

SPORTS & LEISURE



Lead Ken McDermot (centre) of Georgetown had a strong week of play for Rob Lobel's rink from the Brampton Curling Club as the team placed fourth at the TSC Stores Tankard. Also pictured are Team Lobel members Scott Foster of Burlington (left, second) and Whitby's Steven Lobel (vice).
Photo courtesy Carol Pearson, Ontario Curling Association

Local curler McDermot experiences highs and lows at Ontario Tankard

Georgetown native Ken McDermot was a key member of a Brampton rink that went nose-to-nose with some of the world's top men's curlers this past week at the 2008 TSC Stores Tankard in Waterloo, begrudgingly settling for a top-four result in the province.

The 39-year-old McDermot was the lead for Brampton skip Rob Lobel during their run to Saturday's playoff round after posting a 5-4 record in preliminary pool play, facing the likes of current world champion Glenn Howard, Peter Corner, Wayne Middaugh and Georgetown native Mike Harris along the way.

Lobel's foursome qualified for the final four by edging Brantford's Wayne Tuck 9-8 in 11 ends in Saturday morning's tiebreaking game. Facing 1998 Olympic silver medalist Harris in the 3 vs. 4 match on Saturday afternoon, Lobel's team led 7-4 after stealing three in the eighth end and led by a point with the hammer in the 10th, but Harris prevailed 8-7, moving on to lose to eventual champion Howard.



MIKE HARRIS

McDermot battled a nagging throat infection through the week but soldiered on, and his side nearly knocked off the undefeated Howard in the round-robin, coming up just short at 10-9.

"It was a fun week. I've never won this event and have always left disappointed. I'm leaving disappointed but it's still fun to be here," said McDermot, a married father of three who has made provincial curling appearances dating back to 1989 with teams such as Bob Fedosa, Peter Corner, Bob Turcotte, and Russ "Hurry Hard" Howard.

"In the playoffs, anything can happen. We were thinking if we beat Harris and then there's one game against Howard and Peter Corner and you never know, we're off to Winnipeg (for the Brier). There are hundreds of teams that would have liked to be in our position, and we've made it to the last four in the province. That's a pretty good accomplishment."

—with files from Andrew Coppolino

Raiders nail down second to earn first-round bye

EAMONN MAHER
Staff Writer

Never ones to do things the easy way, the Georgetown Raiders have nonetheless earned a much-needed week-long break from the upcoming OHA Provincial Jr. A Hockey League playoff battles after a couple of weekend victories.

Duelling with the Hamilton Red Wings over the final two weeks of the regular campaign for the coveted second spot in the loop behind powerhouse Oakville, the 30-14-5 Raiders pulled off a gritty 4-3 comeback win Friday night in Burlington over the Cougars and then dusted bottom-place Streetsville at the Alcott Arena Saturday 6-3.

Meanwhile, the Red Wings lost 2-1 to fourth-place Brampton on Saturday evening, clinching second spot for the Raiders, who prevailed by just one point over Hamilton despite recent demoralizing losses to Burlington and Mississauga.

"The way this season's gone, if there's an expressway to the cottage, we're the type of team that likes to take the scenic route instead," laughed Georgetown's director of hockey operations, Lonnie Freeman.

"But really, to get the bye is a load off everybody's mind because after some of the things we've gone through, the guys just really wanted

it to prove what type of team we really have here. It also gives us a chance to heal some bumps and bruises and we'll be able to get in a few practices to work on some things and I know everyone's looking forward to a bit of rest."

The number of teams from each of the four OPJHL conferences that qualify for the post-season was cut from eight to six this year, meaning that the top two clubs in the division received opening-round byes, while the remaining four square off in best-of-5 matchups to be played in just eight days.

A number of Raiders could use some down time to recuperate from game action and while the team received good news on the ankle status of forward Anthony Luciani, first-line winger Jeremy Wick will miss the first three games of the second-round series. Wick and Burlington's Michael Folkes were assessed four-game suspensions for intent-to-injure match penalties in the second period of Friday's contest.

"Missing Wick is tough but to get Luciani back is like getting a free agent because not many people expected him to play again this year," said Freeman of his player's fractured ankle, suffered Oct. 27.

The 17-year-old Luciani had 14 points in 13 games with the Raiders after starting the season with the OHL's Erie Otters.

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Jeremy Wick of the Georgetown Raiders (left) helps out his defence by warding off Burlington Cougars Jordan Gidaro (87) and Michael Budd (27) during their OHA Provincial Jr. A Hockey League contest in Burlington on Friday. The Raiders clinched second place in the division by rallying for a 4-3 victory.
Photo by Eamonn Maher

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