

SPORTS & LEISURE



New Georgetown Raiders' head coach James Richmond discusses strategy with leading scorer Adam DeJong (10) during the team's 7-3 victory over the visiting Buffalo Jr. Sabres on Wednesday at the Alcott Arena. Richmond and assistant coach Craig Teeple (left) took control of the bench duties earlier this week.

Photo by Eamonn Maher

New coach gets look at inconsistent Raiders

EAMONN MAHER
Staff Writer

Making his debut behind the bench as the new head coach of the Georgetown Raiders on Wednesday evening, James Richmond witnessed a familiar game story play out for the OHA Provincial Jr. A Hockey League club in this 2006-07 campaign.

The Raiders dominated the struggling Buffalo Sabres for long stretches of play through the first 40 minutes at the Alcott Arena, holding a 4-1 lead heading into the intermission. But as has happened many times this season, suddenly the 4-19-4-0 Sabres cut the lead to 4-3 midway through the final frame and the Raiders had to make a late push to win 7-3.

"The effort was inconsistent and it's just going to take time to get

them playing at one hundred miles an hour, all the time," said Richmond, who replaced Blaine McCauley as Georgetown's coach last weekend.

"We were a little overconfident and Buffalo works hard. When you let up on any team in this league that's what will happen. The best teams show their consistency from game one of the season."

This weekend should provide Richmond with a close-up view of where his charges stand amongst the top clubs in the league's West Conference.

The fifth-place, 14-5-3-3 Raiders visit Oakville to face the Blades Friday night and then they'll host the third-place Hamilton Red Wings on Saturday beginning at 8 p.m. The second-place Blades have won five straight and beaten the Raiders in both meetings this season, while the Wings have dropped just one of their past 11 games.

After that, Georgetown gets a week off before hosting Buffalo again and Richmond is eager to use that time in between games to work with his new players in practice.

The 43-year-old King City resident appears to have a jovial demeanor

while pacing the bench, constantly chatting and chuckling with the players and assistants Lucky DeGrazia and Craig Teeple. But Richmond warned that he's not here to be buddies with the players and isn't going to tolerate half-hearted effort.

"They know I'm serious and they'll know exactly how I feel about things," said Richmond, who was the player/coach for the last four years with the Cambridge Hornets of the OHA Senior loop.

"I know how good these guys can be and when they don't perform I'll ask them why they did what they did. I'm not going to yell and scream at

them. But if they still don't understand, then they'll skate for days."

The Raiders' power play is expected to get a boost this weekend when defenceman Ryan

'I'm not going to yell and scream at them. But if they still don't understand, then they'll skate for days.'

— New Raider coach James

Lee makes his return to Georgetown after starting the season with a pro team in Texas. The 20-year-old from Caledon's ability to move the puck may mean that the Raiders won't require a forward to play the point as often with the man advantage.

Jeremy Whelan notched a hat-trick for the Raiders on Wednesday night, including the clincher into an empty net. Adam DeJong, Kyle Schwende, Wade Finegan and Jon Southgate completed the scoring. Southgate's 10th of the year makes him the seventh Raider to reach double digits in goals this year.

NOTES: Raider defenceman Keegan McFarlane is the grandson of former broadcaster and hockey historian Brian McFarlane...Richmond's coach when he played Jr. B at Henry Carr in Toronto 25 years ago was former Raider bench boss Dan Cameron...Another blueliner the Georgetown management staff is looking at bringing in is Jeff Grenier, a St. Catharines native who was recently released by the Quebec Major Junior league's Gatineau Olympiques.

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

On the ball

Maddy Mayberry from Silver Creek Public School's senior girls' volleyball team gets ready to serve the ball during their game against Oakville's E.J. James at a recent tournament held at Georgetown District High School. Oakville's Montclair claimed the girls' championship at the second-annual Silver Creek tournament, while Stewarttown finished atop the 10-team boys' draw, beating Rolling Meadows in the final. At the recent Provincial Cup playdowns in Oakville, Georgetown's Centennial Public School edged Silver Creek for third place out of 48 teams from around Ontario. The North Halton championship matches were held Tuesday, with Centennial defeating Silver Creek in the boys' final and Stewarttown prevailing over Centennial in three games for the girls' title. All four will move on to next week's Halton elementary school quarter-finals at Milton's E.C. Drury.



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