

SPORTS & LEISURE

Raiders looking to patch holes as camp opens

By EAMONN MAHER
Staff Writer

The Georgetown Jr. A Raiders opened training camp this week at the Mold-Masters SportsPlex with new ownership in place and a few holes to fill following last year's run to a West Division title.

Raiders' head coach and general manager Greg Walters, back for his third season in charge of the Ontario Junior Hockey League club, has made some additions to the roster prior to training camp, but still has several open cards and those won't be handed to returnees just because they show up.

When Bill and Cindy Court of Burlington purchased the club in June from longtime owners Ted and Joanne Nishi, stipulations were attached that guaranteed the return of Walters and other key staff members for at least one season.

And Court is apparently providing the resources to keep the Raiders at or near the top of the standings, encouraging fans on their website to climb aboard for the "drive to the Royal Bank Cup" national championship.

"They've got some new ideas and they're very committed to keeping the tradition of winning hockey teams in Georgetown," Walters said Wednesday.

"We lost 10 or 11 players from last year, but the luxury of having a successful program is that we get a lot of quality players coming to us wanting to play here and it's going to be a really competitive camp. We



Training camp began Wednesday afternoon for the Ontario Junior Hockey League's Georgetown Raiders with dozens of prospects trying to impress the coaching staff. To prepare for the start of the regular season on Sept. 7 in Oakville, the Raiders are entered in a tournament in Burlington this weekend and will face Milton in back-to-back exhibition games next week.

Photo by Eamonn Maher

have to go with a bit of a youth movement, but we're not rebuilding by any means. In the past two years, we've sent 16 players on to either the OHL, NCAA or Canadian university hockey and we're really excited about this year's group."

The regular season begins Friday, Sept. 7 in Oakville and those two former division rivals will meet again the next night in Georgetown.

Among the returnees confirmed to have signed on are 2011-12 regular season and playoff MVP Tyson Fawcett of Barrie, along with second-year blueliner

Jake Emilio, two of six Raiders who were invited to the recent Team Canada East selection camp in Etobicoke.

With both of last year's goaltenders not returning, the Raiders have signed 19-year-old Gabe Grunwald, whose father Glen was the GM of the NBA's Toronto Raptors from 1998-2004 and is now vice president and GM of the New York Knicks.

The 6-foot-3, 190-pound Grunwald played in the NAHL last season with a couple of teams and is committed to the University of Wisconsin next fall.

Also newly signed is highly touted de-

fenceman Thomas Welsh of Burlington, a 6-foot, 200-pound 17-year-old who is headed to Penn State on a hockey scholarship. New forwards include 5-foot-11, 185-pound Drake Hart of Cayuga, a 19-year-old who played prep school in Maine last season.

Guelph's Anthony Marra, a soon-to-be 18-year-old at 5-foot-8 and 175 pounds, averaged more than a point a game in 2011-12 with the Welland Jr. B Canadiens.

This weekend, the Raiders will play in the Cougars Challenge Cup at the Wave Twin Rinks in Burlington, facing the host Cougars, Oakville and Hamilton.

Georgetown will also host the Milton IceHawks in a tune-up tilt Tuesday at the Alcott Arena starting at 8 p.m. and visit Milton Wednesday at 7:30 p.m.

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Some former Georgetown Jr. A Raiders are on the roster for a Canadian men's team that will play in the inaugural Amsterdam Icehockey Cup this weekend.

Forwards Kevin Harvey, Kyle Friday, Matt Carter and defenceman Deron Cousens will take part in the tournament, which begins Saturday with a game against Germany's Cologne Sharks.

Harvey helped HC Slovan Bratislava win the Slovak ExtraLiga this past season, while Carter graduated from the University of PEI and finished out the year with the East Coast Hockey League's Cincinnati Cyclones. Local native Cousens was in the ECHL last season. Friday suited up for Fayetteville of the SPHL.

Two local players celebrate national box lacrosse titles

Team Ontario captured all three Canadian box championships by defeating B.C. in the final at the youth tournaments played during the Ontario Lacrosse Festival in Whitby this month and a couple of Georgetown residents were on the winning teams.

Forward Cory Highfield had a total of eight goals and 20 assists for Ontario through the week, scoring his team's first three goals in a 9-5 victory over B.C. in the midget boys' final, earning selection to the tournament all-star team. Twelve-

year-old Zach Kearney (right), who played for Newfoundland at last year's national peewee championships, notched a goal and an assist in Ontario's 5-1 triumph over B.C. in the title game while also playing on the penalty kill for the champs. Kearney ended up with three goals and seven assists for the tournament.

Highfield also plays for the Halton Hills midget A box team that qualified for this past weekend's Ontario Summer Games in Etobicoke. The Bulldogs posted a 1-4

record and didn't make the medal round. Along with his midget Bulldogs' teammate Theo Dol, Highfield will have a chance for another national title trophy at the Canadian Lacrosse Association's Alumni Cup field tournament in Oshawa Aug. 31 to Sept. 2.

Forward Cory Highfield (left) and Zach Kearney helped their teams claim Canadian box lacrosse championships last week.

Photo by Eamonn Maher



STAYING HOME THIS WEEKEND?... SHOP LOCAL

Shopping local saves you money. Out of town shops have done a good job of convincing us all that sole traders = expensive, but the evidence just isn't there to back this up. If you add in travel, parking costs, fees to transport larger items home and your time, the overall cost is often much higher. SHOP LOCAL, SHOP HALTON HILLS!



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