at the park as we strive to make our next season an even better one. There will be tons of exciting softball to watch with two big tournaments being hosted within the OIWFA in 2017. Stay tuned!

All the best for 2017,

Matt Allen  
President

Steph Manson  
Vice-President

Lisa Ryerson  
Treasurer

Elissa Sivel  
Secretary

If you have any questions about our 2016 OIWFA Update or would like more information about the OIWFA, please contact Matt Allen at [matt\\_allen44@hotmail.com](mailto:matt_allen44@hotmail.com).