



SPORTS

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

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Locals shoot for provincial peewee gold

Milton pair looking to cap successful seasons with Ontario championship titles this coming weekend

By STEVE LeBLANC

The Champion

Provincial peewee girls action will have a local flavour this weekend.

And with any luck, a couple of area players will taste championship victory.

Miltonian Victoria Mulé and Campbellville's Hannah Mott will each be vying for peewee provincial gold — but at different levels.

Victoria's Etobicoke Dolphins hope to triumph at the 'AA' loop while Hannah's Burlington Barracudas will look to take top honours among the 'A' ranks.

Competition in both divisions will be held at Brampton and Mississauga arenas starting Friday.

The Barracudas should be feeling particularly confident these days — after emerging victorious among all 'A' clubs in the North Metro Girls Hockey League.

They held top spot following regular season play and cemented themselves at overall champs with a successful four-team round robin playdown campaign earlier this month.

Burlington knocked off Barrie, Mississauga and Stouffville to clinch the league title.

One of two talented netminders guarding the cage for the Barracudas, Hannah backstopped the team to victory against Mississauga and was exceptional all season long — despite playing among girls two years older than her.

Six shutouts

The 11-year-old stopper — whose kid brother Parker tended the twine with Milton's A minor atoms this past year — secured half-a-dozen shutouts and registered an overall goals-against average of well under 2.00.

"Everyone was trying out for goalie about three years ago and the first time I played net I got a shutout," recalled the local preteen. "I've been a goaltender ever since."

Among Hannah's 2000/01 season highlights are a 2-1 championship victory over the hosts at the London Tournament and a goose egg stalemate with Bluewater at the Brantford Walter Gretzky Tournament — which earned her MVP honours.

Her team also struck silver at tournaments in Burlington and Kitchener and took a few wins against 'AA' teams as well.

But those accolades would certainly take a back seat to provincial gold this weekend. And if this season's results are any indication, the Barracudas' title hopes are as strong as anybody's.

Said Hannah, "We've beat just about every team at least once, so we've got a good shot."

Meanwhile, Victoria's contributions toward victory during this weekend's provincial showcase will be of the offensive variety.

A fast-skating centre with plenty of puck-handling ability, the 13-year-old averaged a point a game with Etobicoke this season and led them to third-place finishes in both regular season and playoff action.

Her jump up to 'AA' competition this year seemed to go as smoothly as the one she made last season from boys house league play to the 'A' Halton Hills Twisters girls team.

'AA' much faster

"It's a lot faster at the 'AA' level, but that hasn't bothered me too much," said Victoria, whose hard work and talent earned her a one-time call-up to Etobicoke's bantam team this season.

Much like Hannah, Victoria has had a knack for shining in big-game situations — including the finals of the Chatham Tournament, when she scored a key goal to ignite a late comeback and eventual 3-2 win over archrival London.

Unfortunately, she and her fellow snipers couldn't engineer a similar rally against Mississauga in a crucial playoff encounter recently and were trimmed 3-1.

However, Etobicoke has been red hot since Christmas — with a near perfect record, including several tightly-contested victories — and have a winning record against more than half the teams vying for provincial gold this weekend.

"About the only team we've really got to worry about is London," suggested Victoria. "Then again there's so many close games at this level that anything can happen."



Photos by STEVE LeBLANC

Campbellville's Hannah Mott and (inset) Miltonian Victoria Mulé will each be looking to secure provincial peewee championship gold this weekend — with the Burlington Barracudas and Etobicoke Dolphins respectively. Victoria hopes to prevail in the 'AA' girls loop while Hannah will look to shine among the 'A' teams.

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