

SPORTS & LEISURE

Raiders on the ropes

Game 4 loss put locals in 3-1 series hole

Goaltending has become the major talking point in the second-round playoff series between the Georgetown Raiders and St. Michael's Buzzers after the latter's 5-3 victory in game four Saturday at the Alcott Arena.

St. Mike's scored four times in the first period on shots that all appeared to be stoppable, with starter Keegan Wilson allowing the first three before getting yanked once again in the series. Then, relief man Gabe Grunwald was beaten by the first shot he faced from the corner, spoiling what had been an excellent start to the game for the home side on a goal by Drake Hart just over three minutes into the contest.

The net result is a 3-1 lead for the Buzzers in the best-of-7 Ontario Junior Hockey League South West Conference semifinal series as they head home for game five Monday at St. Michael's College Arena beginning at 7:30 p.m.

In all four games so far, the Raiders have had to pull their starting netminder due to some soft goals against, while the Buzzers, with the exception of Georgetown's 7-5 victory in game three Friday, have received outstanding goaltending from veteran Adrian Ignagni.

Despite getting seven power-play opportunities and outshooting the Buzzers 46-31, the Raiders had trouble converting scoring chances and the 19-year-old Ignagni was spectacular at times. As well, Georgetown's David Miller hit

the post twice in one shift early in the first period, followed by two more iron-ringers by the hosts during a flurry of chances in period two.

Frustrated Raider captain Brendan Woods, named the game's third star for a two-assist effort, said his squad isn't giving up on the series or its teammates between the pipes.

"We're definitely not blaming anyone," said the 20-year-old forward from London.

"We have to play better as a team in front of them. We've been outplaying (St. Michael's) for a lot of this series and with all the chances we had... to only score three goals (Saturday) isn't good enough against a team like that. We know we can beat them with the guys we have in the room and it's just a matter of going out there and doing it."

Nick Perruccio and Anthony Marra also scored for the Raiders, while former Burlington Cougar Shane Conacher was named the game's first star after tallying once for St. Mike's.

NOTES: Rookie Raiders' defenceman Liam Clare had to leave the game in the third period after crashing heavily into the boards and didn't return...Georgetown's Alex D'Oliveira, a second-team OJHL all-star defender with the Toronto Lakeshore Patriots for the past two seasons, has committed to the Oswego State University Lakers of New York beginning in the fall.



Georgetown Raiders' forward Drake Hart runs into a roadblock in the person of St. Michael's Buzzers' defender Ian Edmondson during their OJHL playoff game Saturday at the Alcott Arena. The Raiders fell 5-3 and will try to stave off elimination Monday in game five at St. Michael's.

Photo by Eamonn Maher

Jaguars seeded eighth

The schedule and rankings for the provincial high school boys' hockey championships are set and Georgetown's Christ the King Jaguars have been seeded eighth out of the 16 teams entered for this week's tournament at the Powerade Centre in Brampton.

Having qualified for the OFSAA AAA/AAAA tourney in three of the past four years, the Halton and Golden Horseshoe-champion Jaguars play their first game on Wednesday at 8:15

a.m. against #11 seed Michael Power of Etobicoke, followed by a matchup with second-ranked St. Thomas of Villanova of LaSalle at 1 p.m.

The final game of the preliminary round for CtK is slated for 10:15 a.m. Thursday versus Kitchener's St. David.

The Jaguars lost just once in league play this season and defeated Hamilton's Bishop Ryan 5-2 in the GHAC championship final that qualified them for the provincials.

Silver times two for Cieplucha

Local resident Tess Cieplucha earned two silver medals and broke a 22-year-old club record at the recent Ontario Short Course Age Group Swimming Championships held in Nepean. The Georgetown District High School student was runner-up in both the girls' 14-year-old 200m & 400m individual medley events and took fifth in the 100m breaststroke finals. The Mississauga-based COBRA Swim Club member cut an impressive six seconds off her best time in the 400m IM and in the process bettered a club record that had stood up for over two decades.

Photo by Rob Glysz



Hurricanes ousted in quarterfinals

Georgetown residents on the Halton Hurricanes' minor midget AAA team were catalysts in nearly knocking off the eventual-champion Oakville Rangers in the quarterfinals of the Ontario Hockey League Cup last week in Mississauga.

The Hurricanes finished fifth in the South-Central triple-A loop during the regular season with a 24-12-4 record, well back of the first-place Rangers, considered the top minor midget squad in Canada with a 33-1-6 mark.

Halton posted two wins and two ties during the preliminary round of the OHL Cup at the Hershey Centre during the March Break, setting up a quarterfinal clash with Oakville on Saturday.

The 'Canes provided the Rangers

with their toughest test of the tourney as Georgetown goalie Michael McNiven was spectacular in nursing a 1-0 lead late into the final period. Local resident Chris Klack, the team's top scorers during the tourney with five goals and two assists in five games, had scored early in the game.

But the OMHA-champion Rangers tied the contest with just over three minutes left in regulation and won on a power-play goal 1:21 into the first overtime period. The 15-year-old McNiven was named his team's MVP in the quarterfinal and is expected to be among the first goalies taken in the OHL Priority Selection on Saturday, April 6.

Oakville defeated the Toronto Marlies 5-1 in Sunday's final in North York.