

SPORTS & LEISURE

Gym club flipping over grants, club changes

By **EAMONN MAHER**
Staff Writer

The Halton Hills Gymnastics Centre has been doing somersaults with the substantial Ontario Trillium grant funds it received last year and is ready to launch its fall program next week.

As a non-profit, volunteer-led organization, the centre applied for and received a grant from the Trillium fund worth \$220,500 in December of 2009 and that financial boost has been put to use in many areas, said HHGC general manager Bill Harrison.

Located at 36 Armstrong Ave. in Georgetown, the HHGC's board of directors decided last year that a manager was needed to oversee the day-to-day operations in the 15,000-square-foot facility and that the parent volunteer board would set strategic direction and the long-term goals for the club, which has approximately 600 members.

"We need to grow our membership in order to be financially sustainable because we're at about 60 per cent capacity right now and there are definitely enough kids out there—toddlers, youths, teens—who we can get into programs and make this work," said

Harrison, who has 30 years experience as a sports administrator.

"But we can't grow without a professional coaching staff and making improvements to our facility and we feel we've come a long way in a short period of time."

As well as hiring Harrison and an office manager, the HHGC has brought over 50 years of coaching experience into the gym, including competitive program head coach Maryna Vorobyova, who guided Olympic-level gymnasts in the former Soviet Union and Ukraine before coming to North America.

Alongside Vorobyova as senior coaches are Florin Chivu, a one-time Romanian national-level competitor who has been with the HHGC since 2004, and McMaster University grad Carolyn Robb, set to work with the younger competitive local gymnasts.

Australian native Karinda Isaacs is the new HHGC recreational program director after coming over from the Guelph Saults' club and is Level 2 certified for both artistic and trampoline.

The facility itself has undergone a physical transformation, with a renovated front lobby and the replacement of outdated equipment with \$40,000 in new apparatus, including a

42-x-42-foot sprung floor, new vaults and a re-worked secondary gym.

Offering recreational programs to children as young as 18 months right up to the adult level in gymnastics, tumbling and trampoline, the HHGC has also established programs for children with developmental disabilities.

If there's one part of the membership that Harrison would like to see increase, it would be the number of boys signing up for both recreational and competitive programs.

"In elementary school, I did seven years of tumbling and five more years in high school and went on to play five years in the Canadian Football League for the Toronto Argonauts. I wouldn't have gotten there had I not been involved in gymnastics," Harrison added.

"We need more boys to come in to see what kind of benefits they can achieve through gymnastics. We also want to offer programs so that schools in the area can come in and use our facilities. It's fully insured. In this day and age when physical fitness is an area of concern for a lot of youths, they should all be coming in here."

For more info, visit the website www.haltonhillsgymnastics.com or call 905-877-4330.



Alexis Heaps of the Halton Hills Gymnastics Centre puts some of the facility's new equipment to the test. Photo by Eamonn Maher

Hill climbs Jays' ladder

If all goes well, fans of the Toronto Blue Jays could be seeing Shawn Hill on the mound in September.

The former Major Leaguer is attempting to make a comeback from a second reconstructive surgery on his right throwing elbow and has for the most part been feeling confident about the progress of his rehabilitation from the 'Tommy John' procedure.

Twenty-nine-year-old Hill went 3-0 with an 0.41 ERA in four starts with the Gulf Coast League rookie Jays and has since moved up to the AAA Las Vegas 51s, awaiting a call-up some time this month for an appearance with the big league club he cheered for while growing up in Georgetown.

The 6-foot-2, 225-pound former Montreal Expo is 1-2 with the 51s, throwing six innings on two occasions before completing just one inning against Reno last week, exiting the game after being unable to get his arm loose.

Hill is expected to get another start in Las Vegas prior to the end of the 51s' season.

Peewee Eagles qualify for provincial finals

Georgetown's major peewee Eagles won all three of their games in the double-knockout Central Ontario Baseball Association A division championship tournament in Brampton and have qualified for the provincial finals in Niagara Falls on the Labour Day weekend.

Georgetown 16, Milton 4: Travis Barker (W, 5 Ks, 2 for 3, 3 runs); Bret Rothery (2 for 3, 3 RBI); James Turner (2 for 4, double); Luke Warkentin (2 for 3, 2 RBI).

Georgetown 10, Burlington 9 (8 inns.): Warkentin (GWRBI, 2 for 4, triple); Tyler Scott (2 for 4, 2 RBI, W); Nick Ridley (3 for 4, 2 runs); James Turner (2 for 3); Damon Crumplen, Nick Hancock (2 for 4);

Georgetown 6, Burlington 3: Jacob Galvao (4 inns., W); Hancock (4 Ks); Scott (S); Crumplen (2 for 3, 3 RBI); Dean Taylor (GWRBI); Ridley (2 for 3).



After capturing the COBA peewee A title, the Georgetown Eagles are headed for the Baseball Ontario championships in Niagara Falls Sept. 3-5. Team members (front, from left) are: Nick Ridley, Damon Crumplen, James Turner, Dean Taylor. Second row (standing): Jacob Galvao, Jason Reid, Tyler Scott, Nick Hancock, Travis Baker, Callum Hutchinson, Luke Warkentin. Back row: Coaches Jeff Hutchinson, Dave Ridley, Dave Scott, Louis Galvao. Absent: Bret Rothery, coach Bryan Rothery.

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