

Let's play ball!

High school teams ready to go

Spring training's over and Milton's three high school baseball teams are ready to take on the best Halton Region has to offer. Bishop Reding and Milton District get started this afternoon, while E.C. Drury begins Monday.

The following is a preview of each squad, their strengths and weaknesses, plus a quick outlook on their chances.

Bishop Reding Royals

Head coach: Joe Juras

Last Year: Lost the Halton championship to Burlington Central, but went on to reach the all-Ontario Blue Jay Cup semifinals at SkyDome by winning their regional play-downs in Guelph. Finished 4-0-2 in regular-season play.



Hitting: Should still be quite strong, especially with reliable slugger Nick Mazzorato back in the number three or four spot. Expect fellow returnees Sean Mathé, Lee Mathé and P.J. McColl to step things up at the plate.

Pitching: Bishop Reding simply can't replace ace graduate Liam Tennant, and nobody's trying to suggest otherwise. However, McColl and Sean Mathé showed strongly down the stretch last spring and provide a solid one-two punch. Depth on the mound could be a question mark.

Fielding: While four of last year's starters have graduated, the Royals don't seem to lose much defensively. The odd-man out in 2004 due to numbers and his age, Lee Mathé will now be a regular at third base, but could find himself at other positions as well at times to help stabilize things. There's no real holes in the field, despite a few younger guys seeing full-time play this season.

The Bottom Line: With five players back from last year's championship drive, Bishop Reding has to be considered a contender once again. If strong coaching and a proven track record can rub off on the younger guys, BR should be in the Halton title picture for a third straight season.

Opening Day: Today at Oakville's Glen Abbey Park against Loyola at 3:30 p.m.

E.C. Drury Spartans

Head coach: Rob Garcia

Last Year: Following a one-year hiatus, went 0-6 in the regular season and missed the playoffs.



Hitting: Kyle Lynch and Scott Rankin are expected to be bright spots in the line-up, but don't bank on a whole lot of punch from the Spartans, who'll merely look to put the ball in play and hope for the best.

Pitching: Could be a particularly weak component for the rebuilding club. With no real standouts to speak of — beyond perhaps Rankin, who's gifted but a little rough around the edges — Drury will throw a lot of pitchers into just about every game and try to keep opposing hitters off balance.

Fielding: Again, with a rather inexperienced squad there'll be a lot of platooning done right away — with some of the younger guys getting put in pressure situations to season them up.

The Bottom Line: Without much going for them besides a solid work ethic, the Spartans aren't expected to do a lot this season. Any victories enjoyed may just have to come through the proverbial 'smoke and mirrors'. But with a new seasoned coach and some young players, future success isn't out of the question.

Opening Day: Monday at Oakville Park against Oakville Trafalgar at 3:30 p.m.

Milton District Mustangs

Head coach: Ted Anderson

Last Year: Lost to Bishop Reding in quarterfinals after beating Oakville's Iroquois Ridge in first round. Finished 3-3 in regular-season play.



Hitting: Though not really the Mustangs' strong suit, a couple of bright spots do exist in Jarred McCall and Chris Jones, who'll look to carry much of the load for a lineup that's not particularly potent.

Pitching: Where BR loses one of high school's top area pitchers in Tennant, MD acquires gifted Shadlock brothers Shawn and Chris plus Thunderbirds veteran Hallan King, who offer an exceptional front-line attack. Throw Jones and a few solid supporting arms into the mix and the Mustangs may just have the most improved pitching staff in the region.

Fielding: While not quite solidified yet, MD's defense looks fairly strong — especially in the outfield, with talented Jon Jeysman anchoring things at centre. Carrying 17 players this season, the Mustangs won't be hurting for back-ups at any given post.

The Bottom Line: Strong pitching can carry a team awfully far. With that in mind, expect the Mustangs to pull off at least one regular season upset and go .500 or better.

Opening Day: Today at Oakville's River Oaks Park against Holy Trinity at 3:30 p.m.



Pitchin' in

Town of Milton Community Services Director Jennifer Reynolds (right) accepts a cheque for \$12,000 from Milton Youth Soccer Club president Dave Haringa and vice-president Heather Brooks for the club's share of the new \$90,000 lights at soccer field number four at Lions Sports Park.

Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Awesome Girls' Birthday Parties

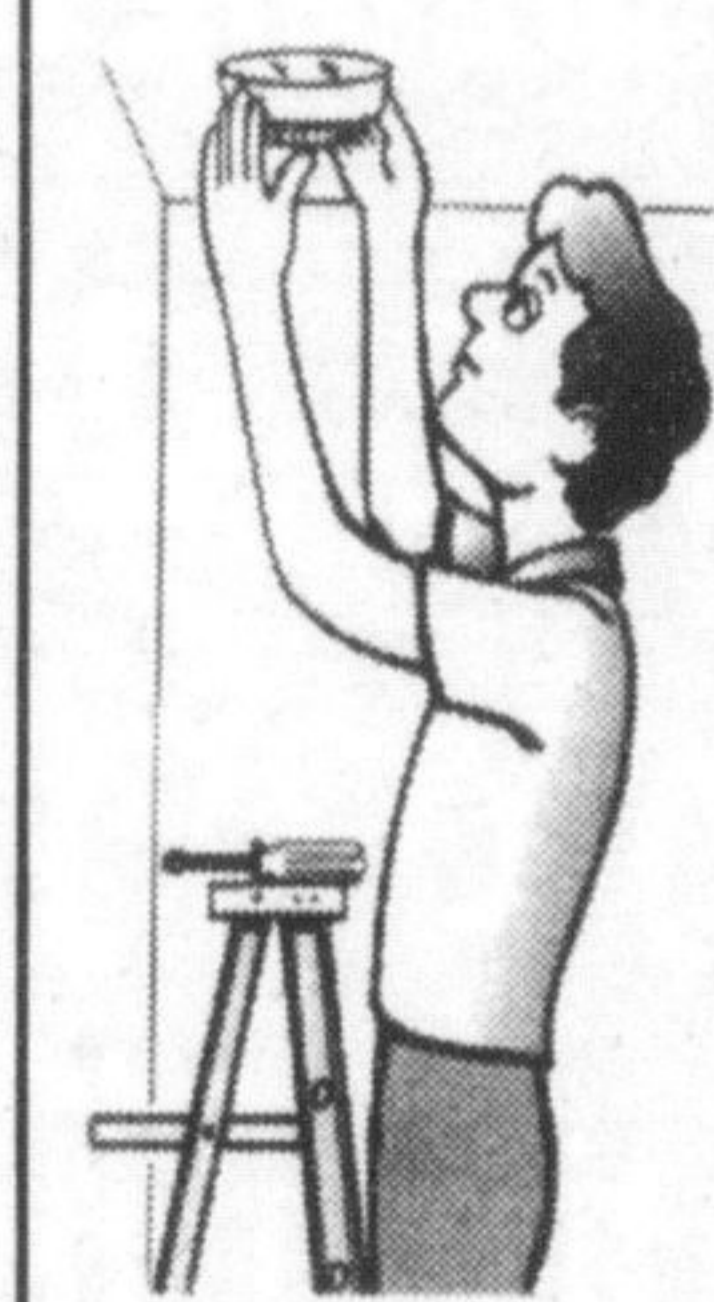
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SHUTTLE BUS: Shuttle Bus by Cullingford Coaches from Islington Subway Station every hour on the half hour starting at 9:30am.

FRIDAY 10-6
SATURDAY 10-5

Premier Publications & Shows

FRIDAY, APRIL 29 • MAINSTAGE	SEMINAR TOPIC	PRESENTER
10:15	Seniors Safe Medication Use Program	Ontario Pharmacists Association
11:00	Seniors Safety and Fraud	Peel Police and Crime Stoppers
11:45	Awards by Don Wall	Awards by Don Wall
12:30	Walking in a Warrior's Footsteps	Shelagh Whitaker, Author
	Anecdote of Love and War by a woman who shared her husband's WWII experiences.	
2:00	Forever Young Idol Competition	Forever Young Idol Competition
2:45	Forever Young Idol Competition	Forever Young Idol Competition
3:30	Seniors Safe Medication Use Program	Ontario Pharmacists Association
4:15	Tribute to the Year of the Veteran	All Star Big Band
FRIDAY, APRIL 29 • VANCOUVER ROOM		
11:00	Travel Seminar	Hola Sun
11:45	Helping You Protect Your Estate	Keybase Financial
12:30	Tell Us Your Story	Living Images
1:15	New Treatments for Macular Degeneration	Occulogix/RHEO Clinic
2:00	Australia/New Zealand	Pacesetter/Goway Travel
	Long stay or escorted. All you wanted to know and more.	
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SATURDAY, APRIL 30 • VANCOUVER ROOM		
10:15	The Five Major Pitfalls To Avoid When Planning A Loved One's Funeral	Wealth Management
11:00	New Treatments for Macular Degeneration	Occulogix/RHEO Clinic
11:45	Tell Us Your Story	Living Images
12:30	Tax Efficient Investing With Safety And Growth Made For Seniors	Keybase Financial
2:00	Empower You and Yours	The Care Guide/Open Doors
	Get the information you need about seniors housing & care	
2:45	Jump start your body with therapeutic grade essential oils	Young Living Essential Oils
3:30	Travel Seminar	Hola Sun

Schedule subject to change.

For Exhibit Opportunities, call: 905-815-0017 or visit www.premierconsumershows.com

