

Appleby doubles its pleasure at OFSAA hockey

Girls win school's first-ever hockey gold, boys add another the next day

By Jon Kuiperij
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It took nearly 50 years for Appleby College to win its first Ontario Federation of School Athletic Associations hockey championship.

It took one day longer for Appleby to earn its second.

Both the school's girls' and boys' teams were crowned provincial champions at their respective A/AA tournaments last week. The Blue Dogs girls' team posted six straight wins to claim their OFSAA gold in Stratford, while the boys won all seven of their games in Timmins by a combined score of 36-6.

"It certainly is and was (special)," Appleby boys' coach Dan Poliziani said of the school's two teams winning OFSAA titles a day apart, "especially because both programs have such a large group of graduating seniors. It was real special and real emotional for our boys, and I can tell it was for the girls as well."

Poliziani added the success of Appleby's teams this season will pay dividends for the school's hockey program in the future.

"While development and getting to the next level is the primary goal of the program, I think... wins and losses really helps the recruitment process," he said.

"This will certainly help both programs in terms of the recognition that Appleby gets for offering a quality co-curricular program. It's co-curricular in that (hockey) is just as important as the day-to-day classes. It's a requirement. It's very much a part of what Appleby is."

Girls win despite depleted roster

Appleby's girls, under the guidance of former national team coach Margot Page, brought the school its first-ever OFSAA title last Friday with a 5-3 victory over St. Theresa in the championship game.

The Blue Dogs won provincial gold despite having only 10 skaters available for the final. OFSAA was held during the



BLUE DOGS TURN GOLD: The Appleby College girls' hockey team won the Ontario Federation of School Athletic Associations A/AA tournament last week in Stratford, earning the first OFSAA hockey gold in school history.

second week of the school's March Break, making it difficult for some Appleby players to participate, and national team players and transfer students weren't eligible to compete in the provincial tournament.

The timing of OFSAA is why Appleby had never sent a girls' team to the provincial tournament in the past.

But for those Blue Dogs players who did make the trip to Stratford this year, there was absolutely no regret about the lost opportunity to head south during their break from school.

"One of my seniors (Anissa Gamble) could have gone for a nice break somewhere," said Page, "but right after (we won OFSAA) she looked at me with tears in her eyes and said 'This was so well worth it. This was awesome.'"

The depleted roster made things more challenging for the

Blue Dogs — Grade 10 forward Lindsay Stenason actually had to move back to defence during the tournament — but those difficulties weren't reflected on the scoreboard.

All but one of Appleby's wins came by two goals or more, including a pair of 8-2 romps in round-robin play.

Kristyn Capizzano and Gamble did most of the damage offensively during the tournament for Appleby, each scoring twice in the gold-medal game. Erika Pyke had two goals in Appleby's 5-2 semifinal win over Kincardine.

Senior goaltender Laura Corcoran backstopped Appleby's final two wins of the tournament, and other players provided contributions that weren't always measurable in the box-score.

"Courtney Power was the defensive partner for (Stenason).

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