

Beat goes on as Raiders prepare to make final cuts

By **HERB GARBUTT**
Staff Writer

It's decision time for the Georgetown Raiders. The Raiders will make their final cuts following Saturday's game against the Brampton Capitals.

Coach Rick Bince sat most of

the Raiders' regulars for Thursday's 11-4 loss to the Capitals in Brampton in order to get a better read on the players who hadn't already secured a roster spot.

"By Saturday or Sunday we want to get down to working with the guys we'll open the season with," Bince said. "We'll get down to smaller groups so

we can start working with some lines."

Bince expects to carry 17 players into the Sept. 21 home opener against the Vaughan Vipers. The team currently has 26 players, including five goal-tenders, in camp.

The loss to Brampton was the Raiders' sixth straight in exhibition play. Georgetown kept

last year's Western Conference champions close on Thursday, trailing 1-0 after the opening period. The Capitals pulled away in the second, taking a 5-1 lead but the Raiders fought back in the early part of the third. Georgetown cut the margin to 7-4 with nine minutes to play. The game got physical in the late going and the Capitals added

four more to their tally.

Brian Buchanan, Ken Mair, Krys Barch and Ryan O'Dette each had one goal for the Raiders.

The Raiders will continue to search for their first exhibition win this weekend. They host Brampton Saturday (7:30 p.m.) at Alcott Arena and then meet the Blues in Collingwood Sunday.

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Rider turns in extra-Ordinary performance

By **STEVE LEBLANC**
Special

Erynn Ballard may have missed her Passage West last month in Wadsworth, Illinois, but she certainly got an exceptional performance out of one Ordinary Man.

Just 10 days before the Continental Young Riders Championships, the 15-year-old Hornby resident suffered a potentially crushing blow to her up-and-coming equestrian career. It came in the form of an injury to her mount Passage West, an 18-year-old former Grand Prix jumper.

"He pulled tendons in his left front leg," said Ballard, who resides at the Looking Back Farm on Sixth Line. With the loss of her partner, her first opportunity to represent Ontario at the Young Riders showcase also disappeared, or so she thought.

"I phoned up teammate Matthew Mulligan and told him about Passage West's injury and that I couldn't go. The next day his parents offered me his second horse, Ordinary Man, a nine-year-old thoroughbred," she said.

Despite his lack of experience at the level of Young Riders, Ordinary Man was tested by Ballard at his Quebec home and shown in Bolton just prior to the North American showcase.



Erynn Ballard was forced to rely on backup horse Ordinary Man in the recent Continental Young Riders Championships but that didn't stop her from helping her team place third.

Having ridden several horses over the years for various owners, Ballard never questioned her ability to handle a new mount—only Ordinary Man's ability to exceed his humble name.

Any doubts she had were erased when Ordinary Man helped her and fellow Ontario members Mulligan (with Starlight Express), Courtney Vince (with Rising) and Jennifer Wallace (aboard Seguro) to a third-place finish in team competition. The two

also shone in the individual championship, reaching the finals and placing 11th.

"It was one of the best performances I've ever had. He's very quick and strong and he can really jump," Ballard explained.

Ballard has since ridden Ordinary Man to victory at the Collingwood Horse Show, where they won a pair of junior jumper divisions as well as the Kanatek jumper competition.

The Grade 11 student and

her equestrian coaching parents, Sandi and David, have been so impressed with Ordinary Man's extraordinary efforts that they're hoping to make him Erynn's regular partner.

"I've got two other horses already, so we'll need to find sponsors to help by Ordinary Man," said Ballard, who will finish out her 1996 season by competing at the Bolton Horse Show this month and the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair in November.

Bennett dealing with retirement

By **HERB GARBUTT**
Staff Writer

It's a reality that Adam Bennett has had two years to come to terms with. For the first time since he began playing hockey, the 25-year-old Georgetown native isn't preparing for the coming season. A knee that can no longer withstand the demands of the game has ended his career.

"I've known for a while," the former Edmonton Oiler defenceman said. "But it's a lot different when the doctor actually tells you, 'You can't play anymore.'"

That message was delivered earlier this year after a third operation on his left knee didn't relieve the swelling and pain. Bennett was drafted sixth overall by the Chicago Blackhawks in 1989 but the injury cut his career short after 69 NHL games.



The injury occurred in 1994 after taking a bodycheck from the Rangers' Nick Kypreos. Bennett fell awkwardly and all the pressure was forced onto his knee. "The doctor said it just sort of exploded," Bennett said.

"At the time there was no indication (that the injury was career-threatening)," he said.

Bennett played 10 games for the Oilers' farm team in Cape Breton the following year and was kept out of the lineup all of last season. He is scheduled for more surgery this year. This time the expectations are much different.

"I just want to be able to walk properly without it swelling up," he said. "I can't bend it past 90 degrees and I've lost a lot of the muscles."

His limited playing time over the past couple of years has given Bennett an opportunity to look for alternative careers. Hoping to stay involved in the game, Bennett took courses in financial planning and hopes to help players manage their money.

"I learned how to handle my own affairs but a lot of players didn't know what I knew," Bennett said. "I was fortunate to find an avenue that keeps me in touch."

Mustangs pick up crucial points in under-14 play

The Georgetown Mustangs picked up three key points in their charge for third place in the Southwestern Ontario Division I Girls U-14 Soccer League.

The Mustangs recently blanked Saltfleet 2-0. The game was scoreless at the half. Mustang defenders Sharilyn Kogon and Lesley Mullins helped hold off the Saltfleet attack.

Saltfleet came out strong in the second half. Kathleen Moffett was the only Mustang forward to make any headway in

the early going with some great runs down the left wing. Laura Shields finally put Georgetown on the board with a hard low shot to the corner that the Saltfleet keeper couldn't handle. Neena Gupta then added some insurance, pouncing on a loose ball and driving it home.

Two nights earlier the Mustangs came up with an important tie against the Dixie Panthers, the team they are battling for third. Dixie took the lead 30 minutes in as Dixie striker Jennifer Small scored from close range. The Mustangs put some extra

players into their attack and it paid off as Lindsay Drysdale and Sinead Irvine both just missed on scoring chances.

Alanna Zelek played a strong game at centre half to hold off Dixie's long-ball attack. Finally, Irvine broke through the middle and brushed off a pair of tackles to score the equalizer.

The Mustangs met Oakville Thursday at Cedarvale Park at 8:30 p.m. and will face London today (Sunday) at noon at Cedarvale Park to round out the regular season.