

Too much hockey coverage? Sure, but it's not our fault

When co-ordinating sports coverage for a community newspaper like the *Beaver*, one of the main goals is to make the coverage as diverse and balanced as possible.

Cover girls' sports as well as boys'. Cover children's sports as well as adults'. Cover all the sports, from hockey, football and basketball to cricket, wrestling and track.



JON KUIPER

If you've been reading our sports sections recently, you've certainly noticed that balance has been lacking of late.

But don't blame us. Blame the Oakville Rangers.

Minor Oaks Hockey Association rep teams have enjoyed a banner month, collecting no less than a dozen Ontario Minor Hockey Association banners. That's meant story after story about the boys (and occasional girl) in red, white and blue reaching the summit of their respective hockey divisions.

Not that all the coverage hasn't been warranted.

In fact, according to OMHA archivist Jim Kinkley, Oakville's 12 championships is an all-time record for one center in one season.

Ian Taylor, director of development at the OMHA, is well aware of the Rangers' success this year. The Oakville resident has coached in the MOHA at a variety of levels, currently working with seven-year-olds in the MOHA's

initiation system.

"Oakville's done a fantastic job," Taylor said. "I'm a huge believer in the initiation program to get (kids) off to the right start.

"Winning is the byproduct of some good development."

Taylor said he expects other centers will be looking for the Oakville blueprint in the near future.

"They'll be taking a hard look at what Oakville's doing and trying to emulate some of it," he said. "When we talk about development, winning isn't the first thing. But it makes people stand up and notice."

The dozen OMHA titles are just the cream of the crop. Two other teams were OMHA finalists, and six more earned Tri-County league championships.

And it would be a mistake to just highlight the strength of Oakville's rep system, Taylor said.

"There's some real good hockey in house league. The coaches are doing a good job with that," said Taylor.

The good news for those looking to read about something other than hockey? The OMHA playdowns are finished. There won't be any more Rangers teams winning OMHA titles this year.

We'll get back to writing about other sports soon. I promise.

Right after I'm done writing about Appleby College winning two OFSAA hockey championships last weekend, the MOHA house league Awards Week results and the Blades' progress through the Ontario Junior Hockey League playoffs, that is.

Oakville's dynamic dozen

Novice AAA – won OMHA tournament in Oakville
Novice AA - defeated Barrie in five games in final
Minor atom AAA - won OMHA tournament in Burlington
Atom AE - defeated Flamborough in three games in final
Minor peewee AAA - won OMHA tournament in Milton
Minor peewee A - defeated Cobourg in three games in final
Minor peewee AE - defeated New Tecumseth in six games in final
Peewee AE - defeated Orangeville in three games in final
Minor bantam AE - defeated Richmond Hill in six games in final
Bantam AE - defeated Stoney Creek in four games in final
Minor midget AA - defeated Ajax in four games in final
Midget AAA - won OMHA tournament in Newmarket



All minor peewee teams won titles

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The Rangers became Oakville's third minor peewee team to win an OMHA championship this year, joining the A and AAA squads. Oakville's other minor peewee team, the AA Rangers, won their Tri-County championship instead.

"The '99 age group in Oakville is crazy deep," Guay said. "Even when we were down 2-0, I don't think I shortened my bench or gave preferred treatment to anyone. (Our team) is just so even keel and so balanced."

The Rangers finished the season with an overall record of 60-13-3. They also won the

hometown Richard Bell tournament over the Christmas break.

Members of the team are Michael Legge, Adam Grant, Kyle Renpenning, Francis Guay, Stephen Kemp, Devlin Forsyth, Ethan Wilson, Matthew McGuigan, Ryan Rudderham, Thomas Campbell, Riley Butler, Justin Hui, Ben Schledewitz, Zachary D'Amico, Tyler Stodulski, Devon Wilson and Kyle Toushan.

Dean Renpenning, Chris Toushan and Scott Wilson are the club's assistant coaches, and Linda McGuigan is the Rangers' manager.

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