

Canada wins bronze at Women's World Cup

By DEREK VAN DIEST, QMI Agency



Team Canada celebrates winning the bronze medal at the Women's World Cup of Baseball against Australia at Telus Field on Sunday. (Codie McLachlan/QMI Agency)

EDMONTON - It wasn't the medal they were after, but for Canada's national women's baseball team, it was better than leaving town empty-handed.

Canada defeated Australia 17-13 in Sunday's marathon bronze medal game at the Women's World Cup of Baseball. The game at Telus Field took three hours and 14 minutes to play, saw the teams combine for 31 hits and featured 10 pitchers.

"It was tough coming back after what we experienced (Saturday)," said Canadian manager Andre Lachance.

"I think everybody was tired on both sides, so that's why we saw the results we did with so many hits and 30 runs.

"But every time you play for a medal, you want to win, especially after a game like (Saturday). It's always tough to lose a semifinal game and then have to come back the next day and play for a bronze medal, but the girls responded well."

Canada had high hopes heading into the tournament and won their first five round-robin games to secure a spot in the semifinals.

But a lost to Japan in their final round-robin game set up a 17-4 semifinal loss to the U.S. on Saturday.

"I think everybody was pissed off (Saturday) night, including myself," said Lachance.

"It was tough because we still think we had the best team here, to be honest. We would like to play those guys again and see what we're really made of.

"We had one bad game and it came at the wrong moment."

Regardless, Lachance was happy with his team's effort throughout the tournament, which included a victory over the U.S. in the round robin.

"Things were a little different this year because the World Cup was here in Canada, so we had a little bit more money to have a longer camp," Lachance said.

"It was interesting to see how the girls got together and bonded before getting here and I think the results showed on the field. It was a great experience for everybody."

Canada got off to a good start against Australia, finding the bats that had gone silent the night before.

The Canadians put up five runs in the second inning, including an inside-the-park home run by local product Nicole Luchanski.

"I thought the fielder looked like she might have been camped under it," Luchanski said.

"But I guess she just got a bad read. I just kept going and I was waved in.

"I thought it was at least a triple for sure. I'm a pretty aggressive base runner with my speed, but when she didn't have control of it when I was approaching third, I thought I could get an inside-the-park homer for sure."

Canada added another three runs in the third, four in the fifth and put up another five in the sixth.

Australia had some pretty good bats of their own, scoring a run in the third, three in both the fourth and fifth and another in the sixth.

The Aussies then made things interesting with five runs in the top of the seventh to cut a nine-run deficit to three.

Australia loaded the bases with their best hitter at the plate, but Christina Kreppold struck out.

Hannah Martensen earned the victory on the mound for Canada, entering the game in relief.

Australian starter Brittany Hepburn took the loss, lasting just an inning and a third.

"It got a little tense there at the end," said Jenna Flannigan, who went four-for-four at the plate with four runs and an RBI.

"You never know what's going to happen, so you just have to go one out at a time.

"It was good that we were able to hold on and get the win. This being my first World Cup, it was nice to get a medal."

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