

# When he's not teaching, Jim's 'eye-balling' for the Blue Jays

By DAVE ROWNEY  
Herald Special

It's not easy to be a Toronto Blue Jays farm team coach and scout while fulfilling a teaching schedule during the year at Stewarttown's senior public school - but Jim Ridley just loves baseball.

"Baseball is my mistress," Ridley readily admits, "but my family comes first." The former professional ball player for Milwaukee is true to his word because for the first time in three years he's now at his home in Milton looking after the kids instead of in Medicine Hat for the summer.

His wife Pat, an Art teacher at Georgetown's District high school is going to school for the summer so Jim has stayed home to enjoy his children for the baseball season. But since Ridley was hired by the Toronto Blue Jays in 1976 as their number two scout, he's been on the road watching players and coaching the Medicine Hat Blue Jays.

The Medicine Hat team are a farm club for Toronto along with Syracuse. The Western league is one of the oldest professional minor league baseball leagues in existence.

When Ridley was with the Medicine Hat Blue Jays he would trudge his ballplayers



BLUE JAY SCOUT  
JIM RIDLEY

through a 70 game schedule in 71 days (yes, they played quite a number of double headers) over some 10,000 miles per month.

**TOUGHEST LEAGUE**  
It's one of the toughest travelling leagues for baseball in North America, says Ridley. To the 18, 19 and 20 year olds he coached he was, "priest, mother, father.... everything!"

While in Medicine Hat Ridley had to write a detailed report on all 240 players in the league, spending about 15 minutes on each player in writing time. "The single hardest thing for a scout to do is to rate prospects on their present and future potential," Ridley says.

Looking at such abilities as arm, footspeed, glove, attitude, bat and physical size, a scout evaluates and rates these abilities on a scale of 1 to 5 on both their present and future talents.

Although coaching techniques have improved, Ridley feels that youngsters are not as devoted to baseball as they used to be.

He's found that Canadian talent prevalent, but ball players need to play 12 months of the year. "It's hard to find a way to get the youngsters to throw the ball around often enough," he says.

Canadian kids are generally about one

year behind their American counterparts when it comes to hitting, Ridley says. Some prospects are scouted as early as 14 but when a ball player is in Junior, a decision is made whether or not to follow them.

Ridley's own baseball career started in Toronto at Christie Pits where he played Pee Wee and Midget ball and impressed seven major league scouts who offered to sign him to a major league contract.

Ironically, his present boss, Bobby Prentice, was one of the scouts he turned down. Prentice is the Blue Jays director of scouting but in 1963 he was with Detroit.

**PRO CAREER**  
Ridley played pro ball for four years with Milwaukee then headed for the Senior Independent league in Quebec. One of the pitfalls to his pro career was his coaches' insistence on trying to make him a pitcher instead of a centre fielder.

Jim married in 1970 and came to Ontario to play intercounty baseball from 1972-6. His first year Ridley won the league's batting crown for the Maple Leafs and was then offered to play and manage Stratford of the Intercounty league during the summer.

During the next three years with Stratford he won two batting championships and was voted manager of the year twice. Although having no real affiliations with the Montreal Expos except for helping out with clinics, he often directed prospects to Montreal.

But in late 1973 he was hired as a scout by Bobby Prentice who was then with the Detroit Tigers. "In those days I was a sub-scout and I'd report directly to Prentice."

Currently Ridley's scouting territory runs from Brampton to London and as far south as Niagara Falls. Most of the work is done during a six month period where a scout is on contract.

**SUB-SCOUTS**  
During the winter little is done besides going through the "banquet circuit" and talking to players through indoor clinics. Jim now has his own sub-scouts in each area he covers while he uses both the telephone and his car in an effort to find new prospects.

The Blue Jays management firmly believe the club cannot win without a strong farm system so every chance is given to develop youngsters, Ridley says.

One of Ridley's biggest signings and his hardest was Kevin Atchison from Stratford. His perseverance paid off because after four years Kevin knew Jim personally and phoned him before other pro scouts could lure him away from the Blue Jays organization. Atchison hit .285 last season and was the best outfielder in Medicine Hat says Ridley.

**FUTURE GOALS**  
Ridley is still waiting to have one of his players make the major leagues and this he sees as one of his future goals. Another goal is to win the World Series as a member of the Blue Jays organization. He's also got his eye on the coaching job of Canada's entry into a World championship to be tried in Los Angeles in 1984 as part of the Olympics. Although the baseball is not recognized as an Olympic sport, there is a good possibility the sports will be played in 1984, but not given official standing.

If Canada does send a team, there is perhaps no one who knows our homebrew players so well. Jim Ridley might just get that chance.

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## the HERALD

# Sportsweek

**NORTH HALTON SPORTS**  
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# Royalettes our wildcard entry in provincial finals

The Georgetown Legion Royalettes became the 'wild card' entry in the Ontario finals to be played in Georgetown Aug. 14 when they placed fourth in Stouffville last weekend at the qualifying Ontario regionals.

The Legion girls missed the chance to bring home the bronze medal when they were defeated by Aurora last Sunday 3-2, a team the Royalettes have beaten twice this season.

