

French accepts head coaching job in Wichita

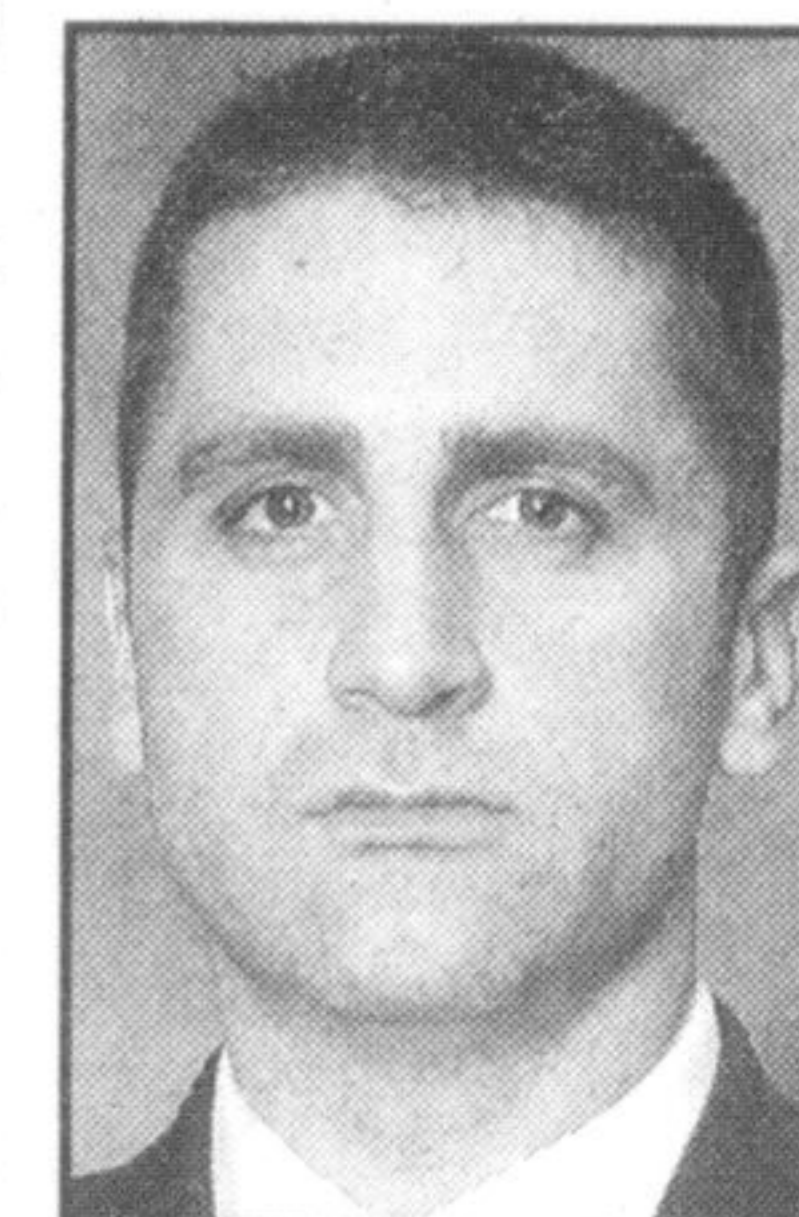
Former Merchant excited about taking reigns at the pro level

Mark French officially begins his first season as a professional head coach later this month, although he's anything but a rookie behind the bench.

At just 34 years of age, the native Miltonian and former Jr. B Merchant brings a wealth of experience to the Central Hockey League's Wichita Thunder, who announced his signing late last month.

French spent last season as an assistant coach with the East Coast Hockey League's Atlantic City Boardwalk Bullies — who fell to Miltonian Scott Bertoli's Trenton Titans in the first round.

When the Bullies moved to Stockton, California this past spring, French began looking for other opportunities — and found what he considers to be an ideal fit with Wichita.



Mark French

"It's pretty exciting. Being a pro head coach has always been my goal, and to get my first chance at that with a team with such a good track record is great," he said.

Before Atlantic City, French was an assistant coach with Canada's 2004 Under-18 World Cup squad that reached the semi-finals in Belarus.

While he won't have to improve things too much in Wichita — inheriting a team that made it to the conference finals the last two years and is always a contender — French has proven he can turn around a struggling team's fortunes.

In the fall of 2002 he returned to the Canadian university ranks for his first head coaching assignment and took the Wilfrid Laurier Golden Hawks from a sub-500 record to just missing the conference finals in a scant two years.

Prior to that he was an assistant with the former North Bay Centennials, while his resumé also includes assistant coaching tenures with both Guelph and Brock universities.

His Thunder begin their season October 21 at home against the Odessa Jackalopes, with whom Milton's Jeff Haydar played during the 2001/02 season.



Photos by SABRINA BYRNES

On the run

Above, W.I. Dick Middle School's Bri Recto competes in the junior girls division at the recent North Halton Cross-Country Meet at Sherwood Forest Park in Burlington. At left, the junior girls start out on the course. W.I. Dick enjoyed the most team success on the day, winning both the junior and intermediate boys divisions and taking top-three honours in three other classes. Individually, Milton-area schools had four first-place finishers. Brookville Public School's Scott Davis, Robert James and Dylan Innes won the bantam, atom and junior boys races respectively, while taking top spot among intermediate boys was W.I. Dick's Matt Dupont.



AE2 peewees win

Milton's AE2 peewees rode a stellar performance by goaltender Justin Davidson to a 4-2 win over visiting Hespeler last Tuesday night.

Davidson weathered a number of storms to pull out the victory, with solid support offered by defencemen Philip Geng and Mitch McLaughlin. Dylan Burkholder led offensively with a goal and an assist on Quinn Kerr's game winner. Also scoring were Russell Jolivet and Megan Wain. Kendall Atkinson, Clay Jones, Paul Marten, Kenny Pagua and Mason Whiting picked up assists.

Meanwhile, Milton's AA minor atoms were doubled up 4-2 in Oakville Thursday evening.

Connor Hallyburton kept things close with some big saves, while goals came from Rourke Ferguson and Adam Wilson. Setting them up were Aidan Atkinson, Jacob Quinn, Ben Preisner and Graydon Wessinger.

Milton Lacrosse Association Annual General Meeting

is being held on Thursday, October 13th, 2005, at 7:30 pm in the Meeting Room at the Tonelli Community Room, 217 Laurier Ave., Milton, for the purposes of Electing 2006 Board of Directors and amendments to the M.L.A. Constitution and By-Laws.



FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: CALL SUSAN GRANT 905-878-1547 BETWEEN 6-9PM

VOLLEYBALL ADULT LEAGUES
URBAN SPORTS CLUB

Teams & individuals of all levels welcome! Sign Up Today!

CO-ED ADULT VOLLEYBALL LEAGUES
 Milton at E.W. Foster School
 Thursday nights between
 8 & 10 pm Oct 13 to Dec 15

905.407.GAME • info@urbansports.ca
 www.urbansports.ca