

Acton, Georgetown ball groups unite

By Eamonn Maher
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The newly formed Halton Hills Minor Baseball Association, which has merged the Georgetown and Acton organizations for the 2015 season, will host a festival to reveal the new uniforms this Saturday at the Cedarvale Community Centre from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Discussions began late last season about possibly bringing the two groups together, mainly for logistical reasons. With 150 players in the Acton association, the amalgamation will mean that approximately 700 youths will play under the HHMBA, including bantam and midget boys' teams from Brookville, Campbellville and Kilbride that play in the Central Ontario Baseball Association Rural League.

"With the number of volunteers and kids out there, it just didn't make sense to operate with two organizations when it was better to organize everything with one," said Dee Dee Haynes-Ridley, the HHMBA's secretary and director of umpires.

"We're trying our best to accommodate both communities and have games in both communities so it will make things easier for the amalgamation."

Former Acton Minor Baseball Association president Larry Fitzgerald has assumed the same role with the new Halton Hills' organization.

All that's required for the amalgamation to become official is the approval from the Town of Halton Hills as Baseball Ontario has already okayed the merger.

At Saturday's festival, the new rep team uniforms will be revealed and sizing will be taken for team members, with the Eagles' nickname from the Georgetown Baseball Association remaining with the Halton Hills' rep teams. A ceremony will also take place to officially mark the amalgamation.

Haynes-Ridley added that the rebranding of the new Halton Hills organization was a five-month process that involved entering a partnership with uniform provider T. Litzen and Nike Canada that will offer Eagles' merchandise for sale online.



"This is just the start. There's going to be all kinds of things coming down the pipe soon. It's just going to take a bit of time," she said, hinting that the season would begin with an opening-day tournament.

NCCP-sanctioned clinics for rep and select coaches will take place on the Feb. 20-22 weekend at the Cedarvale Community Centre. House league coaches do not require NCCP certification and anyone interested is asked to contact Fitzgerald at larry.fitzgerald@hhmba.ca

The amalgamation means that select ball will be available to the former Acton association members for the first time. In past years, Acton residents were welcomed by the Georgetown rep teams that played at higher Baseball Ontario classifications.

Registration for the house league divisions is tentatively set to begin on March 1. For more info, including a schedule of Saturday's fitting times for the rep teams, visit the website www.haltonhillsminorbaseball.ca



Georgetown's Matt Laxton is in his first year of long-track speed skating with the club based in Milton and has caught on quickly, qualifying for the Canada Cup #3 5,000-metre event held late last month in Ste. Foy, Que. Submitted photo

Locals shine for Milton Speed Skating Club

Laxton, Carr enjoy taking the long route

A couple of Georgetown residents with the Milton Speed Skating Club have taken a shine to the long-track version of the sport this winter.

Sixteen-year-old Matt Laxton and Kelsey Carr, 14, remain active on the short track, but are also faring well on the big oval, which involves some outdoor skating.

Laxton attended the Canada Winter Games Long Track Trials in Quebec in December and placed 10th, earning him an invitation to the recent Canada Cup #3 races in Ste. Foy.

He also finished fourth overall in the men's division at the Provincial Long Track Championships in Ottawa last month, placing third in both the 3,000m and 5,000m events.

Carr, meanwhile, has enjoyed her first year of long track as well, although the wind chill temperatures at a recent outdoor oval qualifier in Ottawa hit -35C.

The longtime Milton Speed Skating Club member was able to surpass the required time standards at that meet and earned a berth at this weekend's Canadian Long Track Championships in Saskatoon as a member of Team Ontario.

Carr has also been doing well in short track, earning gold medals at the Western Regional meet in Milton in the 400m, 500m and 1,500m.

Another local resident, Samuel McEachran, did qualify for the Canada Winter Games and will travel to Prince George, B.C. for the event to be held Feb. 13 to March 1.

REBELS RALLY FALLS SHORT Georgetown Rebels' forward Sarah Laurie lets a shot rip against the visiting Abbey Park Eagles Tuesday afternoon in a matchup of Halton Tier II varsity girls' hockey teams at the Alcott Arena. The Rebels rallied from a 4-1 deficit after two periods but were denied their first win of the season by a final score of 6-4. In boys' action on Tuesday, Christ the King's Jaguars improved to 3-2-1 on the Tier I season with a 5-2 home victory over Frank Hayden S.S.

Photo by Eamonn Maher





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