

# Rebel flag has more than one history, depending on person's point of view

The furor over Georgetown District High School's Rebel flag is likely to be just the first shot in a series of battles over whether to continue its use or ban it.

The U.S. civil war was fought over 100 years ago, with one of its main issues being slavery. The flag, in American historical terms, is seen as one of the south's strongest symbols of their struggle. Many display it as a demonstration of their regional identity and southern heritage. However, there are those who use it as a symbol of white superiority, such as the Ku Klux Klan.

It's the negative side that principal, Bryn Davies is concerned with, and he should, being one of the school's leaders. That's not to say that there are negative connections between the school and its flag.

Davies should be on the lookout, as should all students and teachers, for signs of racial tension at the school - anything ranging from derogatory graffiti on walls to name calling or actual physical confrontations.

I've talked to a number of students about this, but have yet to hear even a hint of any problems. Granted, I am not at the school all day and I don't hang out after hours with students, so I can't say for certain it doesn't exist.

However, unless the principal or the student council has actually discovered racial incidents, I believe they are more interested in damage than in addressing what is actually happening.

None of the black students have been forced to sit at the back of any classrooms, use separate drinking fountains or keep their eyes focussed on the floor in the hallways. I know that will never happen at GDHS and I am exaggerating, but perhaps that is what is being done when the GDHS Rebel flag is being discussed.

GDHS Rebel flag, just think about those three words for a minute. It's not the Confederate Rebel flag or the flag of white supremacists that the school teams play their games under, battling the likes of hated M. M. Robinson or Pearson - it's the GDHS flag, with its own separate and proud history, unmarked by any racial stains.

I haven't been in the area for very long, but it doesn't take a genius to look at the banners on the gymnasium wall and know that the school has a long tradition of success with its teams, all



**RISKY BUSINESS**  
By Rob Risk

of which have performed under the Rebel banner since 1963. Were all those students, coaches and their supporters racists because of it? I feel sorry for anyone who would be stupid enough to say so.

I spoke with Bryan Lewis, director of officiating for the National Hockey League, who also happened to be president of the student council which organized a school vote that decided on the team name and flag. He said the idea of the flag representing any kind of racism or white superiority when it was chosen is ridiculous.

"We liked the name 'Rebel' because we thought it suited us as non-conformists... the flag was a convenient symbol to use," he said.

Mr. Lewis has been called many things, especially since he is involved with NHL referees, but even as one of the central figures involved in starting the Rebel tradition at GDHS, calling him a racist would be terribly incorrect.

Davies has said he wouldn't be the one to make a decision on whether the flag may be banned in the future from school proper-

ty, but would be a process involving the staff, students and the community. In addition to this, he mentioned the Halton Board of Education had recently completed a race equity policy, but how that would be applied to GDHS was unclear at this time.

It's this point that may cause problems down the road. If the board, based off in Oakville somewhere, decides the flag is objectionable, the school officials will have to comply. There is a real danger of this happening, having already occurred in Toronto over the use of an Indian head as a school symbol.

There is a positive side to all this. At the first sign of the rumours circulating over the Rebel mascot, a petition to preserve the Rebel name and flag gathered over 600 signatures within the first three days. The hope is there that if the board were to try to take action, members of the community and the thousands of former students and staff would step forward to let the trustees know that if you take their flag away, you're taking something of them away too.

There is one other thing I believe is being missed here, something that is given every day at the school - education. If people, especially the students are opposing schools are told about the GDHS flag, about its own separate tradition and what it really means to its students, I'm sure the true colors of its athletes will be seen by all.

The Georgetown high school students are the finest ambassadors I can think of and I'm sure they will do their best to help others understand.

## RECREATION REPORT

### Some scary swimming at both indoor pools

**HALLOWEEN SWIM**  
Join us for a haunting good time at both the Acton and Georgetown pools on Saturday, October 27 from 2 to 4 p.m. Prizes will be awarded for best Halloween bathing suit.

**KNIT KNACKS**  
Learn to knit sweaters, vest and much, much more with the

Halton Hills Recreation and Parks Department. Basic techniques plus some interesting and creative twists for the more adventurous will be presented. Knit knacks begins Wednesday, November 7 from 7:00-9:00 p.m. and runs for 6 weeks at Stewarttown School. For more information, call 873-2600, ext. 268.

### Seniors Bowling

## Harrison continues his superb ways

### SENIORS

Four weeks in a row! Robert Harrison has continued his superb bowling as he has marked up his fourth 700 triple in as many weeks. This week was his highest yet, as he came away with a 740(278).

Close on Rob's heels was a high

average bowler, Brian Bell, with a 739(292).

Closing out the male dominated scoreboard were Dave Ridley 675(235), Blake Smith 631(259), and Eddie Doyle 629(295).

Coaches Ralph Miller and Dee Dee Haynes along with the senior bowlers and proprietor Rose Radyk, would like to welcome

Jason Ogden and Christian Gravelle to the senior league. (I hope that fixes it Christian).

If you are interested in "striking" it rich with a new skill and new friends, stop by the bowling alley or call 877-9922.

Did anyone hear that Rob Harrison wants to stretch his streak to five? Stay tuned.

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