

# SPORTS & LEISURE

## Raiders drop critical point in pursuit of playoff bye

**EAMONN MAHER**  
Staff Writer

Count injured Georgetown Raider forward Trevor Branning among those who wouldn't mind getting an extra week to prepare for the OHA Provincial Jr. A Hockey League's post-season.

The third-place Raiders are dueling with the Hamilton Red Wings for second spot in the league's West Division and a first-round playoff bye heading into the final week of the regular season. Georgetown trails by one point and both clubs have two contests remaining on their schedule, meaning that the first-round playoff matchups may not be set until Monday evening.

The 20-year-old Branning has missed the past four games due to a shoulder injury and while he's hopeful of playing this weekend, the Raiders also don't want to lose their second-leading scorer for a lengthier period of time.

In order to surpass Hamilton in the West Division standings for the first-round bye, the Raiders will likely have to win their remaining games at Burlington Friday and at home to last-place Streetsville on Saturday night and hope that the Red Wings are tripped up against either Brampton or Mississauga.

Getting a free pass through the opening round could also have some drawbacks, however, including rustiness when the division semifinal series begin and less gate revenue by skipping through the best-of-5 first round.

But Branning, a 5-foot-11, 190-pound Brampton native acquired from Orangeville during the off-season, could use the extra rest.

"I'd love the bye. It would mean another

week for me to recuperate and get more treatment and rest," he said prior to Monday evening's practice.

"You can't help but scoreboard watch at this time of year because it's been going back and forth every night. One team gets a big win and then they lose the next. It's been so close teams can move up or down in the standings two or three places in just one night."

Milton, Mississauga and Burlington are also scrapping it out for the fifth and sixth spots in the conference, making for an interesting final week of play.

The 28-15-4 Raiders let another precious point escape their grasp at home Saturday against Burlington, as the Cougars forced overtime on a goal with five seconds left in the third period and then won in overtime 5-4. Georgetown had taken a 2-0 lead after 20 minutes on scores by Tom Jefferson and Andy Bathgate and then Kyle Essery and Mark McGowan tallied 42 seconds apart to give the hosts a 4-3 advantage late in regulation time. Brant Nicolson won it for the Cougars off a rebound in the extra frame.

Marcus Pryde scored twice for the Raiders Sunday night in Etobicoke as they downed languishing Streetsville 3-0. Paul Claxton made 20 stops for his third shutout of the campaign and Lukas Ciotti added a single marker.

Meanwhile, Georgetown resident Craig Rylett, a ninth-round draft pick of the OHL's Sudbury Wolves last spring, was called up by the division-leading Oakville Blades for a couple of weekend games but didn't see any action.

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## Truscott earns bronze at senior meet

Georgetown teen Tasha Truscott picked up a bronze medal among other top-10 results at the recent Swim Ontario Senior Provincial Championships, hosted by the University of Toronto.

It was the first time that the Halton Hills Blue Fins sent athletes to the senior provincial meet, which draws many of Canada's elite and top university-level swimmers.

The 14-year-old Truscott swam to a third-place finish in the women's open 100-metre long course butterfly in a time of 1:03.56, a half-second behind the winner.

The Grade 9 Georgetown District High School



**TASHA TRUSCOTT**

student was one of seven girls selected to participate in Swim Canada's Age Group National Identification Squad, a training program for prospects for the 2012 Summer Olympics in London, England.

Truscott also finished fifth in both the 100m and 200m fly events and sixth in the 50m free. She will compete next at the Speedo Eastern Canadian Championships Feb. 14-17 at the Etobicoke Olympium.

Fifteen-year-old Marc Laforet of the Blue Fins placed 54th in the 200m butterfly at the senior provincials, 70th in the 100m fly, 72nd in the 50m free and 7th in the 100m freestyle race.



Fred Gervasi of the Georgetown Raiders got the better of this collision with Burlington's Jordan Gidaro during their Jr. A matchup Saturday night at the Alcott Arena. Gidaro scored once to help the visiting Cougars pull off a 5-4 comeback overtime victory.

Photo by Jon Borgstrom



## Twisters tops at tourney

The North Halton Twisters captured the atom B division championship at the Mississauga Chiefs' girls' hockey tournament recently by defeating Buffalo 6-5 in overtime, avenging a preliminary-round loss. Team members are: (forefront) Goalie Julianna Kobow. Second row: Abby McEachran, Katelynn Krafczek, Sydney Fitzpatrick, Kylie Ricciardi, Sarah Laurie, Victoria Montgomery. Third row: Madison Smith, Carolyn Stoddart, Hana MacDonald, Brittany Mallach, Jodie Braga, Jennifer Matthew, Jamie Watson, Grace Watson, Rachel Bridges. Back row: Assistant coach Archie Braga, trainer Kelly Fitzpatrick, assistant coach Colin Montgomery, head coach Alan McEachran, assistant coach Todd Laurie. See story page 18. Submitted photo

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