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Sports & Leisure

Friday, October 5, 2001

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Nelson's James McBain tips the ball past Georgetown's Graeme Leverette in Tuesday's Halton Secondary School Athletic Association senior boys volleyball game. Georgetown, the defending Ontario champions, improved to 2-0 with a 25-19, 25-19 win. Photo by Herb Garbutt

Defending OFSAA title is no small task for senior Rebels

A year after winning their first provincial boys volleyball title, the Georgetown District High School Rebels will get to test the old adage that the only thing more difficult than winning is repeating.

The Rebels lost three players from last year's championship team and this year's version of the Rebels that will defend the title will be younger and shorter.

"We lost some size but we didn't lose any skill or heart," said Rebels coach Jonas Kaciulis.

Although Kaciulis admits that size is a key ingredient in winning an Ontario Federation of Schools Athletics Association (OFSAA) title, he believes his team is capable of compensating in other areas.

"If we can possibly work harder than we did last year, then we're going to have to," he said. "We can't afford to make mistakes. Now that the team is set we can start adjusting our defence to make up for our lack of height."

The Rebels have three starters back— Scott Allison and Kyle Hall who give the team a strong attack game as well as setter Chris Campbell. Returnees Graeme Leverette and Chris Cavin will also see their roles and responsibilities increased.

The Rebels are off to a good start with two victories, including Tuesday's home opening 25-19, 25-19 victory over the Nelson Lords.

The Rebels have also established themselves as one of the frontrunners at tournaments at York University and the University of Toronto. With OFSAA-calibre fields the Rebels reached the semifinals in both events. At York it took the number one seed, Oshawa's Anderson to knock them out.

"That tournament was a measuring stick," Kaciulis said. "We want to go for the gold and were working for that. We're in the thick of the top-10."

As the Rebels found out two years ago, it is very difficult to win in your first trip to OFSAA. Now with two trips to the provincial championship— and one victory—the Rebels are well aware of what it takes.

"That (experience) is going to be big," Kaciulis said. "That should get us into the final eight and from there we'll give it our best shot. They got their taste last year and it was such an amazing feeling. They want it again."

But the Rebels coach knows the team has many bridges to cross before OFSAA. Last year the Rebels found their intensity waning in league play. They rose to the occasion against the strongest teams and slid back against other opponents.

Now with title of Ontario champs on their shoulders, every team will be looking to knock them off.

"It's going to be much harder getting through Halton and GHAC," Kaciulis said. "We have to be ready for that emotional letdown. At times we were playing down to other teams' levels and that's where it gets dangerous. Other teams are going to be gunning for us."

Twenty-four teams set to battle for titles at this weekend's Earlybird tournament

The Georgetown Minor Hockey Earlybird Tournament opens tonight (Friday) as 24 teams vie for top honours in the novice and atom divisions.

It will take 42 games and three days to decide the champions. The Georgetown Novice Raiders begin their quest with a game against the East Enders tonight at 7 p.m. at the Alcott Arena.

That will be followed by the Georgetown Atom Raiders opening game at 8:10 p.m. when they face Aurora.

The Novice Raiders round out their schedule with games at 8:20

p.m. Saturday against the York Toros at Memorial Arena and then switch back to Alcott to play Aurora at 1:30 p.m. on Sunday.

The Atom Raiders' second game is against Sault Ste. Marie at 5:10 p.m. Saturday and they wrap up the round-robin against Georgina at 3:50 p.m. on Sunday. Both games are at the Alcott Arena.

Both the novice and atom



draws are divided into three divisions. The division winner plus one wild card team will advance to Monday's semifinals.

