

SPORTS & LEISURE

At Alberta tourney

Rebels upended by 'neighbour'

EAMONN MAHER
Staff Writer

Facing some of the top senior boys' basketball teams in western Canada, the Georgetown Rebels were denied a shot at the tournament championship by a southern Ontario neighbour at the 25th-annual REB Invitational at Jasper Place High School in Edmonton this past weekend.

The Rebels, with a 9-1 overall record heading into the 16-team tourney, began the preliminary round with a 66-55 win over Edmonton's Archbishop O'Leary, followed by a 77-65 triumph over West Vancouver. But Georgetown's seniors then ran into eventual-champion Hamilton Cathedral, which prevailed 83-55 and sent the Rebels into the consolation final, where they downed host Jasper Place 82-74 in overtime.

"It's funny that you go all that way to play and a team from next door beats us," said head coach Steve Pettit. "Cathedral dominated the tournament. They beat us by 30 and that was the closest game they had all week. But the whole tournament was a great experience for our kids. You put them together under strange circumstances like that and more often than not, they'll bond."

It's the second time that GDHS has sent a team to the REB tournament, having last entered three years ago. Guard/forward Dalton Olinoski was named to the tourney all-star team in part for his 38-point effort in the consolation final, and 6-foot-6 centre/forward Brett Neumann placed second overall in the slam-dunk contest.

Pettit added that about 2,000 spectators turned out for Thursday's opening ceremonies and a few hundred backers of host Jasper Place watched as their Rebels lost to Georgetown's Rebels for third-place honours. GDHS was also presented with the REB Invitational's sportsmanship award.

"We always preach success as opposed to winning and this is a really good group, their marks in school, everything," Pettit said.

The senior Rebels have four of the five starters back from last year's squad that made it to the Halton AAAA final and this Wednesday's home clash with Milton's Bishop Reding Royals, who were also undefeated in the North Division standings, promises to be a tough test. The Royals are led by provincial team member Al Alilovic and figure to be a contender for the Halton AAA title. Tip-off is at 3:30 p.m. in the GDHS gym.

The Rebels have a busy schedule ahead and are even active through the holidays, traveling to the Syracuse, N.Y. area to play in a tournament.

They are also signed up for elite-level events at Toronto's St. Mike's, Hamilton and London, and will participate in their annual exchange with a high school from Mishawaka, Indiana Jan. 19-20, with Georgetown serving as hosts this year.

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



Georgetown Raiders' defenceman Ryan Lee and Brampton's Jordan Oye swing away at a loose puck during the first period of their OHA Provincial Jr. A Hockey League matchup on Saturday night at the

Alcott Arena. The Capitals led 2-1 after the opening frame and went on to beat the reeling Raiders 7-2.

Photo by Eamonn Maher

Season's beatings: Raiders drop first game to Capitals at Alcott Arena in four years

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Peter Mavroudis is putting his wish list together and it has absolutely nothing to do with what will show up underneath someone's Christmas tree on Monday morning.

The Georgetown Raiders' director of hockey operations has four blank OHA Provincial Jr. A Hockey League registration cards remaining to sign reinforcements for a team that was embarrassed on home ice for the second consecutive Saturday evening, and at least one of those new players could arrive by the weekend.

Second-place Brampton won its first game at the Alcott Arena in about four years, outskating and outshooting the Raiders 45-32 in posting a 7-2 triumph. Defensive-zone woes continue to be the undoing of the fifth-place Raiders against the class of the league's West Division and Mavroudis says that he's trying to wrap up a couple of experienced blueliners before January's stretch drive, along with a top-six forward.

"You wonder how we could have such a stinker in a big game like that, but it's not a situation where we're going to panic," said a frustrated Mavroudis. "There are a couple of defencemen out there who we're looking at and this is the time of year when those players become available. We haven't been carrying any extra bodies because we want everyone to play, but pretty soon we're going to have three kids sitting and that means the guys are going to have to buy in to what the coaches have to say or sit out."

Complicating matters is the uncertainty of the Raiders' goaltending position after 20-year-old starter Keaton Hartigan was scratched from Saturday's contest with an ankle injury. A last-minute midget call-up was unable to make it for the game, meaning that recent acquisition Marc Stuart faced the Capitals' fury without a backup.

It's not known whether Hartigan will be available for a couple of tough tilts coming up this weekend when the Raiders visit Milton on Friday night and host the fourth-place Burlington Cougars Saturday at the Alcott Arena starting at 7:30 p.m.

Georgetown was three points back of Burlington prior to their scheduled game in Buffalo last night (Monday). Mavroudis said he hopes to erase that gap before the two-week holiday break, with an eye on home-ice advantage in a possible first-round playoff matchup against the Cougars.

"There's an awful lot of talent in our lineup and we know we've had our weaknesses on 'D,' Mavroudis added. "We've seen flashes of how good we can be but it's only been for half-games or a period and we've told the kids it needs to be all the time or we'll put someone else in their spot."

Kyle Schwende and Matt Carter tallied on Saturday for Georgetown, which had great chances to tie the score at two early in the second period while killing a penalty, but vet Rob Sgarbossa was first stopped on a breakaway and then missed an empty net. Brampton's leading scorer, Matt Ferreira, scored twice soon after, putting the Caps just a point back of front-running Oakville in the division standings. Wyatt Russell, son of actors Kurt Russell and Goldie Hawn, made 30 saves in the Capitals' net.



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GAME ONE 6:30 P.M. ~ GAME TWO 8:30 P.M.



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