

Sports & Leisure

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Raiders 'Buzzed' about trip to Royal Bank Cup

Down St. Mike's 3-1 in Dudley Hewitt final

The Georgetown Raiders are champions. And they can take that to the Bank.

The Raiders avenged their loss in the league championship by downing the St. Michael's Buzzers 3-1 Saturday to win the Dudley Hewitt Cup in front of an enthusiastic, packed house at the Alcott Arena. The Raiders will now represent Central Canada in the Royal Bank Cup, the national Jr. A championship, in Weyburn, Saskatchewan May 7-15.

"Oh my God, this is unbelievable," Raider captain John Wheaton said amidst a wild dressing room celebration. "Those last few seconds my legs were going numb. I got tears in my eyes."

As centre Mike Nelson strolled by with a cigar, someone yelled out, "Nelly, that's a big cigar." "That's a big win," he said without missing a beat.

In fact, it was the 22nd win of a play-off run that began almost three months ago. And if anyone believed that as tournament hosts, the Raiders didn't earn their way to the nationals, Nelson wasn't buying it for a second.

"Any team that comes in the back door is going to be second-guessed but we had a lot of guys hurt. We spotted St. Mike's a 3-0 lead (in the league final) but we knew in our hearts we were the best team and we showed that here."

As if to leave no



Frank DeAngelis parades the Dudley Hewitt Cup around the Alcott Arena Saturday following the Georgetown Raiders' 3-1 win over St. Michael's in the tourney final.

Photo by Herb Garbutt



Charles Amodeo of the Georgetown Raiders chips the puck past St. Michael's goalie Kain Tisi for the winning goal in the Raiders' 3-1 win in the Dudley Hewitt Cup final Saturday at Alcott Arena. Amodeo, who played for the Buzzers two years ago, called it the "highlight goal of my career" as it propelled the Raiders to the Royal Bank Cup tournament in Weyburn, Sask. starting Saturday. Photo by Herb Garbutt

doubt, the Raiders rolled through the Dudley Hewitt tournament with a perfect 4-0 record, putting an emphatic stamp on it with a 3-1 victory in which St. Michael's never threatened them.

The Raiders had an early chance to take the lead when Mike McKenzie, one of the Buzzers' top players in the tournament, took a high-sticking major 84 seconds into the game. Though the Raiders didn't capitalize, they took advantage of their next opportunity.

Jay Sprague drove to the net to pop in a rebound for his tournament-high fifth goal with six minutes to play in the first.

"There were times during the Aurora series we thought this might not happen and then the St. Mike's series, that hurt. We wanted that league championship," Sprague said. "But to bounce back and beat the team that beat us, it feels awesome."

The Raiders carried the momentum into the second and just under four minutes in Charles Amodeo, as he was falling to the ice, chipped Frank DeAngelis' pass over Buzzer goalie Kain Tisi.

"That's probably the highlight goal of my career,"

said Amodeo, who played for the Buzzers two years ago. "Maybe all this was meant to happen."

Five minutes later, the Raiders put St. Mike's down for the count when a deflected shot went to Kevin Harvey at the side boards and he one-timed a shot that hit Tisi's pad and trickled in. Harvey, in his first game back since being suspended in the league final, leapt against the glass as the Georgetown fans erupted.

After the game Harvey stood on the bench in the dressing room watching his teammates celebrate and soaking it all in.

"Every guy battled," he said. "So many guys stepped up all year. It's unbelievable."

If St. Mike's was going to get back in the game, their chances went down the drain when they squandered three straight power plays in the second half of the period. Along with goaltending, the Raiders' penalty killing may have been their biggest strength in the tournament. The penalty killers allowed only two goals on 33 opportunities, while producing a pair of shorthanded goals.

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