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# Martha Gleeson honoured for b-ball coaching success

By STEVE LeBLANC  
Special to The Champion

A Milton basketball coach was recently honored by Canada's top hoopsters.

Martha Gleeson was one of just 10 instructors province-wide to receive a coach-of-the-year award from the Toronto Raptors April 8 at SkyDome, during their showdown with the Washington Bullets.

While the Ontario Basketball Association (OBA) has recognized outstanding coaching in the past, this was the first year they coordinated the presentations with the local NBA franchise.

Gleeson, the heart and soul of the Milton Monarch program, was named top midget coach in the entire province. Her commemorative plaque — signed by Isiah Thomas — was presented by Toronto's public relations manager Al Quance at half time.

"It (the award) came as a big surprise, I'm not even sure who nominated me," said Gleeson, a longtime coach at both the high school and club level. "Being out there at half court and receiving an award was quite a thrill."

Her initiation into coaching followed a remarkable playing career at Leamington High School, and later with Western University where she helped the Mustangs win three national titles. She split her duties between player and coach during the last of those championships.

After successful periods instructing in Brantford and Preston she moved to Milton, where among numerous accolades she led Our Lady of Victory's boys team to a regional championship and the league finals.

One of her best memories — in her 30-plus years in basketball — came three years ago when she led the Monarch bantam girls to the gold medal at the AA Ontario championships.

"I really thought we were only a single A team that year, but the girls played their hearts out and just kept winning," Gleeson recalled.

Along with husband Pat, whom she describes as a "master strategist", Gleeson has not only coached hundreds of provincial hoopsters but all four of her chil-



Photo by STEVE LEBLANC

Prominent Milton basketball coach Martha Gleeson shows off the plaque she received in appreciation from the Toronto Raptors, who recognized her commitment toward development of the sport at the grassroots level. The ceremony took place at a recent Raptors game.

dren as well. Daughters Anne and Mary-Ellen currently excel at Milton District High School while sons Patrick and Michael are at university.

Of those who have come through the Monarch program and benefited from Gleeson's expertise, no less than 22 have played or are playing at the college or university level.

## In track

# Beatty wins handful of gold

Lauren Beatty may want to pursue a career in prospecting, because she's already proven her ability to strike gold with the Athletiques International track and field club.

The 10-year-old J.M. Denyes Public School student won five gold medals in five events last Saturday at the Al Nicholls Memorial Track and Field Meet in Oakville.

Her collective efforts won her the outstanding female athlete award.

Highlighting her day-long success was a 6.86-metre hurl in the shot put, which not only earned top honors but her first-ever meet record. It also set an individual standard, as did two of her other efforts.

She opened the day by dominating the 100m dash, in a personal

best 15.3 seconds, and followed up with a 33s finish over 200m (P.B.), a 3.60m long jump (P.B.) and a strong final leg in the 4x100m relay that gave her local contingent a 1:09.6 triumph.

Part of that relay team was seven-year-old Shannon Laing, who had a fairly good day herself with a handful of personal records.

Beginning with a meet record of 9.8s in the eight-and-under girls 60m, an entire second off the old mark, she settled into a nice groove and took more than two seconds off her 200m standard, clocking in at 36.7.

She later established a new record in the shot put, 5.31m, and finished second in the long jump, with a personal best of 2.83m.

Trying her luck in the 10-and-

• see LOCAL on page 24



Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Lauren Beatty displays the handful of gold medals.

# Community Sports Calendar

Attention all Sports Organizations!  
To Place Your Upcoming Event

Phone 878-2341 Fax 878-4943

**Friday May 9th**

**MILTON MAVERICKS JUNIOR A LACROSSE**

8:00 pm

SIX NATIONS at MILTON

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**Saturday May 10th**

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