

## Area broomball team wins national championship



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By Tony Pearson

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The Misleads went through the tournament undefeated, although almost all the games were close. They won 4-3 over New Brunswick, 2-1 over Owen Sound, and in the Page play-off system, just got by Quebec 4-3 in overtime. Their easiest win was over a team from the Northwest Territories, who despite not being the most talented squad, won everyone's admiration for playing hard and never giving up; they won the award as the most "sports-minded" team.

The Misleads also placed four of their members on the tournament all-star team - forwards Pierre Lacombe and Thomas St. Pierre, goalie Holly Reid, and coach Jason O'Brien. Reid had the lowest goals-against average in the tournament, with two shot-outs to her credit (including one in the final). Lacombe and St. Pierre had the most goals, with St. Pierre registering the most overall points. Lacombe was voted the MVP of the gold medal game, while Rick Vanloon was voted overall Mislead MVP by his teammates. O'Brien saluted his crew for their speed, ball-handling, and tenacity: "The bigger the game, the harder they play," he stated. He also praised the goal-keeping.

"All in all, I've never been more proud of a team than I was during this championship," he continued. "Everyone was determined to bring home the gold, right from Day One."

As it turns out, broomball is quite popular in Eastern Ontario - in Ottawa, Kingston, and Carleton Place as well as Palmer Rapids. O'Brien says that people who try the game are often surprised by how much fun it is. Mixed broomball requires three women on the ice at all times, and it's non-contact for the most part.

The Misleads now advance to the World Championship, to be held next November in Regina, as "Team Canada." A busy round of fundraising will be needed to make the trip. But if Regina seems far away to us, consider that teams are coming, not just from Europe (Italy), but from Asia (Japan) and Australia.

On the other hand, as O'Brien says, "There's no better feeling than accomplishing your goals in your favourite sport, alongside people who are your close friends."