

SPORTS & LEISURE

Ex-NHLer Rick Heinz purchases Jr. A Raiders

The long-awaited sale of the Georgetown Raiders' Jr. A hockey team was completed early this week, with Campbellville resident and longtime hockey-school operator Rick Heinz taking over operations of the club.

Former Raider owner Peter Friedmann had been rumoured to be entertaining some offers for the past few months and Heinz said he'd been looking to acquire a team within the OHA Provincial Jr. A Hockey League. The 50-year-old Heinz, a goalie who spent parts of nine seasons with the NHL's St. Louis Blues and Vancouver Canucks, has operated goalie and hockey schools across North America for more than 20 years and would like to try his hand at running a junior hockey organization.

"I see it as a challenge, but a fun challenge. It's just something you think about doing and you wake up one day and say, 'Why not give it a try,'" Heinz said Tuesday morning from his Milton offices.

"I love Georgetown because it's a hockey town. I've done goalie clinics there for many years and I know a lot of Georgetown kids have come to my schools. I played in the bantam tournament there as a kid and I remember that as being such a great experience. Based on the team's reputation and the great fan support it receives, I just couldn't pass this up and the great part is that it's basically in my backyard."

He inherits a Raiders' squad that made it to the semi-finals of the national championship tournament last spring in Saskatchewan, but had a somewhat disappointing 2005-06 campaign, losing to Hamilton in the second round of playoffs.

Heinz confirmed that Raiders' director of player personnel Peter Mavroudis will not be back with the club, although head

coach Jay Anderson and Heinz were slated to meet last night (Tuesday) to discuss options for next season.

It's expected that Heinz and friend Keith Pandovski will now oversee the hockey operations for the Raiders and that there will likely be a change in philosophy about the makeup of the team.

"We're not going to bring in a bunch of players from the (OHL)," said Heinz, a former player agent and native of Essex, Ont. "This team is going to be run in a fiscally responsible manner, where we go out and identify kids who we can bring in and develop into established players. Keith and I have contacts throughout North America, but really, the more local content this team has, the better, so we'll be looking at kids in Halton Hills to come in and help us."

Another of Heinz's objectives in pur-

chasing the team is to re-establish relationships and sponsorships within Georgetown that had apparently been severed over the past couple of years. He also wants to start up a Georgetown Raider hockey school during the summer months, with players from the team working at the camps.

As for the prospects for next season's Raiders, Heinz said he followed the team over the final couple of months but hasn't yet begun to address the loss of star goalie Ryan Gibb and virtually the entire defence corps. Heinz's Campbellville neighbour, four-year Raiders' centre Rob Sgarbossa, is one of 14 players eligible to return in the fall.

"I plan on meeting with everybody—from Jack Moon the general manager, to the training staff and the players—to get their perspective and background on what this team is all about," said Heinz.

(Eamonn Maher can be reached at emaher@independentfreepress.com)



RICK HEINZ

Bulldogs enter season with new bench boss

With the majority of last year's players back for another season of Jr. B lacrosse with the Halton Hills Bulldogs, the most noticeable new arrival on the 2006 team will be behind the bench.

The Bulldogs opened their training camp Tuesday night at Memorial Arena in Georgetown and figured out until about a month ago that Mike Falkiner would be returning as head coach for a second season.

But Falkiner couldn't pass up an offer to guide his hometown Orangeville Jr. B Northmen, so the Bulldogs quickly turned to a familiar face as his replacement.

Georgetown's Blaine McCauley, the current assistant coach with the Georgetown Jr. A Raiders' hockey club, accepted the Halton Hills head coaching position and will retain last year's assistants J.J. Dickie, Ryan Marshall and Mike Bland. Most locals know about the McCauley family's long-time involvement with hockey, but 30-year-old Blaine and his late father John have strong lacrosse ties

as well.

"My favourite sport is lacrosse, but growing up in Georgetown, there wasn't any lacrosse here, so you had to go to Brampton to play," McCauley said.



BLAINE McCAULEY

"When I got to a point where I had to choose my sport, I chose hockey. The nice part now about coaching the Bulldogs is that people like (ex-minor lacrosse president) Gordie Lyons jave put so much hard work into building Halton Hills as an elite lacrosse centre in Ontario over the years, we're able to reap the benefits of that today."

McCauley played in a Minto Cup national Jr. A lacrosse championship in 1993 with the Brampton Excelsiors, who lost in a seventh-and-deciding game to New Westminster, B.C. After a stellar junior hockey career that culminated with a Royal Bank Cup championship with the Vernon, B.C. Vipers, McCauley earned a scholarship to

See McCAULEY, pg. 20



Fancy footwork

Erica Kosmack and Katie Schupp perform *Rainbows & Wishes* during the Acton Skating Club's 2006 carnival— *A Few Of My Favourite Things*— Saturday at Acton Arena.

Photo by Sabrina Byrnes

SPRING USED CAR BLOWOUT SALE

2005 Chrysler Sebring Touring Blue

am/fm/cd, a/c, pvs, pl, tilt, cruise, alum rims, full coverage warranty to 100k included and so much more
29,000 kms
\$18,888.
or **\$219.**
bi weekly

2004 Dodge SX 2.0 Inferno Red

auto, am/fm/cd, alum rims, a/c, tilt, full coverage warranty to 100k included and so much more
25,000 kms
\$14,888.
or **\$176.**
bi weekly

2001 Chrysler Neon LE Blue

5 speed, am/fm/cd, a/c, tilt, nice clean car, full coverage warranty to 100k included and so much more.
45,000 kms
\$8,888.
or **\$118.**
bi weekly

2001 Chrysler Neon LE Silver

auto, am/fm/cd/cass, a/c, tilt, full coverage warranty to 100k included and so much more.
77,000 kms
\$9,888.
or **\$128.**
bi weekly