"The girls are a little disappointed," coach Wilkes said. "There was a lot of pride involved in trying to

win a medal, but no one's going to walk over us at the Ontario finals."

The general feeling on the club is that although they are automatically allowed an entry into the Ontario Intermediate girls fastball finals, the Royalettes wanted to prove they belonged by finishing within the top three teams.

However, the Royalettes played well and most likely impressed the other teams at the regionals that Georgetown will be a power to be reckoned with August 14, 15 and 16.

Coach Wilkes was pleased with how the team played Saturday and Sunday but the Georgetown squad did not start off well last Friday against Elmvale from Owen Sound. Elmvale defeated the Legion girls 7-4 and they went on to collect a medal on Sunday.

The Royalettes were leading 3-2 after the first inning but Elmvale came back to increase the score in the fourth and fifth innings. Michelle Miehms started as pitcher for Georgetown but was relieved by Barb Curry in the fourth inning.

Top hitters in the contest for the Royalettes were Janet MacKay who was 2 for 3 including one home run, Joey Bennett (2 for 3) and Dea Rutherford (2 for 3).

Monica Pollock was 2 for 3 while Barb Curry was 3 for 3. Although Georgetown outthit their Elmvale opponents they registered seven errors which proved to be costly.

**Stouffville 1 Georgetown 2**  
The Legion girls came back well on Saturday in their game against the host Stouffville team as they beat their opponents 2-1. Barb

Curry pitched for the Royalettes.

Janice Gagne proved to be the hero for her Georgetown teammates when she scored the winning run in the fifth inning. Both Barb Curry and Janice Gagne were 2 for 3 at bat. Nancy Shortill also recorded a 2 for 3 standing.

One hour later the Royalettes faced Port Colbourne and won handily in a 6-3 score.

**Port Colbourne 3 Georgetown 6**  
In two previous encounters with Aurora, the Royalettes played where either side could have won the contest and the tournament game at Stouffville was similar.

Barb Curry started pitching while Michelle Miehms finished off the duties. The two pitchers registered a one-hitter for the game while their counterparts had a three-hitter.

Two runs were scored by Georgetown in the sixth inning with bases loaded but Aurora came back and knocked the Royalettes out of further tournament play.

After the game coach Wilkes lamented that it was tough to lose a one-hitter.

Aurora, Elmvale and Dunnville qualified to go to Georgetown from the Stouffville tournament while in other regional tournament around Ontario, Sarnia, Riverside (Windsor) and Moore Centre (Windsor) were confirmed as entries while the unofficial word was that Belleville, Richmond Hill and Napanee were coming from a Kingston regional tournament.

**NOTES:**  
Nancy Shortill moved from second base to catcher while Joey Bennett went to second. Both are familiar with the positions but have not switched thus far this year. Both played well in the switch, according to Ted Wilkes. Janet MacKay and Barb Curry received praise from their coach for the way they played all weekend, especially at bat.

With some practice time remaining before the Ontario finals Coach Wilkes says he'd like to spend some time perfecting the pitching side of the Royale game which he feels is the key to doing well at the finals. The team is healthy except for Monica Pollock's sore arm.



Although having some problems with a sore arm, Monica Pollock (seen above) and her fellow Legion Royalettes were back in form last weekend as they finished fourth in the Ontario regionals after losing a heart-breaker to Aurora 3-2 on Sunday. The loss to Aurora was particularly disappointing because Georgetown pitched a one-hitter and Aurora has been defeated by the Royalettes twice in the season this year. Nevertheless, the girls seem ready to peak for the Ontario finals to be held in Georgetown August 14.

# Merchants rally for week's victories

The Glen Williams Merchants of the Intercounty baseball league continue to do well as the team's schedule enters into August.

After losing a heart-breaker to Orangeville last Tuesday 3-1, the Glen men bounced

ed back to record a 6-2 victory over Alton and a 6-4 standoff against Cambridge.

Against Orangeville the local Glen team were leading their opponents 1-0 until the ninth inning. Terry Haines

led the way with some excellent pitching. In the ninth inning Blanchard of Orangeville was hit by a pitched ball to get on first base.

The Glen team made two more errors, losing to the

final score of 2-1.

**GLEN 6 ALTON 2**  
Against Alton the next night the Merchants were still upset about their loss to Orangeville, but they rallied forward.

In the first inning, Les Wilson walked, Dean Hancock hit, Rob Hatcher drove in the first run on a hit while Jeff Haines hit a double to score two more runs.

Andy Broadbent hit a home run in the third inning. In the seventh inning Dean Hancock had his fourth hit of the night followed by a long home run hit by Jeff Haines to beat Alton 6-2.

Jeff Haines pitched a good sound ball game giving up only three hits while striking out 10 batters. This win led the Glen Merchants with Alton for first place.

**GLEN 6 CAMBRIDGE 4**  
Last Sunday the Glen team travelled to Cambridge with four of their regular players.

Cambridge took a 4-1 lead by the seventh inning and dominated the game until this point.

