

Nyhof hoping to cap college career with national title

By EAMONN MAHER

Staff Writer

There's just one thing left for Georgetown's Kelly Nyhof to accomplish in her last year as a member of Humber College's women's varsity volleyball team, having already won four straight Ontario championships along with a slew of individual honours.

The 22-year-old law student came back for her fifth and final season of eligibility to help the Hawks try to finally break through on the national stage after several years of domination within the Ontario Colleges Athletic Association.

Humber has actually advanced to the national championship tournament six consecutive years, but a fourth-place finish two years ago was their best result.

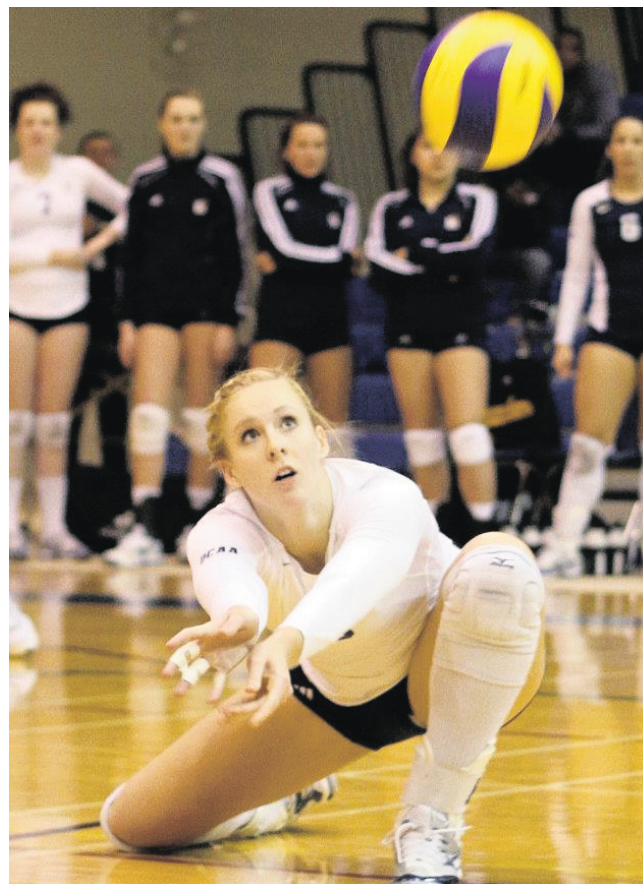
Ranked third in Canada this year with a perfect 9-0 match record heading into the holidays, Humber captain Nyhof is confident that her college career will end with some hardware around her neck that doesn't involve a personal achievement.

She was also selected to play for Canada's national women's team for the first time at a tournament in Russia during the summer and hopes to get another call next year after her playing career at Humber is over.

"It's nice to be recognized, but for now it would be a bigger accomplishment for the team to get a medal at nationals rather than any individual award you'd get, just because a team accomplishment feels better in the end," said the 6-foot-1 middle, who starred for Christ the King Secondary School.

"Even though we're relatively younger this year, we're taller and more versatile. I have a feeling this year is going to be good because the nationals are at Seneca College, which should be like a home-court advantage for us."

Hawks' coach Chris Wilkins said he didn't have to make much of a recruiting pitch to Nyhof to return to Humber for a fifth year, despite her having several options elsewhere.



Georgetown's Kelly Nyhof is considered to be one of the top community college women's volleyball players in Canada and is optimistic her final year of eligibility with the Humber Hawks is a memorable one.

Submitted photo

There was also the motivating memory of Humber's heartbreaking loss in the national semifinals two years ago when the Hawks were edged out in a fifth-and-deciding set to host Vancouver Island College, before losing in the bronze-medal match.

"Kelly had some choices— obviously a big one being

with Volleyball Canada — and some options to play for different institutions, but it goes to the character of who she is when she told me that she wanted to finish her last year here with the teammates she started with," said Wilkins, who has been Humber's coach for 19 seasons.

"She felt that we had strong opportunity to win a national championship and do it close to home. It's been a long time since an Ontario school has won the Canadian title and that's been our focus since day one this season."

Playing in a largely weak Ontario conference, Nyhof said the team's practices are actually more intense than some of their league matches. Wilkins entered the team in a week-long tournament in Florida after Christmas to keep the team sharp, something that worked well in 2011 when the Hawks had their best showing to date.

Nyhof was coaxed back for another year after earning a degree in child & youth work. She has hired an agent and has researched playing professionally in Europe, but also hasn't ruled out lining up for Canada at the 2016 Summer Olympics in Brazil if she continues to be on the national team's radar.

"I'm interested in pursuing a career in law, like office administration, a legal assistant or law clerk, but I can always put that on hold and try playing in Europe. We'll wait and see where the national team goes."

Nyhof, a product of the Georgetown Impact club organization, is the middle sibling of an athletic family. Her older sister Jillian played Division I volleyball in the U.S. on scholarship at Coastal Carolina University, while younger brother Greg is a third-year wide receiver for Wilfrid Laurier University's football team.

As well as earning an invite to compete for Canada at the FISU World University Games in Russia this past summer, Nyhof has twice been named OCAA Player of the Year and a CCAA All-Canadian selection.

Last year, she was the OCAA scoring champion (5.3 points per set, 199 kills, 43 blocks, 32 aces in 18 matches) and earned Humber's Female Athlete of the Year award.

Raiders halt three-game losing streak by clipping Red Wings 5-1

A 5-1 road victory over the Hamilton Red Wings Monday evening snapped the Georgetown Raiders' three-game losing streak in Ontario Junior Hockey League play, with three games on tap before heading into the holidays.

Captain Steve Hladin notched his second hat trick of the season after the quick-

ly fading Wings took an early 1-0 lead.

Brendan Jacome and Phil Kiss also found the mark for the 17-14-2 Raiders, who played host to the Burlington Cougars Wednesday night.

Nicholas Palumbo and Liam Board chipped in two assists apiece for Georgetown and Michael McNiven only faced 19

Hamilton shots, with the visitors firing 37 at Mark Sinclair.

On Sunday afternoon in North York, the Raiders couldn't hold on to a 3-2 second-period lead and ended up losing 4-3. Hladin, Ryan Smith and Andrew Court were the Georgetown goal scorers.

Local resident and former Raider

Zachary Fung scored once and set up another for the Rangers Sunday and the 19-year-old forward now has 10 goals and 30 points this season.

The Raiders will travel to Oakville Friday night to face the Blades and host Milton Saturday at 7:30 p.m. before getting a two-week holiday break.

Wishing Everyone a Happy Holiday Season

Take advantage of our **\$500 GAS CARD** or **\$500 Prepaid VISA**
with Every New vehicle purchased between now and January 2, 2014!

GEORGETOWN
TOYOTA

Holiday hours • Christmas Eve - 9 to 2 • Christmas day - closed • Boxing Day - closed • Friday - regular business hours

15 MOUNTAINVIEW RD. N., GEORGETOWN

905-877-2296

www.georgetowntoyota.com