

Coming  
up

The 34th-annual Egg Nog Jog, organized by the Georgetown Runners, goes this Sunday at 10:30 a.m. in Terra Cotta. Field is full at 500 runners.

## World Jr. camp invitee McNiven riding emotional roller coaster

By Eamonn Maher  
emaher@theifp.ca

Signed by the NHL's most storied team. One of three goaltenders invited to try out for Canada's entry at the World Junior Hockey Championship later this month.

He's been the top netminder statistically in the Ontario Hockey League.

It's all been a bit of a blur over the past few months for local native Michael McNiven, with his career heading onward and upward.

Last Friday night his name was mentioned umpteen times for making big saves during the national TV audience in his Owen Sound Attack's 3-2 victory in London over the defending Memorial Cup-champion Knights, and yet the home team somehow got the top two stars of the game.

He also recently posed proudly on his Twitter account a picture of himself with his high school diploma, achieved six years after he began classes at GDHS.

But about a month ago, McNiven received a phone call that sent him reeling. His mother had died in Winnipeg, his birthplace, at age 43.

Only, McNiven had never been in contact with his mother until a couple of years ago, when he gave her a call and she began watching some of his games on TV.

It was sudden. I got the call from my father on Nov. 10 that she'd passed away, said McNiven, not knowing the exact cause of her death.

I didn't know her that well, but she is still my mother and it does hurt. The first couple of days were really tough and thankfully I've had a lot of support from family and friends. You try to keep it aside from the rink and just try to dial down. I know she's watching over me. This month is important in my career and I needed to play. Just coming to the rink and helping my team win is what I have to focus on.

McNiven attended the funeral in Winni-

peg last week and stayed with cousins he'd never met.

He was raised by his grandparents in Georgetown, Jimmy and Christine, who provided the financial support for Michael's minor hockey with the Halton AAA Hurricanes.

Drafted by Owen Sound in the fourth round of the OHL Priority Selection in 2013, McNiven played for his hometown Jr. A Raiders and was brilliant, earning the OJHL's All-Prospect First Team honour with a 21-10-0 record.



Georgetown's Michael McNiven pictured during a rookie camp held by the NHL's Montreal Canadiens last year. The 19-year-old McNiven later signed with the Canadiens and is now vying for a spot on Canada's world junior team.

File photo

His grandfather was also his biggest motivator, rinkside for all Raiders practices, pushing the 16-year-old to be even better.

Then Jim fell ill and died of cancer in December of that season. Michael still pays tribute to him in his routine prior to the drop of the puck in every game.

He has rekindled the relationship with his dad Mike, a former goalie with the Raiders as well.

Continued on page 39



SARAH FILLIER



MEAGHAN HECTOR

Photos by Matthew Murnaghan Hockey Canada Images

## Local duo on national team

Two of the 23 players chosen for Canada's National Women's Under-18 Team that will compete in next month's World Championship call Georgetown home, just as many as cities like Toronto and Saskatoon can boast.

Forward Sarah Fillier and defender Meaghan Hector, students at Christ the King Secondary School, were named to the Canadian for the 2017 IIHF Under-18 Women's World Championship Jan. 7-15 in the Czech Republic.

Canada begins the preliminary round Saturday, Jan. 7 against Sweden. Russia and the U.S. are also in the Canadians' pool.

Last year, Canada earned a silver medal at the world championships in St. Catharines.

Sixteen-year-old Fillier and Hector, 17, both play for the Provincial Women's Hockey

League's Oakville Hornets, who sit atop the standings with a 17-2-2 record.

Fillier and another Georgetown resident, Courtney Maud, were on the gold-medal-winning Team Ontario Red squad at last month's National Women's Under-18 Championships in Regina, defeating Quebec 4-1 in the final.

5-foot-5 Fillier had a goal and an assist in that contest and is tied for the PWHL scoring lead with 17 goals and 16 assists in 20 games.

Hector, who recently committed to Clarkson University on a scholarship for next season, has three goals and four assists in 17 starts for Oakville.

She was named one of the Players to Watch at the U-18 National Championships for Team Ontario Blue and named third star in the bronze-medal game, a 5-3 loss to B.C.

## Raiders chalk up weekend wins

For the second time in less than 24 hours, forward Josh Dickinson notched a pair of goals as the Georgetown Raiders skated past the Rangers 7-3 in North York Sunday afternoon.

With the victory, the 25-3-0-1 Raiders have just one regulation loss in their last 24 starts and are tied with the Trenton Golden Hawks in the overall Ontario Junior Hockey League standings, despite having played two fewer games.

Georgetown held intermission leads of 2-1 and 6-2, outshooting the hosts 36-31 and scor-

ing three power-play goals. Jordan Anderson, Jordan Crocker, Matthew Thom, Austin Cho and Ashur Elliot rounded out the scoring for the Raiders, who beat the Toronto Patriots 5-1 at the Alcott Arena Saturday.

Dickinson scored two first-period goals against the Patriots while Ryan Takamatsu chipped in a goal and two assists. Zack Dybowski and Daniel Berno added singles for the 24-3-0-1 Raiders, unbeaten at home at 14-0-1-0.

Next up is a home date with the Toronto Jr. Canadiens Saturday at 7:30 p.m.



JOSH DICKINSON

COUNTDOWN TO THE  
**RAIDERS**  
NEXT HOME GAME

Saturday Dec 10th, 2016  
7:30 pm at Mold-Masters Sports Plex  
**Georgetown Raiders**  
vs.  
**Toronto Jr Canadiens**

312 GUELPH ST.,  
GEORGETOWN  
905-877-2296

**GEORGETOWN**  
**TOYOTA**

www.georgetowntoyota.com