

New recreation director plans bright future for Halton Hills

By **STEPHEN FROST**
Herald Staff Writer

One of Tom Shepard's ambitions as the town's new recreation director is to unify his department across Halton Hills, so that a separate recreational atmosphere no longer exists in Georgetown and Acton.

In an interview with The Herald five weeks after taking on the job, Mr. Shepard reviewed his early education in Ontario schools and later Michigan, where his father worked for the Ford Motor Company. Mich-State University granted Tom a baseball scholarship, allowing him to continue his education in the physical education field.

A stint with the major league Detroit Tigers which garnered Mr. Shepard some initial publicity on his arrival in Halton Hills was downplayed by the 34-year old director, who explained he only "banged around" on the club's farm team.

Mr. Shepard feels that the recreation and parks master plan, due for final release in mid-March, will help him greatly in administering recreation across Halton Hills because it incorporates both Acton and Georgetown in a comprehensive scheme.

As Mayor Pomeroy pointed out last week to the George-

town Area Ratepayers Association, the master plan is a necessary component of the town's own official plan, enabling Halton Hills to apply for provincial government assistance grants.

The parks plan also gives Mr. Shepard some idea of what he has to budget for each year and what to present before council for approval. He stresses, however, the plan is only a guide, and priorities have to be examined each year and incorporated into the scheme of things.

PIECE OF PIE

Part of his job as recreation chief will be "to fight for as big a piece of the budgetary pie as possible". Priorities outside of recreation may force some scheduled project off the town's budget for a year, he said, but perhaps next year, he may be able to include it.

Among the proposed facilities outlined in the plan are two "community-scale" outdoor skating rinks, outdoor swimming areas, complete with beaches, six lighted tennis courts and more picnic areas. If the plan is accepted, the facilities would be developed over the next five years.

Recreation, Mr. Shepard feels, is not a "soft" service but a "hard" service; that is, it's something people want. When he worked in Walkerton

as recreation director, the total budget. When he left seven years later, it had increased to 12 per cent.



Tom Shepard, Recreation Director

Mr. Shepard feels that people aren't used to dealing with any plan covering five or more years and admits this will be a first for him as well. Because of the time frame involved, he feels it will be a good learning experience for everyone.

Concerning rental increases for the town's arenas, Mr. Shepard says that prices revised last year really aren't out of line compared to other areas. He makes it clear that the purpose of the increases was not to help make the arenas pay, but to find a happy medium whereby user-groups pay a more "reasonable amount" toward facilities that are largely supported by tax dollars.

Mr. Shepard also insists there are going to be changes in policy as far as the collection of ice rental fees is concerned. In the past, the attitude towards on-time collection has been rather slack, but he feels if groups using the ice from 6 to 7 a.m. can pay their fees on time, so can those using the ice in prime time.

When asked about proposed rental charges for other community facilities, such as soccer fields, baseball diamonds and gymnasiums, Mr. Shepard claims they will be nominal. In return for those

fees, user-groups will be able to avail themselves of recreation department facilities. For example, if a league in town wants copies of its schedule for distribution to its teams, the department may help with that, he said.

The main reason for the proposed charge is to try and offset the town's maintenance costs. Adult user-groups would have to pay their own way, while minor league groups would ideally be subsidized, he explained.

SMALL TOWN

As director of a small-town recreation department like Walkerton's, Mr. Shepard wasn't locked into any one job, as he may have been had he chosen a position in a large city. There, he often worked with arena crews at night to gain an intimate knowledge about the hows and whys of staff jobs, which enabled him to answer taxpayers in detail when questioned about arena operations.

Mr. Shepard feels his approachability and good relations with staff are two of the most important facets of his profession, which explains why informality is a favorite word of his. His job, he explains, is not necessarily to dictate but to co-operate with and co-ordinate groups and activities in the community.

Sport Camp novices second

Adam Bennett scored with only 26 seconds remaining to give North Halton Sports Camp Novices a thrilling 4-3 victory over the stubborn Chinguacousy team in the last regular season game for both teams.

The win assured Georgetown of at least second place in Tri-County standings with an outside chance of overtaking Burlington, should the latter lose either of their two remaining games.

The goal for Bennett was

his second of the contest as Georgetown built up leads of 2-0 and 3-1 before being tied by their opposition in the second last minute of the third period. Brent Presswood and Mark Lorito scored the other goals for the locals with Lorito and McDermot chipping in with assists.

The goaltending tandem of Chris Berry and Curtis Green made some key saves to keep Georgetown in the

game, particularly in the latter half when Ching applied the pressure.

On Sunday, the Sports Campers travelled to London for two exhibition games against London West and London South. Unfortunately the locals were on the short end of 5-2 and 4-3 scores. Jason Knight and Travis Gardner with two each and Adam Bennett scored for Georgetown in the two games.

Standard pee wees bow out

It's been a long and gratifying season for the Standard Product major pee wees but, it had to come to an end sometime. That time was Friday in Milton.

Friday in Milton the game went into overtime after three scoreless periods. The two teams had both won a game each. Milton won theirs the day before in Georgetown with a 3-0 score. However, it only took 3:24 before Milton scored the game's and series' winning goal.

Both teams played well with the goaltending making the difference. Had it not been for their outstanding work the players in front of them may have had an easier time scoring.

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