

BULLDOGS PLAYOFF PREVIEW

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Bulldogs back on the bus to start playoffs

By Eamonn Maher
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The difficult, winding road to playoff glory in the Ontario Jr. B Lacrosse League will involve another long bus trip this weekend along Hwy. 401 to the Ottawa area for the Halton Hills Bulldogs as they'll visit the Gloucester Griffins in the opening round for the second year in a row.

Finishing third in the East Conference with a 15-5 record, the Bulldogs travel to sixth-place Gloucester this weekend for the first two games of the best-of-5 series against the 9-11 Griffins, with the following three games scheduled for Georgetown's Alcott Arena July 3-5.

Bulldogs-Griffins playoff schedule

OLA East Conference

Best-of-five quarterfinal series

Game 1

Saturday, June 27 @ Gloucester, 7:30 p.m.

Game 2

Sunday, June 28 @ Gloucester, 2 p.m.

Game 3

Friday, July 3 @ Georgetown, 8 p.m.

x-Game 4

Saturday, July 4 @ Georgetown, 7:30 p.m.

x-Game 5

Sunday, July 5 @ Georgetown, 5 p.m.

x-if necessary

The teams met once during the regular season, with the Bulldogs pulling out an 8-6 win in Georgetown on May 30.

Halton Hills captured top spot in the South East Division and enter the post-season riding a four-game winning streak, capped with a 20-4 pounding of the last-place Kings in Orillia on Sunday afternoon in the regular campaign finale.

Two Bulldogs reached the 50-goal plateau Sunday, with Connor Brown notching a hat trick to break the franchise record for points in a regular season at 51 goals and 64 assists, edging Luke Laidlaw's 114-point total in 2012 with three fewer games played.

Third-year forward Adam Charalambides also hit the half-century mark in Orillia with eight goals and three assists while Brown collected 10 helpers in a suddenly rejuvenated Bulldogs' attack, which looked punchless during a recent four-game losing string.

The additions of Jr. A-experienced forwards Wayne McCann of the Brampton Excelsiors and Chris Boushy from the Burlington Chiefs, alongside the acquisition of defender Brett Andrews, also from the Excelsiors, seem to have sparked an urgency within the team on the eve of the playoffs.

"Picking up the two righties, McCann and Boushy, is a big help to the offence so we can swing it from side to side," said Charalambides, who was red-shirted during his first year with Rutgers University's field lacrosse team due to a bone chip in his knee.

"For a few games there, we just couldn't



Campbell Parker of the Halton Hills Bulldogs buckles the ankles of an Oakville Buzz defender during an Ontario Jr. B Lacrosse League contest last month at the Toronto Rock Athletic Centre. Parker hasn't played in June due to injury but is expected to be back in the lineup for the post-season.

Photo by Eamonn Maher

find the back of the net. You get unlucky and have your bad streaks, but it's good that we're starting to click now for the playoffs."

Boushy (4), Cory Highfield (2), Jesse Oliver, Jamie Batten and Owen White also scored against the 1-19 Kings.

The Bulldogs avenged an earlier home-floor loss to the Oakville Buzz Saturday with a convincing 14-8 triumph.

Several players from the Bulldogs' 2010 Founders Cup Canadian championship graduated last year after getting swept in the Ontario final by the Six Nations Rebels, who

have won four straight provincial finals following Halton Hills's run to the national title.

But the unexpected return of Brown from the Orangeville Jr. A Northmen and the maturation of others up front has made for a powerful offensive arsenal for head coach Blaine McCauley.

As well, the defence has plenty of experience headed up by captain Jamie Batten, while it appears the starting netminding position is up for grabs between 20-year-old Ryan Schuetzkowski and 18-year-old Drayden Patey.

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