



**Tucker Johnson (15) celebrates a crucial point during Christ the King's Jaguars five-set victory over the St. Thomas Aquinas Raiders Monday in the Halton Tier I championship match at Sheridan College in Oakville.**

*Photo by Graham Paine/Metroland West Media*

## Jaguars hold off Aquinas for Halton Tier I title

Christ the King's Jaguars captured their first-ever Halton Tier I senior high school volleyball title Monday afternoon with a rousing, pushed-to-the-limit 25-22, 18-25, 25-16, 21-25, 15-12 victory over the top-ranked St. Thomas Aquinas Raiders of Oakville at Sheridan College.

The Raiders, who finished 11-1 during the regular season and just edged out the 10-2 Jags for first place in the Tier I division, twice rallied from a set down and appeared to have the momentum heading into the fifth-set tiebreaker.

But an experienced group of CtK seniors fended off the STA comeback bid and earned home court advantage for this Thursday's Golden Horseshoe Athletic Conference championship match against Hamilton's St. Thomas More beginning at 3 p.m.

The winner of that contest will

advance to the OFSAA AAA championship tournament in Windsor Nov. 26-28.

For two members of the team, Jayson Tate and Mike Korzeniewski, this is their third consecutive Halton title after winning two Tier I championships in a row in the junior age group.

In other playoff action Monday, Georgetown District High School's junior boys were edged out for the Halton Secondary School Athletic Association Tier I volleyball title at Burlington's Garth Webb Chargers prevailed two sets to one over the Rebels in a clash between undefeated teams.

**FOOTBALL:** Georgetown and CtK advanced to the HSSAA Tier II junior semifinals, with the Rebels downed 13-0 by Milton's Jean Vanier and the Jaguars lost at home to Assumption 48-13.

## Kelly embarks on new plan for GAO

**By Eamonn Maher**  
emaher@theifp.ca

Local native Mike Kelly has just taken the reins as executive director of the Golf Association of Ontario and he's teeing up an ambitious plan to establish the sport at the grassroots level.

The 36-year-old father of kids age 5 and 6, who now resides in Brooklin, had been the GAO's interim executive director for five months until recently "having the training wheels taken off."

Kelly has heard all of the complaints about the current state of golf; that 18 holes take too long to play, it's too expensive and has become an elitist activity.

He says those issues can be addressed with the co-operation of the key industry stakeholders and while acknowledging that it's an imposing challenge, there are many more positives to accentuate, such as fitness and developing active life skills.

"We don't pump our own tires enough," he said. "It's a story we need to tell more often and it doesn't involve concussions."

Kelly has spent the past eight months researching the new strategic plan, which is called Building Golf Communities, and a pilot program in Barrie just launched this week. A province-wide implementation has been tentatively set for the spring of 2017.

Backed by funding from the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture & Sport, the concept draws from other sports such as tennis, basketball and youth hockey as well as Golf England's Get Into Golf campaign.

The GAO has also set up introductory displays at girls' hockey tournaments and is already seeing participatory numbers rise in those age groups. Discussions are ongoing with the Ontario Minor Hockey Association to make the same pitch to families.

"Potentially, it would be something structured like the Georgetown Minor Hockey Association," explained Kelly, who played on scholarship at Kentucky's Union College before graduating from the Professional Golf Management program at Georgian College in Barrie.

"We'd be creating that for golf, but instead of just being for kids, it would involve the entire family, so you'd be playing in golf leagues and not belonging to Eagle Ridge or North Halton or somewhere around the area. It would be Golf Georgetown, if you will, in order for it to be sustainable like you see in other sports. Yes, we're going head to head with those sports, but the beauty of golf is you can play your entire life."

Some might remember Kelly as



**MIKE KELLY**

Mr. Knickers, the "golf-meets-Disneyland" character who introduced the game to elementary school kids with activities that involved more running and jumping than actually hitting real golf balls. Golf at Schools is now a national program with more than 2,500 schools participating and it started in 2001 at Georgetown's Holy Cross and a couple of others in Mississauga.

Prior to becoming the GAO's executive director, Kelly worked as its managing director of sport for nearly a decade after a nine-year stint with ClubLink.

"The biggest trick here, which hasn't really been done, is getting golf courses in any given market to work together, rather than fighting each other," he said.

"With golf today, it's a race to the bottom. The idea is to band together

all of the golf organizations and course owners and the PGA to help get this off the ground. If you want more members in the GAO tomorrow, or if you want more people playing in our championships or training programs, that doesn't matter. We're taking the long-term approach instead of trying to fix the problems of today. We're going to the root of the problem and that's trying to build a culture of golf at the community level. And it all starts with golf course owners leaving their egos at the door."

Noting that "Georgetown could use one more public course today," Kelly attended Holy Cross before moving on to high school at Milton's Bishop Reding. He played baseball with the Georgetown Eagles until giving it up in Grade 10 to concentrate more on golf, signing up as a junior at The Club at North Halton and working for a year at the Georgetown Golf Club (now known as Eagle Ridge).

Kelly has been recognized for his accomplishments at the youth level with national awards for the Golf In Schools program and another for coaching development. He is especially excited about the prospects for the GAO in 2016 with the Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, where golf is slated to make its return to the five-ringed athletic circus after a nearly century-long absence.

"Most people probably don't know that we're the defending champs (George S. Lyon at the 1904 Games in St. Louis, Mo.) and we're hanging on to that one for dear life," he laughed.

"Seriously though, we've got a potential gold medallist right here in Ontario with Brittany Henderson. She's got a legitimate shot based on the amazing things we've seen her accomplish so far. Could you imagine the impact that would have?"

Continued on page 51 ►



**COUNTDOWN TO THE  
RAIDERS  
NEXT HOME GAME**

**Sat. Nov. 21, 2015**  
**7:30 pm at Mold-Masters Sports Plex**  
**Georgetown Raiders**  
**vs.**  
**St. Michaels Buzzers**

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