

SPORTS & LEISURE

Excels trade up for Flint

ROBIN INSCOE
Special to The IFF

The Brampton Jr. A Excelsiors got their man—but they had to trade up in the Ontario Lacrosse Association (OLA) draft order to get him.

The Excelsiors secured the first overall pick in Sunday's draft by trading goaltender Gary Muzzin of the national Jr. B champion Oakville Buzz to the Burlington Chiefs and then claimed Georgetown resident Cameron Flint with the No. 1 pick.

"He's a great two-sport athlete," said Excelsiors coach Brian Beisel of his newest recruit. "He's good at every sport, but he's a great lacrosse player."

And the Excelsiors' gain may be the Brampton Battalion's loss.

The OHL team took Flint in the sixth round of last season's Priority Selection draft but Flint will concentrate on lacrosse.

"I want to pursue lacrosse," said the 16-year-old Flint while home for Christmas from Salisbury Prep School in Connecticut. "I'm looking for a lacrosse scholarship."

Flint, who was the leading scorer with the Halton Hills Junior B Bulldogs last season with 33 goals and 25 assists in just 19 games, is looking forward to playing with the Excelsiors

and carrying on a family tradition. His father and uncle both played for the Excelsiors at one time.

"It's exciting," admitted Flint about being selected first overall. "They're giving me an opportunity to show what I can do."

Flint describes himself as a smart player.

"I can slow things down," said Flint. "And I can play both ends of the floor."

His new coach concurs.

"He can play everywhere on the floor," said Beisel. "And he's got a great attitude."

General manager Bob Bartlett felt the Excelsiors had to deal for the 5-foot 10, 180-pounder.

"We wanted Cameron Flint," said Bartlett of the decision to move up the draft list. "This was a very good draft year and Cam is in the elite category."

In addition to his box lacrosse prowess, Flint was also a member of the Halton Hills Bulldogs field lacrosse squad that won the national under-16 title in British Columbia this past season.

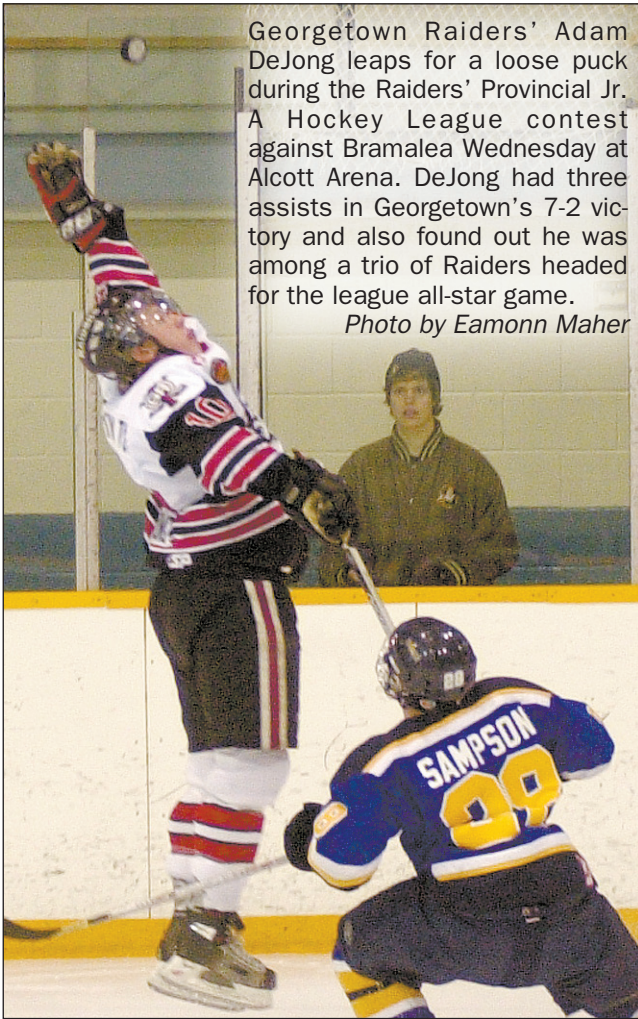
And Flint has three goals in mind.

