

Orinda Pinto League A's Take Crown

By Frank Tse



A's celebrate championship win

Photo submitted

Going into Sunday's championship game, the Orinda Pinto League Bombers had momentum on its side. In the span of just five days, the red-hot Bombers knocked out three play-off teams and then beat the undefeated A's 13-12 on Saturday to force a winner-take-all match against the A's.

Yet on Sunday, it was the A's who grabbed momentum by the throat by shifting their defense to a higher gear. "Holding a hot-hitting Bombers team to just one run in the first three innings was a tremendous defensive effort from the A's fielders," said A's manager Steve Cassriel.

In Saturday's loss, the A's allowed 12 runs in the first three innings. The A's cruised to a 14-8 victory to take the Pinto League crown.

"With the pressure of an undefeated season gone, our team played much more focused and relaxed," explained A's coach Scott Mollahan.

A couple of defensive moves also paid dividends for the A's. Will Cassriel moved from his customary pitcher's assistant position to short-stop, and had a game-high of five assists and two line-drive catches. In the fourth inning, as the Bombers threatened to rally, Stephen Tse made two athletic running catches in the outfield to rob Nikhil Shastri and Max Levy of extra-base hits. Henry Connor handled first base flawlessly as he filled-in for all-star teammate Chase Callister.

In a game highlighted by defense, the A's offensive quietly built a 10-

run lead with a balanced attack. Ten A's players scored at least a run, with Ben Mollahan, Derrick Garcia, Zach Weiner and Connor scoring two runs each.

For the Bombers, third baseman Teddy Hoxie scored three runs and made several sensational stops, while leadoff hitter Andrew Schwarz scored two runs.

In Saturday's prelude, A's Asim Khan, Paul Bakshi, Tommy Brovelli and Paul Legellet combined to tie the game at 12-12 in the sixth inning. But on the bottoof the 6th, Bomber Michael Swinton knocked in Henry Marken for the game winner.