The novice final is set for 1:30 p.m. at Alcott Arena. The atom final follows

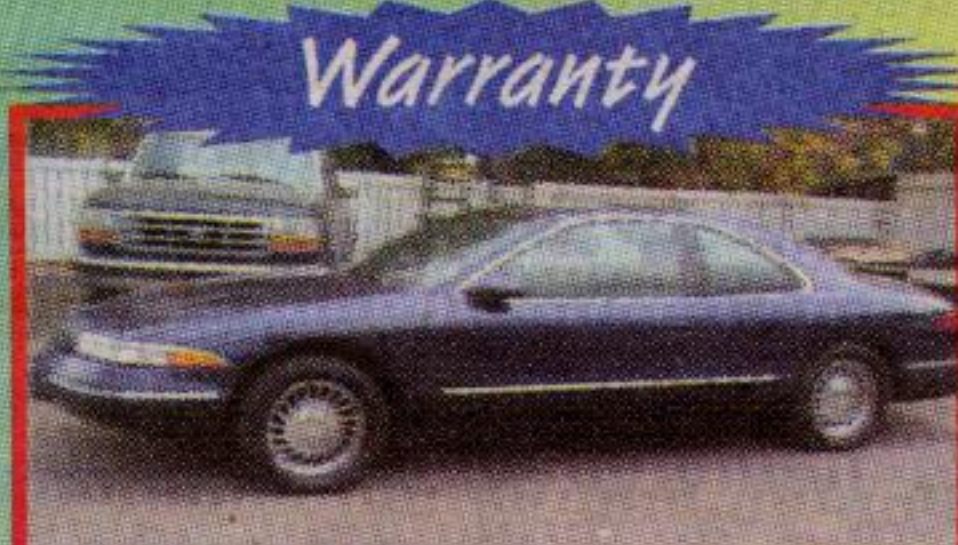
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There will also be a three-on-three King of the Rink competition on Saturday. The novice event is at 1:15 p.m. at Alcott and the atom competition is at 2:30 p.m.

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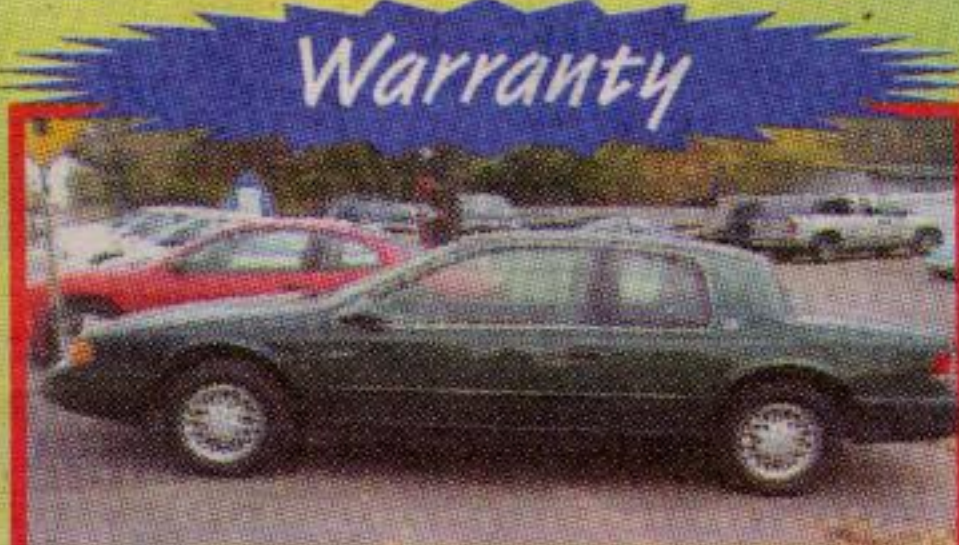
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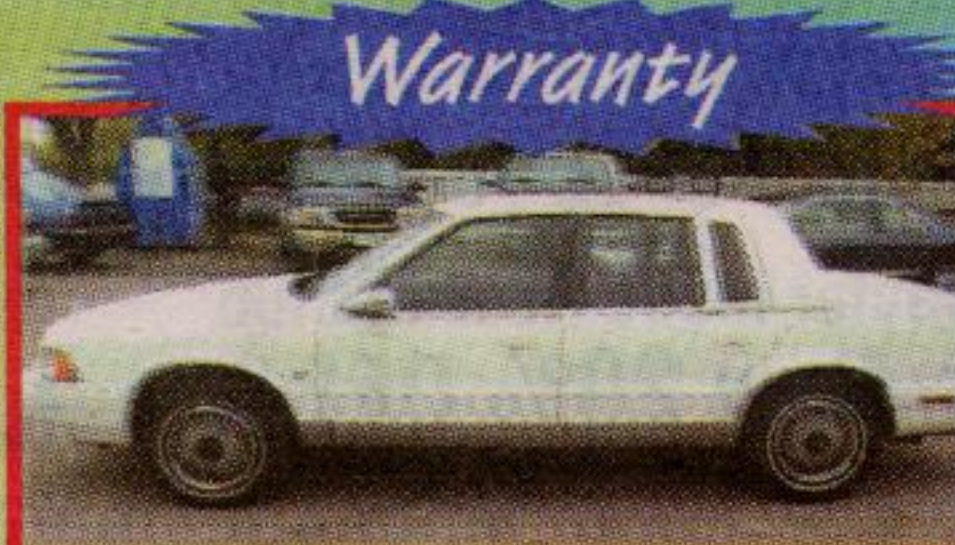
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