



The Halton Hills novice AE Thunder captured the OMHA Central Division championship on Sunday in Markham. Team members (front, from left) are: Jaden DeZeeuw, Lucas Denning. Second row: Ronan Harrison, Jack Munday, Victoria Price, Sydney Hood, Josh Cheeseman, Evan Wright, Kyle Targett, Zac Van Damme, Krozly Vassos. Third row: Thomas Harney, Jackson Gognavic, Chris Cuthbertson, Deacon King, Riley Targett, Cameron D'Amico. Back row: Dave Hood, Dan King, John Bulhoes, Bryan Krafczek, Sean Targett. Not pictured: Manager Valerie Petryniak. *Submitted photo*

Novice AEs earn OMHA title

The first-ever Ontario Minor Hockey Association championship won by the newly amalgamated Halton Hills Thunder organization was earned by the novice (8-year-olds) additional entry rep team earlier this month in Markham.

A 4-3 overtime victory over the Waxers clinched the OMHA Central Division novice AE title and completed a sweep of the best-of-5 series for the

Thunder, which finished its fantastic season with an overall record of 61-6-4.

The team went undefeated through the regular season and won three tournaments along the way.

In other action, the Halton Hills atom AE Thunder was edged 3-2 at home by the Aurora Tigers last weekend and bowed out of the OMHA Group 2 final three games to one after winning the opening contest.

Skaters have need for speed

Four Halton Hills residents have turned in some podium-worthy results this winter on the long blades as members of the Milton Speed Skating Club at Ontario series meets and the recent provincial championship races in Newmarket.

Matt Laxton, 14, raced to gold medals at regional meets in Belleville and London earlier in the season, advancing

from his first-place standing among regional skaters to the Provincial Series, in which he's currently ranked seventh.

Laxton placed third at the Ontario championships in the 3,000m and was on the silver-medal-winning relay team, making him the third alternate for Team Ontario for the upcoming Canada East Championships in Quebec.

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Raiders ready for Patriots

The Georgetown Raiders and Toronto Lakeshore Patriots are set to meet in the Ontario Junior Hockey League playoffs for the second straight year, although the circumstances are much different this time around.

Game one of the best-of-7 South/West Conference championship series was set for Etobicoke's Westwood Arena Wednesday night at 7 p.m., followed by game two Saturday at Georgetown's Alcott Arena at 7:30 p.m.

Last year, the favoured Raiders defeated the Patriots in last year's first round of the playoffs in six games and the teams split the 2013-14 regular-season series 1-1, with Georgetown winning the most recent meeting 4-1 here on Feb. 19.

This season, Toronto Lakeshore owned top spot in the conference for much of the campaign, while the Raiders struggled at around the .500 mark in December before becoming one of the OJHL's hottest clubs in the new year.

The first-place Patriots didn't have a player among the top 25 in league scoring but finished up with the best record in the regular season for the South/West Conference.

Like the third-seeded Raiders, Toronto Lakeshore has lost just one game in the post-season after dispatching the Toronto Jr. Canadiens and the North York Rangers to reach the conference final.

Game three of the series will be played Monday at Westwood.

In the North/East Conference final, the Aurora Tigers will take on the top-ranked Kingston Voyageurs after the Tigers edged Cobourg 2-1 Tuesday night in game seven of their series.

The Raiders dropped the opening game of their conference semifinal series against Buffalo before storming back to take the next four to eliminate the Jr. Sabres.

Georgetown captain Steve Hladin again took charge, netting two goals, including an empty-netter late in the



Linemates Anthony Marra and captain Steve Hladin celebrate a big goal during last Wednesday's comeback 6-4 win for the Georgetown Raiders in their second-round playoff series with the Buffalo Jr. Sabres.

Photo by Brian Watts / OJHL Images

third to seal the 5-1 result in game five last Saturday in Buffalo. The 19-year-old from Mississauga is now second in league playoff scoring with 19 points in nine starts.

For updates after each game of the series, visit our website www.theifp.ca

NOTES: Second-year Raiders' winger Anthony Marra of Guelph knows what it's like to win a championship in Georgetown. Marra played for the Georgetown Eagles' squad in 2007 that won Baseball Canada's peewee AAA boys' title in Quebec City under coach Bill Byckowski. Another player from that ball team, Mark Jankowski of Dundas, was a first-round draft pick of the Calgary Flames in 2012 and is now playing for Providence College... Former Raiders' associate coach Ryan Kuwabara was recently named the Golden Horseshoe Conference (Junior B) coach of the year with the Ancaster Avalanche (formerly Stoney Creek).



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