

SPORTS & LEISURE

Georgetown native's goal sends Raiders to 5-3 loss

Georgetown resident Justin Rasmussen potted the third-period winner as the Mississauga Chargers recorded a 5-3 upset victory over the visiting Georgetown Raiders Monday evening.

The 17-year-old Rasmussen, a fourth-round draft pick of the Ontario Hockey League's Mississauga St. Michael's Majors in 2009, tallied at the 5:11 mark of the third period on a power play to break up a 3-3 tie for his seventh goal of the Ontario Jr. Hockey League season.

Rasmussen, a 6-foot-1, 180-pound centre, also has a goal and assist with the Memorial Cup-host Majors this year.

The 29-13-3 Raiders held a 3-2 lead in the second period and had a chance to build on that as rookie Patrick Megannetty was awarded a penalty shot, but

missed.

Justin Basso, Josh Burnell and Nick Marinac scored for Georgetown, which outshot the 11-31-3 Chargers 40-35.

With five regular-season games remaining, the Raiders host the Buffalo Jr. Sabres Saturday at the Alcott Arena starting at 7:30 p.m. followed by a trip to Burlington Sunday to take on the first-place Cougars at the Wave Twin Rinks at 3 p.m.

Georgetown Raider forward Nick Marinac tries to slip one by Mississauga Chargers' goalie George Grammenopoulos during their Ontario Jr. Hockey League contest Monday night won 5-3 by the lowly Chargers.

Photo by Rob Beintema



Merger in jeopardy without arenas, say hockey execs

By **EAMONN MAHER**
Staff Writer

A proposed amalgamation between minor hockey groups in Georgetown and Acton is on thin ice pending the approval to build three arenas in Halton Hills before 2014, officials say.

Executive members with Georgetown and Acton minor hockey associations have been working on arrangements for the past two years about amalgamating the organizations, with a constitution and bylaws already in place for what would be called the Halton Hills Minor Hockey Association.

Members of the Halton Hills Ice User Group have made numerous pleas to council regarding the high demand for ice time in the four current rinks in operation.

"The amalgamation was approved overwhelmingly provided that we could get the additional ice that we needed to make the program meaningful," said GMHA president Carson Mininch.

"So I'm in the position that unless I go back and get another mandate, I can't turn around now and say, 'Forget about your mandate, membership, but we're

going to go this way.' I can't do that. We would have to explain changes and get approval from them again."

At a meeting on Jan. 4, the Halton Hills budget committee—consisting of the members of town council—voted 7-4 in favour of deferring for one month approval of any capital budget items for 2011 regarding future arena construction.

A plan that would see the building of another twin pad at Georgetown's Mold-Masters SportsPlex and the twinning of the Acton Arena would cost an estimated \$29 million.

Some Town councilors were shocked by the proposed financial strategy to pay for the arenas, which would require the municipality to go \$25 million into deficit, mostly through property tax debt.

"Both organizations have really truly given up the mandate to say go forward with amalgamation, but we need the ice. That was always the problem and now we're stuck on hold," said AMHA



CARSON MININCH

president Arlene Fritz.

"I think everyone felt this would be deferred because it's not a bad thing to look at other options, but for it not to happen? I think it would have been a huge political issue for the last election to make sure everyone was on board. There are a lot of kids and adults in this municipality involved with anything on the ice pads, whether it's pleasure skating, figure skating, hockey or 3-on-3."

Mininch explained that amalgamation of the Georgetown and Acton groups would enable the HHMA to operate a "true" double-A, single-A and additional entry rep system at both the major and minor levels within the Ontario Minor Hockey Association. At present, Georgetown is classified as a double-A, AE centre, while Acton runs BB and AE teams.

There are currently close to 1,900 players registered in house league and rep combined in the GMHA, while in Acton, the house league and rep pro-

grams (350 and 150 players, respectively) have operated separately for over 50 years.

The Acton House League has opted not to be part of the amalgamation.

Several other municipalities in southern Ontario have teamed up to amalgamate in recent years, including Elora and Fergus (Centre Wellington), Alliston and Tottenham (TNT) and Nobleton and King City (Noble-King).

Mininch added that the GMHA's refusal to turn away youths from registering has masked the scale of the ice-time crisis and that there are probably 800 more youths playing in the GMHA alone for what would be typical of an organization that offers a suitable development system.

For the 2010-11 season, the GMHA has more than 300 hours booked at the Erin-Hillsburgh and Caledon Teen Ranch facilities, while the AMHA accounts for about 100 hours of ice time in those rinks.

Fritz said that plans are in place to apply a surcharge to registrations that would be used in a fundraising campaign to help build the arenas.



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