

SPORTS & LEISURE

McCauley out, Richmond in as Raiders' coach

EAMONN MAHER
Staff Writer

Blaine McCauley's stint as head coach of his hometown Georgetown Raiders lasted just 24 games before the OHA Provincial Jr. A Hockey League club replaced him and assistant Duke Bouskill over the weekend in the midst of a four-game unbeaten streak.

James Richmond will be behind the bench tonight (Wednesday) when the Raiders host the Buffalo Jr. Sabres at Alcott Arena beginning at 8 p.m. Raiders' owner Ted Nishi met with McCauley and Bouskill after Saturday's 3-3 home tie with Burlington to inform them of his decision.

"I truly respect the admirable job that Blaine and Duke did, but we're half-way through the regular season at this point and we're in fifth place out of 10 teams in our division," said Nishi, who assumed the general manager's duties after Jack Moon

resigned two weeks ago.

"The unfortunate part of this business is that you have to make difficult management decisions like this when a team isn't meeting its expectations. From a timing standpoint, we've still got half a season left and if we had waited until January to make a change if things hadn't improved, it would be too late to have any effect. We are very fortunate that someone with James's background was available and that he's excited to be joining us."

Nishi added that McCauley was asked to bring in another assistant to help address the team's defensive shortcomings, which had included breakdowns late in games against division rivals. For his part, the 30-year-old McCauley said he was in the process of recruiting an assistant, and even with a 13-5-



BLAINE McCAULEY

3-3 record, a "difference in philosophies" is what led to the change.

"Duke and I had a vision of bringing back the Raiders to the Georgetown community using a three-year period and we were on the right path, but there are people involved with the organization who just want to win at all costs by trying to buy a championship and that's what's wrong with junior hockey today," McCauley said.

"We stand for our principles and it's a matter of them (management) pulling in a different direction, and that's a different plan than what we agreed to coach over the summer."

Richmond becomes the third Raider bench boss since the club's run to the Royal Bank Cup in May 2005. The 43-year-old Mississauga native captained the University of New Hampshire's varsity team and later

served as player/coach for pro teams in Denmark, Holland and Germany. Richmond has since become director of player development for the Ontario Hockey League's Owen Sound Attack, as well as a coach for the Ontario Minor Hockey Association's under-17 Program of Excellence.

"I know that there is a good core of leadership there and the type of players who have been in winning situations before," said the King City resident. "For me to come in during the middle of the season, one of the things I can do is to go over those games they've dropped, go back and look what went wrong and get those questions answered. Work ethic and building consistency are the keys."

Richmond's assistants are Lucky DeGrazia and Craig Teeple. DeGrazia operates a youth hockey academy north of Toronto and the 35-year-old Teeple played several seasons professionally in Europe.

Raiders hope for net results

EAMONN MAHER
Staff Writer

Perhaps overshadowed by a change in the coaching staff of the Georgetown Jr. A Raiders over the weekend was the acquisition of another 20-year-old goalkeeper with impressive credentials, creating what team officials hope will be a "friendly competition" for the starter's job.

Well-traveled Brian Mahoney-Wilson was signed by the Raiders last week and made his debut in Friday's 7-3 win at Bramalea over the last-place Blues, in which he faced 23 shots. His new teammate in Georgetown, Kitchener native Keaton Hartigan, isn't likely to surrender his current status as the Raiders' go-to goalie, however, judged by his play in a 3-3 draw with the visiting Burlington Cougars Saturday night.

Hartigan, MVP of the Mid-Western Jr. B league last season, made several excellent saves to help the scrambling Raiders, who were outshot 52-32 by the third-place Cougars, earn a point. For now, Mahoney-Wilson and Hartigan will be employed in a platoon system until a clear-cut starter emerges. And with OPJHL clubs limited to nine 20-year-olds on their rosters, one of the goalies may not finish the season in Georgetown.

"Competition is good. People forget we had two 20-year-old goalies when we went



Georgetown Raider forwards Adam DeJong and Rob Sgarbossa try to dig out a rebound from a collapsing Burlington Cougar defence in their 3-3 draw Saturday night at the Alcott Arena in Jr. A hockey action. Despite being badly outplayed in the contest's late stages, the Raiders salvaged a 3-3 draw. Photo by Eamonn Maher

to the Royal Bank Cup two years ago," said Raiders' director of hockey operations Peter Mavroudis. "It puts us in a position where we're comfortable with whoever's in goal and it shows how much this team wants to win. Keaton wasn't being pushed as the starter so we wanted to bring someone in who was going to make it competitive. (Hartigan) is still our number one and he proved that by going out and stealing a point

for us against Burlington. At the same time, there's no guarantee either of them will finish out the year here. It does give us some options, because a lot of teams are looking for number-one goalies."

A native of West Roxbury, Mass. and the nephew of San Jose Sharks' head coach Ron Wilson, the Sharks drafted Mahoney-Wilson in the ninth round of the 2004 NHL Draft after the 5-foot-10, 177-pounder led

Catholic Memorial to back-to-back Super 8 Boston-area high school championships. He has since bounced around to a number of Jr. A teams in North America, overcoming serious injuries and bad timing, still wanting to prove he's worthy of U.S. scholarship offers to schools such as Boston College, Northeastern and Alaska-Anchorage.

Hartigan has posted a 9-6-3-0 record and 3.50 goals-against average so far for Georgetown. To make way for Mahoney-Wilson, 17-year-old backup netminder Cameron Healy was dealt to the Milton IceHawks.

It's not known which goalie will get the call this evening from new head coach James Richmond as the Raiders host the 4-18-4-0 Buffalo Jr. Sabres at the Alcott Arena beginning at 8 p.m. The fifth-place 13-5-3-3 Raiders could get the quarterback on the power play they've been looking for after 20-year-old Ryan Lee was released by the Austin Ice Bats of the Central Hockey League. Forward Kyle Schwende missed this past weekend's games to his firefighter training commitments but will return tonight.

Matt Carter tallied twice for the Raiders in Saturday's draw with the Cougars, including the equalizer midway through the third period. Jeremy Whelan added a single marker for the hosts. Scoring for Georgetown against Bramalea were Adam Campbell, Rob Sgarbossa, Matt Thomson, George Lovatsis, Jonathan Quarrie, Adam DeJong and Jon Southgate.

Also this week, the Raiders will travel to Oakville Friday to take on the Blades and then host the Hamilton Red Wings Saturday. Game time is 8 p.m.

(Eamonn Maher can be reached at emaher@independentfreepress.com)



GEORGETOWN TOYOTA

GAMES OF THE WEEK

GEORGETOWN JR. A RAIDERS
vs
BUFFALO JR. SABRES

Wednesday, November 22, 2006
8:00 pm

Mold-Masters SportsPlex (Alcott Arena)

GEORGETOWN JR. A RAIDERS
vs
HAMILTON RED WINGS

Saturday, November 25, 2006
8:00 pm

Mold-Masters SportsPlex (Alcott Arena)

GEORGETOWN JUNIOR "A"



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