In the eighth inning Rob Hatcher got a single followed by Dean Hancock with a single. Jeff Haines came to bat and hit one of the longest home run balls the Glen coach Cliff Norton has ever seen in any fastball game.

Andy Broadbent singled, stole second base, stole third base and scored on a throwing error.

In the ninth inning Paul Mastalerz started off with a double. Les Wilson followed with a double scoring Duane Hatcher who was put in for a pinch runner.

Three of the minor ball players came to help out in a short-handed situation: Duane Hatcher, Chris Haines and Carman Larruso. Thanks from the coach for the help.

Terry Haines pitched a good game giving up four hits while striking out 14 and coming on very strong in the last three innings.

# Tennis players excel

The mixed intercounty tennis team from Gordon Alcott continue to fare well in competition, although victories were not decisive against Brampton last Thursday.

The mixed 'C' team tied with Brampton by winning three matches and losing

three. Ed Reiger and Jim Taggart registered victories by downing their opponents

7-6, 4-6, 6-3. John Rice and wife Linda won their match

in sets of 7-5, 1-6 and 6-4. Bill Kent and Pat Harris outmaneuvered their counterparts 6-1 and 6-2.

On the losing side were John D'Alison and George Croft who found it hard going as they were defeated 3-6, 6-4 and 2-6. Jim Taylor and Andy Zvagulis lost their match in scores of 2-6, 6-2 and 2-6. Isla Allison and Ann Kennedy lost their match 2-6 and 2-6.

**Bolton stings Mosquito Raiders**

Friday night saw the Minor Mosquito Raiders drop a 4-3 match to visiting Bolton in exhibition play.

July is always the month for players vacations and the Raiders have been especially short for the last two weeks of the month.

House league players are being used to fill the gap and played well against Bolton but not well enough to take the game. Getting the Georgetown goals were David Harris, David Shandelmair and Davin Ciglen.

This week the Raiders play in Mississauga in a game to decide first place and are hoping for a miracle because of the roster shortage.

# REACH FOR IT, FELLAS!



The Georgetown Ajax team of the Intercounty Men's soccer league played an action-packed game when they met Milton last week in Georgetown. With saves like this one by Milton Rangers goalie off an Ajax corner kick, Georgetown had a hard time finding the right opportunities as they were downed 7-4 by the Rangers.

(Herald photo by Karen Fokkens)

## STANDINGS

Team	GP	W	L	T	PTS	FA
C and S Plumbing	21	15	6	0	30	66
North Halton Sports	20	14	5	1	29	50
Family Trust	21	10	10	1	21	-23
Peel Steel	21	9	11	1	19	-9
Akers and Clarke	20	9	11	0	18	-6
Merchants	21	9	12	0	18	-26
Varian	21	7	13	1	15	-13
Inesco Equipment	19	7	12	0	14	-36

## Football

TEAM	W	L	GP	F	A	PTS
Delrex Smoke Shop	8	0	8	322	76	16
Wimpeys	6	2	8	182	127	12
Glen	5	3	8	135	132	10
Dairy Queen	5	3	8	183	135	10
Mountainview Plaza	3	4	8	163	169	7
Greeks Tavern	3	4	7	148	178	6
Foberts Real Estate	2	4	7	120	134	5
Royal Pizza	2	6	8	134	171	4
Norval Arcade	0	8	8	47	312	0

**SCORING LEADERS**

1st Werner Mikolet - Smoke Shop	86
2nd Brent Ferguson - Royal Pizza	55
3rd Bruce Cartwright - Smoke Shop	50
4th Mark Reis - Smoke Shop	48
5th Jeff Lockwood - Dairy Queen	44

## Sports in brief

### Ball coach suspended

As a result of using an illegal player on their Georgetown Stinger lineup last week against Lowville, coach Brian James has been given a two-game suspension by the league.

Halton Rural Minor Softball commissioner Nancy Auger of Milton told The Herald it was felt the coach and not the team should be penalized for an infringement of the league's rules.

Coach James, who is now on holidays, was given a staff warning by commissioner Auger.

The Midget girls (fastball) team sacrificed a chance at first place in the standings and will play Limehouse in the semi-finals next week. Brookville will play Lowville in the other semi-final.

One footnote to the whole episode is that non-rural teams such as Acton, Milton and Georgetown were not

voted into the league each year by their fellow members. There is a possibility that Georgetown will not be asked back into the league if the majority of teams vote that way.

A twelve team industrial league tournament is scheduled for the long weekend with games starting at 8:30 a.m. on Saturday and Sunday. Teams from the Acton industrial league, Acton condominium league, Georgetown industrial league, Hillsburgh, Guelph and Limehouse will be participating. Entrance to the park will be \$1.00 per adult.

**Standings As Of July 27, 1981**

Team	W	L	T	PTS
Indurmin Rockets	13	6	0	26
Limehouse Laing's Construction	12	6	1	25
Huttonville Hawks	12	7	0	24
Abitibi-Price Limehouse	10	8	0	20
Ballinlad Blue Jays	4	13	1	9
Petrohul Oilers	4	15	0	8