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Staff Writer

Winners of 18 of their last 19 games, the Oakville Blades took over first place in the OHA Provincial Jr. A Hockey League's West Division on the weekend with a sound 8-1 trouncing of the host Georgetown Raiders on Saturday evening at the Alcott Arena.

If fifth-place Georgetown was beginning to build some confidence thanks to a modest three-game win streak, which included a comeback 8-4 triumph in Streetsville Friday night, the 27-5-1-1 Blades dismantled the Raiders in front of about 350 mostly quiet spectators.

The home side was able to keep up for a while, outshooting the Blades 12-9 in the first period, but still trailed 1-0 and went on to drop its fourth game in four tries this season versus Oakville. Georgetown didn't score until there was two minutes remaining in the contest and was outshot 35-8 through the final two periods.

"Oakville's the best team I've seen so far. They come at you pretty hard and I think that was probably the worst performance that I've seen from us, even before I started here (last month)," said Raiders' coach James Richmond. "We got into penalty trouble, didn't get the loose pucks and once we got behind, we started trying to do too much and got caught out of position. Like they say, though, hard work creates luck and good bounces and we've seen now what it's going to take to beat (Oakville).

The 17-8-3-3 Raiders held a team meeting on Monday night prior to practice in order to try to regroup. They'll play host to the improving Mississauga Chargers tonight (Wednesday) at the Alcott Arena beginning at 8 p.m. and will entertain the now second-place Brampton Capitals on Saturday at 7:30 p.m.

Against slumping Streetsville last Friday, the host Derbys took a 2-0 lead into the first intermission before the Raiders struck for five straight goals in the middle stanza, including a hat trick by Ryan Ford en route to victory. Wade Finegan, Matt Carter, Adam DeJong, Kyle Schwende and Spencer Janes had single markers and new goalie Marc Stuart made 24 saves in his Georgetown debut.

Greg Lever had the lone goal in the loss to Oakville. Starting netminder Keaton Hartigan didn't get much support and was lifted after the sixth goal.

George Lovatsis missed the weekend games after being called up to the OHL's Barrie Colts, while top defender Matt Thomson and forward Jeremy Whelan sat out with suspensions. Blueliner Jon Quarrie will miss the next two games for coming to the aid of teammate Peter Mrksic in a late scrap Saturday night.

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

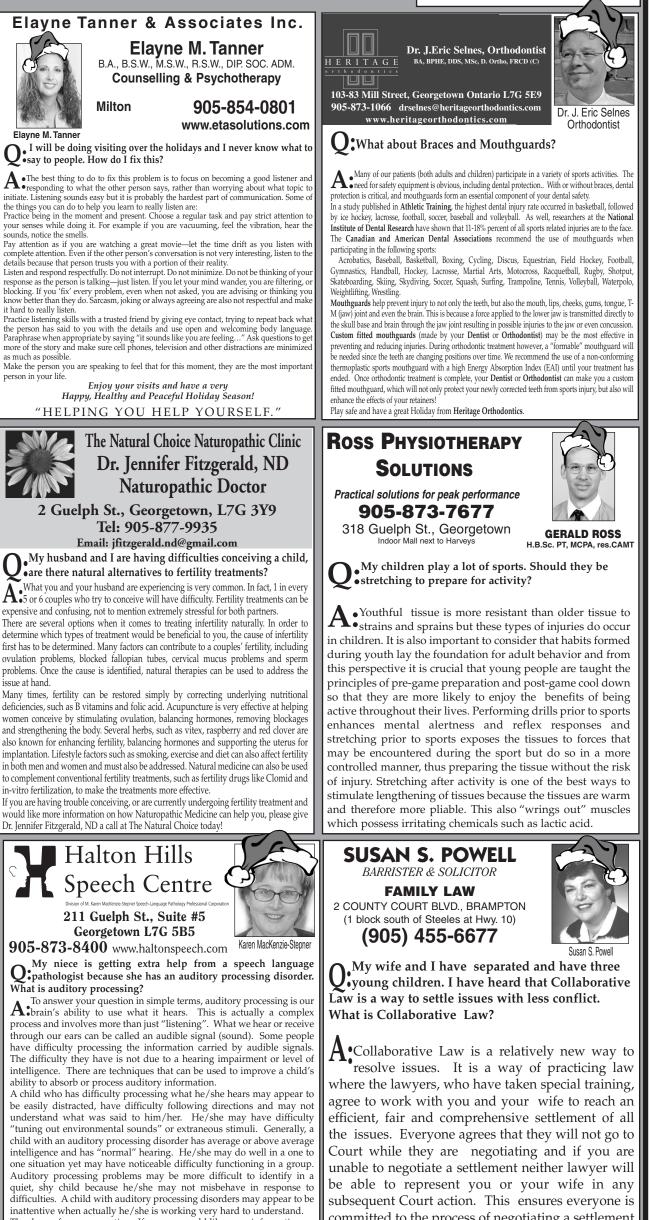


Iournament champs

At the Festival of Lights Peewee AA tournament in Niagara Falls, N.Y., the Georgetown Toyota Raiders skated past teams from Michigan, Orangeville and Wheatfield, N.Y. in the preliminary round before beating Duffield 4-2 in the final contest. Members of the team (front, from left) are: Dean Daquano, Jordon Brown, Scott Sheahan. Second row: Matthew Knox, Paul Chiappetta, Tyler Topham, Connor Mortimer, Shane Finlay, Michael Capostagno. Third row: Jarrett Gray, Brett Scace, Devon Wylde, Alex Freer. Back row: Trainer Ronnie Harlow, Kyle Moore, Nick Farrugia, Mark Hurst, assistant coach Rod Heinz, head coach Shawee Tooley. Absent was Travis Godfrey. Submitted photo



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