

# SPORTS & REC

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## Royals fall short as UBC steals their thunder

### Coach Kaluzniak proud of his players' performance

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The Parksville Royals' season ended with a heartbreaking 8-7 loss to the top-seeded UBC Thunder in the final of the British Columbia Premier Baseball League Premier Championships.

The Royals rallied from a 6-3 deficit to grab a 7-6 lead in the top of the seventh and were three outs away from the title. Unfortunately it wasn't meant to be as the Thunder's Robert Orr homered to tie it up 7-7 and force extra innings.

The Royals had an opportunity in the top of the eighth with runners on base but were not able to capitalize.

The Thunder placed two runners in scoring position and Oliver Clements's single to centrefield led to Calvin Gully from second, scoring the winning run and giving UBC the 2023 PBL Championship.

Catcher Keitaro Adachi led the way for the Royals with three hits and three runs scored. Parker McBurnie had a hit, drove in two runs, and walked twice. The clutch hit of the game again came from Thomas Plant, whose two-out single drove in McBurnie and Kolopenuk to keep the comeback alive. Plant finished with four RBIs for the second time in the tournament.

It was an emotional and sad conclusion for the Royals who, despite not having a good start to the season, finished strong, winning their last seven league games in a row and 12 of the last 15 games to earn the eighth spot in the playoffs that they hosted at Springwood Park, July 20 to July 23.

"I am super proud of the kids," said head coach Frank Kaluzniak.

"We weren't on the better side of it but I



Parksville Royals baserunner Tyler Kolopenuk dives back to first base, beating the throw to Ryan Kennedy, during a pickoff attempt. (Michael Briones photo)

couldn't be more proud of what I have seen from my guys. We came a long way. It's bitter-sweet but I am proud of them."

Kaluzniak said it was a slow process to get the Royals to fully convince themselves they were competitive enough to win the league.

"Even when we were struggling at the beginning of the year, I kept telling them that we had one of the best teams in the league," said Kaluzniak.

"And it took us a while for our kids to believe. Once they started to believe in themselves that's

when we started to get it done."

In their playoff run, the Royals opened with an 8-5 decision over the fourth-seeded White Rock Tritons but lost to the eventual-champion Thunder 5-3 in a close game.

The Royals earned their berth in the semifinals when they outlasted the Mid-Island Pirates 9-8. The Royals went deep twice on their way to the victory. The first home run came from Breandan McLaughlin who launched a solo shot in the top of the third inning. Then Plant came up in the fourth and crushed a pitch to

deep left-centre to score two runs. Thomas Plant added a double in the fifth and finished the day with four RBIs to lead the boys in purple to the victory.

The Royals kept the momentum going when they blanked the third seeded Delta Blue Jays, who prior to that game allowed just one run their previous three games. Pitcher McBurnie hurled six electric innings with six strikeouts and no runs allowed. Justin Ackerman sealed the win for the Royals in relief, throwing nine strikes out of 11 pitches.



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Island Health will host two public drop-in sessions (one in person, one virtually) as part of a rezoning application process to open an abstinence based 19-bed addictions treatment centre at 188 McCarter Street in Parkville, BC.

Staff from Island Health will be in attendance at both sessions to share information about the proposed addictions treatment centre and the services it will provide and to answer questions from participants.

Everyone is welcome to attend.

<b>In-Person Drop-In Open House</b>	<b>Virtual Drop-In Open House</b>
Date: August 2, 2023	Date: August 9, 2023
Time: 3 pm - 6 pm	Time: 3 pm - 6 pm
Location: 188 McCarter Street	Location: Zoom meeting.

Please email [MHSUinfo@islandhealth.ca](mailto:MHSUinfo@islandhealth.ca) for the Zoom meeting link.