

Local youth courts fame at Rogers Cup tennis tourney

By Eamonn Maher
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Ten-year-old Hayden Surette has a whole bunch of new favourite professional tennis players following his experiences last week at the Rogers Cup in Toronto.

The Grade 6 Stewarttown Public School student seems to have a knack for getting up close and personal with some of the stars of the sport after obtaining several autographed towels, having pictures taken and even engaging in a couple of lengthy conversations at the Aviva Centre at York University.

Hayden and dad Marc, both members at the Halton Hills Tennis Club, took in both qualifying



Georgetown's Hayden Surette got to meet with his tennis hero, Milos Raonic of Thornhill, in a chance encounter after the latter had lost his quarterfinal match Friday at the Rogers Cup. Submitted photo

days and made three other visits to the tournament last week to see and meet players such as top-ranked Novak Djokovic, Canadians Milos Raonic, phenom Dennis Shapovalov and Vasek Pospisil, along with semifinalists Gael Monfils and Stan Wawrinka and #5 seed Thomas Berdych.

Having recently given up playing minor hockey for his newfound love of tennis, it might be easier to list of the players who Surette *didn't* get at least a moment with either on or off the courts.

The youngster was hanging around the practice area on day one when Australian Nick Kyrgios was hitting balls with someone when Kyrgios noticed Surette on the sideline watching. Hayden offered to serve as the ball boy before the temperamental 21-year-old changed his mind.

Ball boy is the worst job on the planet, go get one of my racquets and play tennis!, Kyrgios told Surette.

We hit balls for about five minutes and then we sat down and talked for a while and had a drink of water...He said one of the favourite things he liked about being in Toronto was playing Pokemon Go, remembered Surette.

Last year, when the women played in Toronto at the Rogers Cup, Surette got an autographed towel from Montreal's Eugenie Bouchard and discovered that tennis players appear to be more approachable than most pro athletes.

The highlight of Surette's week came on Friday night after witnessing his *most* favourite player, the fourth-seeded Raonic, lose in the quarterfinals in somewhat of a surprise to #10 Monfils.

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Running back Chris Caissie of the North Halton Crimson Tide breaks free from Oakville Titans tacklers during the Ontario Football Conference's Pee-wee Champ Day at Christ the King Secondary School in Georgetown. Providing blocking support for Caissie are Liam Callan (66), Jacob Hilton (47) and Chase Gallant (4). The Titans won this seventh-place game 24-0. Photo by Jon Borgstrom

HHMFA coaches to tackle firefighters Sunday

With each team having won a game apiece, the anticipation is growing ahead of the third-annual charity contest between coaches from the Halton Hills Minor Football Association and the Halton Hills Fire Department.

The North Halton Crimson Tide's coaches take on the firefighters Sunday afternoon with the kickoff set for 1:30 p.m.

Proceeds from the event will go to the Sick Kids Hospital in Toronto's Arthur and Sonia Labatt Brain Tumour Research Cen-

tre. It's billed as a family-fun event with games, food and a raffle table.

The HHMFA is also holding a fundraising draw with the grand prize of two tickets to anywhere in the world WestJet flies. The prize winners will be drawn during Sunday's charity football contest.

The draw is capped at 1,000 tickets. Cost for one is \$15, three for \$40 and five for \$50. For more info contact Leanne at sampan@sympatico.ca or tickets can be purchased from executive members.

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