

Regular season starts at home Saturday vs. Buffalo

## Raiders feeling confident

By **EAMONN MAHER**  
Staff Writer

The Canadian Junior Hockey League released its pre-season top-20 rankings for 2014-15 and last week and for the second year in a row, the Georgetown Raiders are seeded third out of the 126 teams among the 10 Tier Jr. A leagues.

And while the lofty rating was received with flattery in the Raider training camp at the Alcott Arena on Tuesday, it's notable that when Georgetown was slotted as the third-best team in the country last summer, just one player had been signed to a card.

Fifth-year head coach & GM Greg Walters rolled his eyes when asked about the CJHL seeding, considering that his club started poorly last season before making a run to the OJHL conference finals, in which they were swept

by the Royal Bank Cup-bound Toronto Lakeshore Patriots.

Walters has a healthy core of returning players, headed up by captain Steve Hladin, and assembled a roster loaded with 19- and 20-year-olds with some intriguing prospects in the mix.

"I'm not sure where (the CJHL) gets their information from, but I guess that's cool," said 20-year-old Mississauga resident Hladin, who was second in OJHL scoring last season.

"Hopefully we can live up to that, or even improve on it."

For curiosity's sake, the 2015 RBC will take place in Portage la Prairie, Man. in May. The foundation for any national title contender begins in goal, where the Raiders feel they've got a gem in 20-year-old Marc Williams, the OHA Midwestern Jr. B's MVP for the Kitchener Dutchmen last season who backstopped his team to

a 25-game win streak.

Backing Williams up is 16-year-old Jack LaFontaine, a 6-foot-3 third-round draft pick of the Kitchener Rangers.

Up front, the team has several returnees including Anthony Marra, John Adams, brothers Richard and Andrew Court, Scott Emerson, Brendan Jacome, Kyle Allan and Luke Sanko. Additions include Francois Cote from Brampton Jr. B, local resident Josh Dickinson, the younger brother of Dallas Stars' first-round pick Jason, former OHL'er David Perklin and Erie Otters' prospect Kyle Maksimovich.

A veteran defence group is headed up by Georgetown's Liam Clare, Gavin Shantz, Connor Andersen, Eric Eustace, Jordan Brown and rookies Zack Dybowski and Wyatt Hicken.

The past two seasons, the Raiders have begun slowly and it ended up costing them home-ice advantage in the playoffs, so most of the players skated together in Oakville once a week during the summer to develop familiarity.

"The core group is more than committed on and off the ice to winning a championship," said Walters.

"After last year, they know what it's like now to go through a long playoff run. But really, at this point, we're just trying to get better day by day."

The Raiders are in the midst of bringing in another assistant coach after Terry Richardson joined the Central Hockey League's Brampton Beast. Andrew Martin moves into Richardson's associate coach & GM role and Walters said an assistant will join the club shortly.

Georgetown begins the new campaign at home Saturday at 7:30 p.m. with a matchup against their West Division rivals, the Buffalo Jr. Sabres, who are now coached by former NHL'er John Tucker.

Just two exhibition games were scheduled, including a 5-4 overtime loss to North York Friday. The Rangers were here Wednesday night for the rematch.



Cristy Nurse (left) with teammates Lisa Roman and Rosie DeBoef await the presentation of their silver medals after Canada's women's 8s rowing team placed second at the World Rowing Championships in Amsterdam on Sunday. The Canadian boat turned in a superb performance but the U.S. maintained its dominance. *Submitted photo*

## Settling for silver getting old for Nurse and Canuck mates

Although overjoyed at being able to serve as the maid of honour at her sister Jodey's recent wedding in Georgetown, rower Cristy Nurse and her Canadian women's 8s teammates are getting a little frustrated at having to play the bridesmaids on the world stage.

The 27-year-old Nurse took part in her fourth World Rowing Championship this past week in Amsterdam seated in the bow of the Canuck boat, and while most countries would be thrilled with silver medals, another runner-up finish for Canada behind the reigning Olympic and World champion U.S. is hardly satisfying.

In last week's preliminary heats, the Canadians matched the Americans' finishing time, but on race day Sunday, the defending champs pulled away in the middle stages of the 2,000m event and crossed the line nearly three seconds faster than second-place Canada.

"It's hard to be disappointed with any medal at the world champion-

ship," Nurse said from her family's home Tuesday during a long-awaited break from training and a series of end-of-season races in Europe.

"But the U.S. has shown that they're the team to beat and until then we just have to keep looking for ways to improve. There's a reason why they haven't been beaten for so long and that's because they've got so much depth. We'll go back to training and keep pushing to create more boat speed and a more powerful stroke. I don't think anyone on our team is content with a silver medal, but it's something we can build from and measure our progress."

The last time Canada captured gold in the women's 8s class was at the 1992 Summer Olympics in Barcelona.

Having graduated from the University of Ottawa's law school, Nurse, a Georgetown District High School grad, has put her law career on hold in order to train full-time at the National Training Centre in London.



**STEVE HLADIN**

**TOYOTA**  
**HAPPY**  
**50<sup>th</sup>**  
**EVENT**

**2014 CAMRY LE**

OWN IT FOR  
**\$25,515\*** -\$2500 CASH REBATE  
**\$23,015**

OR lease for **\$267** plus tax per month for 60 months @ 0.9% and \$0 down payment  
**For inventory & pricing visit us at [www.georgetowntoyota.com](http://www.georgetowntoyota.com)**

**0.9% Financing available up to 84 months.**



\*See dealer for details Model BF1FLT-CA

**NEW LOCATION**

312 GUELPH ST.,  
GEORGETOWN  
905-877-2296

**GEORGETOWN**  
**TOYOTA**

[www.georgetowntoyota.com](http://www.georgetowntoyota.com)