



COMMENT



THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

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COMMON SENSE (R)EVOLUTION

NEASE '02

Haydar and midgets do community proud

Just a month ago, hockey fans from coast to coast rejoiced in Team Canada's Olympic triumph over the Americans.

Now Milton's sporting community is buzzing about the recent feats of NCAA star Darren (Mini) Haydar and the AA midgets — who've both earned major-league distinction.

Haydar is a leading candidate for the Hobey Baker award, given each year to America's top university hockey player, and has propelled his New Hampshire University Wildcats into next weekend's national Frozen Four.

The Merchants' all-time scoring leader has become one of the best clutch performers UNH has ever seen and this season's accomplishments — which may not be done quite yet — serve as vindication for the hard-working sniper most felt was simply too small to succeed at a high-profile level.

Meanwhile, Milton's AA midgets — led by well-respected head coach Arnie Parcels — reached the top of the OMHA mountain in Barrie Tuesday night with an inspiring 3-1 victory. Their OMHA title win highlighted an overall much-improved season for the local rep hockey program.

Haydar and the midgets have offered two success stories for local fans to revel in — and for that, we thank them. Way to go, guys!

There's more local sports to pick from this summer

Milton's summer sports scene is about to get interesting.

With Jr. B lacrosse set to be revived and men's football ready to be started up, local fans now have three high profile teams — counting already established junior baseball — to follow through the warm-weather months.

So unlike the Jr. A Merchants — who pretty much have a monopoly on your local sports entertainment buck from September to March — the fight for fan support may be as great as the weekly battles with league opponents.

Summer sports generally haven't enjoyed much fanfare in recent years, but with the recent population boom that might just change.

In fact, Milton's newcomers may now play a significant role in deciding which team becomes the flagship of the summer. After all, a club's success can be judged as much by its spectator sup-

port as its number of wins.

And while some sports enthusiasts may follow all three teams, most will support only one.

So just which sport will be the top dog in 2002? That's difficult to say right now — given the nature of each team.

Re-established by John Arnold, Milton's Jr. B lacrosse team has the early start, with the regular-season getting underway in late April. And with games being moved from Friday to Thursday nights, the club may have minimized their chances of missing the weekend-getaway crowd.

That's something junior baseball and men's football will have to contend with — since the majority of games are expected to be played Saturday and Sunday afternoons.

However, baseball and football are still among the 'big four' sports and tend to draw larger crowds than lacrosse — which despite being our

OUR READERS WRITE

Local historian responds to recent column

Dear Editor:

Richard Vivian's column which suggests "sometimes an old building is just an old building" reflects a frighteningly shallow perspective from several points.

The building now being demolished is much more than old. It's an important part of the streetscape that gives Milton's downtown core some of the charm that municipal policy is busy promoting.

Originally, as was pointed out by Mr. Vivian, plans included keeping the front and one side wall. This would have maintained the streetscape, which gives the downtown its uniqueness.

It doesn't seem unusual that weaknesses emerged after gutting and leaving the building open to the

elements for months. It's true the building wasn't a designated structure on the roster of LACAC. But then, by my count, there are only two buildings on the street that bear such a designation.

From Mr. Vivian's perspective, I assume all the other old buildings may face a similar fate at the whim of the owners. This of course will fly in the face of Town policy, which I understood was inclined to see the downtown core and its uniqueness as worthy of preservation.

Mr. Vivian's failure to see any need for the Milton Historical Society to be involved with this situation will be evident as he walks out of his Main Street office and sees the ugly hole punched in the

fabric of the streetscape.

But then, "sometimes an old building is just an old building," he says.

Good luck to the church in its project, which will attempt to build back in some of the workmanship of former generations. Perhaps a cosmetic effort is the best we can hope for. And if the old building has been an eyesore in downtown Milton for a year, as Mr. Vivian suggests, I seem to remember it being okay until the gutting started.

I urge readers that the next time they walk along Main Street to look around at the fabric of the street that makes it unique. It may not survive much more progress.

Jim Dills
Milton



with STEVE LeBLANC

Up
Front

national sport, has not really caught on in most Ontario communities.

Even during the Mavericks' Founder's Cup season of 1999, John Tonelli Sports Centre sat at least half empty on most nights.

Hopefully a greater contingent of local players this season will go toward putting more bodies in the stands.

Arnold will have the minor league ranks from which to draw on as well, which should help.

But in the end, simple success will be a huge factor in just who pulls in the fans. That's certainly evident with the AA midgets — who's OMHA championship run has helped them pack Memorial Arena on more than occasion this season, something the Merchants did just a handful of times despite their higher profile status.

Both new teams — football and lacrosse — have an uphill climb ahead of them in terms of establishing themselves as league contenders. But both have strong managements, so while neither will likely be powerhouses, they shouldn't be pushovers either.

As for your local sports scribe, he'll be following all three teams and is quite interested to see which club can turn some heads.

So let the games begin.