

Milton rep hockey program makes a major comeback, thanks to changes

By MURRAY TOWNSEND
Special to The Champion

And the award for comeback of the year goes to... Milton minor hockey.

Last season was a dreadful year for the rep teams in Milton. Most of the teams were cellar dwellers in their leagues, the playoffs were a complete bust, and one measly team had a record over .500.

A number of suggestions were made as to the reason for the drop in quality, the most common being that the population had aged because there hadn't been any new development for so long. The future would be brighter it was thought, but not for a while.

It didn't take long at all. One year to be exact.

In the regular season in the AA age group of Tri-County, the midgets were 19-7-2, the most wins in the league; the bantams were 14-10-4, good for fourth place; the peewees had a winning record; and the atoms were 13-7-2. Some other teams didn't fare so well, but overall an excellent showing.

In A, the midgets had a winning record, in AE, three of four teams had winning records, including

a 14-7-3 mark by the bantams and a 15-6-3 record by the atoms.

In the playoffs there was yet more success. In AA, the midgets are now playing in the OMHA finals, the AA bantams went to the OMHA semifinals, and several other teams were successful.

In the Tri-County playoffs two teams have already qualified for the finals — the atom AA and minor atom AA.

Pretty impressive stuff, and it was no accident. And almost none of it was the result of kids moving into the new developments in Milton.

Tammie Parcels, vice-president in charge of the rep program, took the time to explain some of the changes from last year, as well as deflect the credit to several other people.

There was an increased focus on coach and player development to start, which included hosting more clinics. She said they increased the level of communication, and determined from coaches what they needed and what they felt wasn't being provided to them.

As well, they were able to place the proper

coaches at the appropriate age levels.

One result from the increased communication was that rep teams were allowed to carry fewer players this year, meaning weaker players weren't on teams because they had to be to meet the number requirement.

Joey Pedulla, a former Junior and European professional, helped with the tyke to peewee ages; Grant Gooding took over player and coach development, with help from Dan Vipond, and did a tremendous job according to Parcels. She also mentioned the help of Scott Anders and others that contributed to the increased success that extended all the way down to house-league where vice-president Mike White was responsible for several successful changes.

More changes are in store for next year, but the one year turnaround is a tremendous achievement in itself.

We can count ourselves fortunate in Milton that there are people to take the initiative to create better programs for our kids, with little fanfare or thanks.

Please fax all of your team reports and sports story ideas to Steve LeBlanc at (905) 878-4943 anytime.

CANADIAN TIRE CORRECTION NOTICE

We wish to draw your attention to the following in our current "2002 Annual Catalogue"

PAGE 225- ELEVATED TOILET SEAT, 63-5746-6
Copy reads: \$6.99.
Should read: \$29.99.

PAGE 346- OVERHEAD THEATRE, 35-2503-0
This item is discontinued and has been replaced by: Mobile DVD Player with 6.4" invertible monitor, 35-2513-6. \$829.99

PAGE 378- THE PRICES FOR ITEMS 1 AND 2 SHOULD BE TRANSPOSED

Item 1 - Lasertemp, 25-1018-6
Copy reads: \$15.99.
Should read: \$159.99.

Item 2 - Pro Remote Starter Switch, 25-1040-0
Copy reads: \$159.99.
Should read: \$15.99.

We sincerely regret any inconvenience we may have caused you.

cnote Cat/02 - All Zones

Midgets win series opener

• from 'AA' MIDGETS on page 19

By this time, Milton had completely taken over the game, something that Barrie was no longer interested in. Adam Rutz, who forechecked as if he invented it, was robbed on several occasions, as was Galick, who kept appearing out of nowhere to turn a rush into a two-on-one. Chris Coates and Derek Blanchard both sent him in alone with perfect passes and he had another breakaway on his own.

The only way Barrie was going to get anything by Strong was on a deflection, and they managed two of those in the third period, one with 23 seconds remaining.

Coach Arnie Parcels was clearly pleased with the team's effort and couldn't say enough good things

about the way Strong played in net, and how strong the team's goaltending was with him and Kyle Goertz.

Parcels wasn't impressed with Barrie's tactics, but maintained that Milton's focus was on maintaining that focus. He explained that it meant, "making strong d-zone plays" and "minimizing high percentage chances."

Parcels by no means thinks that Milton has a hammerlock on the series after one game. Barrie is a talented team that isn't going down without a fight. Parcels says the game plan will be the same for round two tonight in Milton at 7:30 p.m. at Memorial Arena. "We have to outwork them every shift, win the one-on-one battles and bury our opportunities."

Local rider to represent Canada

Heather Manbert-Serniuk of Milton has earned one of three spots to represent Canada in the upcoming World Cup equestrian finals.

The Canadian team will compete in Germany during the first week

of May against riders from more than 30 countries.

Manbert-Serniuk will ride long-time mount Just Julia — a 10-year-old Dutch Warmblood mare owned by her mother Janet Manbert, who's also the owner/operator of

the world class Hendervale Equestrian Complex just outside of Milton.

Manbert-Serniuk is current in Ocala, Florida, training for the World Cup event.

'AA' peewees end season with tournament victory

Tri County championship play may have eluded them, but Milton's AA major peewees refused to let their season end without securing another piece of hardware.

After narrowly missing a berth to the league finals, the Hydro One Winterhawks amassed four consecutive wins to take top honours at this past weekend's Goderich Lions Young Canada Tournament.

Milton clinched his second tournament title of the season by knocking off Mitchell 3-1 Sunday. Brendan Duke's rock-solid cage work and a pair of third-period goals allowed the local lads to triumph.

Jacob Demarsh potted the game-winner, while also lighting the lamp were Jeremy Brown and Alex Marshall.

Andrew McLean assisted on the first and final tallies while single helpers were recorded by Duke, Jordan Gleed and Mark Murray.

The Winterhawks reached the finals with an identical margin of victory over Mississauga Sunday. Marshall, Connor Mitchell and Alex Yeoman scored in the semifinals while tending the net in fine style was Devin Plater.

Before that, the eventual champs secured decisions over London (3-1) and Mitchell (4-3) Saturday. Brown and Blake Frittenburg buried the biscuit in each game while also scoring were Demarsh, Mitchell and Alex Berndt.

Duke and Plater combined for an impressive 1.5 goals-against average at the tournament.

The AA major peewees finished Tri County round-robin play with six wins and two losses.

They fell just one victory shy of a berth to the championship finals.



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