"I want to get a U.S. scholarship, win a Minto Cup (national Junior A championship) and play in the National Lacrosse League," said Flint of his future goals.

And according to Beisel and Bartlett, all three will be achievable.



The Brampton Jr. A Excelsiors traded up in the OLA draft order to acquire Georgetown's Cameron Flint (centre) with the first overall selection. Brampton coach Brian Beisel (left) and general manager Bob Bartlett seem pleased with the choice.
Photo by Robin Inscoe



Georgetown Raiders' Adam DeJong leaps for a loose puck during the Raiders' Provincial Jr. A Hockey League contest against Bramalea Wednesday at Alcott Arena. DeJong had three assists in Georgetown's 7-2 victory and also found out he was among a trio of Raiders headed for the league all-star game.
Photo by Eamonn Maher

Raiders win, but top sniper hurt

EAMONN MAHER
Staff Writer

Any elation in the Georgetown Raiders' camp over having three players selected to next week's OHA Provincial Jr. A Hockey League All-Star Game in Markham was tempered somewhat by a frightening injury suffered during a practice earlier this week.

Centre Ryan Ford of Cambridge was accidentally clipped in the eye by linemate Matt Carter's stick on Monday night and the team's leading scorer, who actually wasn't one of the three chosen for the all-star contest, may not be back until the playoffs begin Feb. 9. The 20-year-old Ford was wearing a half-visor at the time of the accident and had surgery on Wednesday.

"The good news is that there's little damage to the eyeball itself and the doctors are saying he could be back in 10 days to two weeks," said Raiders' director of player personnel Peter Mavroudis. "The eyelid was cut and right now they just want to give him time to rest. Of course, Ryan wanted to play Wednesday night."

The 25-9-3-3 Raiders didn't seem to

miss Ford's 24 goals and 34 assists against last-place Bramalea, skating to an easy 7-2 win, outshooting the 1-38-1-2 Blues 56-20. Including their Newmarket Showcase Tournament triumph, the Raiders have now won 13 straight games heading into tonight's (Friday) return match in Bramalea.

Kyle Schwende (2), Wade Finegan (2), Greg Lever, George Lovatsis and Justin Wakewich were the Georgetown goal scorers on Wednesday.

The Raiders' Kitchener connection of Schwende, Adam DeJong and defender Matt Thomson were given the nod by Brampton coach Paul Crane and Aurora's Jerome Dupont to represent the West/North squad in Markham. All three are products of the Kitchener Jr. B Dutchmen and chose to make the commute to Georgetown for their final season of junior eligibility.

For DeJong, he said the accolades are nice, but the hard-charging Raiders are focused on making an impact in the playoffs, although their fifth-place standing in the OPJHL's West Division will make their road more difficult. "That's fine", he added, almost preferring to be the dark horse in the league's toughest conference. Last year, DeJong was a member of the Milton

IceHawks' squad that was favoured by many to make it to the Royal Bank Cup national championship, but like the Raiders, the 'Hawks run ended in the second round of the post-season.

"This team seems to have everything—well-balanced scoring, goaltending and guys who are great checkers—a team made for the playoffs," said DeJong, who has had scholarship offers from U.S. schools such as American International College near Boston. "You can put a bunch of superstars together like we had in Milton but I like the team we have here. We'll see what happens pretty soon."

After a lull in the schedule, the Raiders will play their final nine regular-season games in the next couple of weeks, including a home contest against Milton Saturday beginning at 7:30 p.m.

Mavroudis has one blank card remaining to sign a player and said he's working on a few possibilities. Second-year winger Adam Campbell has been loaned to the Thorold Jr. B Blackhawks for the remainder of the season and a deal is in place to bring him back to Georgetown for next year.

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



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