

McNiven headed off to camp

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Upon signing with Montreal, the 6-foot-2, 212-pound McNiven, who wasn't taken in last year's NHL Draft, underwent changes to his fitness and nutrition intake and is now down to 201 pounds.

His puckhandling skills have also evolved, to the point that London head coach Dale Hunter said last Friday that McNiven was like a third defenceman out there, retrieving dump-ins and firing passes to teammates before the Knights forecheckers could get into the Attack's zone.

Handling the puck is my favourite part of being a goalie, other than making a nice glove save or two, he laughed in a phone interview.

I love the pressure aspect of being a goalie, he said.

McNiven had boasted OHL-best stats in goals against and save percentage until a 6-1 loss to the league-leading Erie Otters at home Sun-

day afternoon in which the visitors scored four power-play markers.

McNiven will head off to Blainville, Que. this weekend for Hockey Canada's selection camp. At the very least, he'll be an alternate goalie for the home team for the world junior championships, to be held in Toronto and Montreal.

He's up against a pair of 19-year-olds from the Western Hockey League for the top two spots on the team and is confident he can impress the management's braintrust.

It's my job to lose and I always like to think about it that way, he said.

There's only one person that can stop you and that's yourself. I've got to show the staff that my effort is consistent and keep things rolling the way they have been. There would be nothing better than playing for your country on home soil, especially in a tournament like this the way Canada gets supported.



ORANGE CRASH: The host Georgetown Rebels finished as runners-up in both the senior and junior divisions last Friday in the Orange Day boys' high school basketball mini-tournament. Rebels Ben Abram and Dominic Walker each had 14 points but the home side lost to Toronto's Cardinal Leger 64-55 in the senior final. Coach Steve Pettit's squad hit several three-pointers in a 58-48 victory over Oakville-Trafalgar in the semifinal, led by 11 points apiece from Luke Borges and Kian Durno. Pictured at left, Rebels centre Ben Abram prevents an Oakville-Trafalgar player from scoring. The Rebels downed the Red Devils 58-48 before losing to Cardinal Leger in the senior boys final. On the junior side, GDHS downed Christ the King 46-33 in game one of the tourney on 20 points from Nat Hughes. The Rebels were defeated by Brampton's Mayfield 53-22 in the championship.

Photo by Eamonn Maher



TEAM OF THE WEEK: Members of the Halton Hills minor peewee A white Thunder invite local residents to join them for their Teddy Bear Toss for charity on Saturday, Dec. 17 at the Mold-Masters SportsPlex. Team members (front, from left) are: Logan Santori, Liam Preza, Noah McCutcheon, Daniel Arsenault, Jaden DeZeeuw, Jesse Bodin, Matthew Longmead, Michael Arsenault, Matthew Gormley. Back row: Cameron D'Amico, Chris Cuthbertson, Jake Greenough, Luca LoFranco, Riley Targett, Owen Burd, Noah Capetola, Elias Barlas. Bench staff: Head coach Rob Burd, assistant coaches Bob DeZeeuw, Ray Martin, Randy Flynn, trainer Dave Longmead, manager Karen Arsenault. Photo by Eamonn Maher

Thunder squad launches Teddy Bear Toss fundraiser

Curious thing happened after one of the players on the Halton Hills minor peewee A white team brought a teddy bear to a recent game.

The Thunder has gone undefeated in five games since then and is playing at a better-than-anticipated 10-6-6 clip in the Tri-County league.

So the idea of staging a Teddy Bear Toss just in time for Christmas was floated and it's been set for Saturday, Dec. 17 during the Thunder's

game against Brampton at 3:30 p.m. at the Mold-Masters SportsPlex's Saputo (D) Pad.

Fans are asked to bring a new teddy bear or other stuffed item to be thrown onto the ice after the first goal the team scores. All stuffed toys and financial proceeds will go to the Toys for Tots program and other children's charities.

Teddy bears will also be sold for \$10 prior to the contest for tossing purposes. For more info contact bobdezeuw@cogeco.ca



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