

Making basketball fun helps Iera's team reach new heights

By Herb Garbutt
CANADIAN CHAMPION STAFF

For Andre Iera, having a competitive basketball team is important in the effect it has on his players.

The look of satisfaction on the players' faces is all he needs to see at the season's end.

"They're not really sure what they can do at the start of the season," said Iera, the coach of the St. Peter Panthers girls basketball team. "As the season goes on you see their confidence grow. Now they're starting to think they're basketball players, not just kids wearing a uniform."

For helping the budding athletes become players, Iera is

the Champion's March Coach of the Month.

Iera has coached track, soccer and volleyball over his 13-year teaching career — the last 10 with the Halton Catholic board and last two at St. Peter School.

In addition to his coaching duties, Iera is also the teachers' student council representative for the school.

"He gives up a lot of his own time to make school better for the kids," said Rob Stevenson, a grade 7/8 phys ed teacher.

"My wife sometimes says I spend more time here with the students than I do with her," Iera said. "But she's a teacher, too, so she understands."

At the beginning of the season, Iera admits the Panthers were struggling to keep up with their opponents.

"Last year we had a lot of grade 6s so I just tried to get them to understand the fundamentals of the game. I was hoping it would pay dividends."

It did. All the players returned this year and as the season

has progressed, the team has started to build on last year's solid foundation.

This year St. Peter is challenging to be one of the top three teams in north Halton to move on



to the Halton championships.

Iera has taken the team to tournaments and scheduled exhibition games to help sharpen the players' skills.

"He makes basketball so much fun to play because he helps us learn plays and he is happy for us even if we lose," said Sarah Camick, a grade 7 student at St. Peter.

"He knows a lot about the games he coaches and he's got a great rapport with the kids," Stevenson said. "He's positive and very approachable. He always makes himself available for the students."

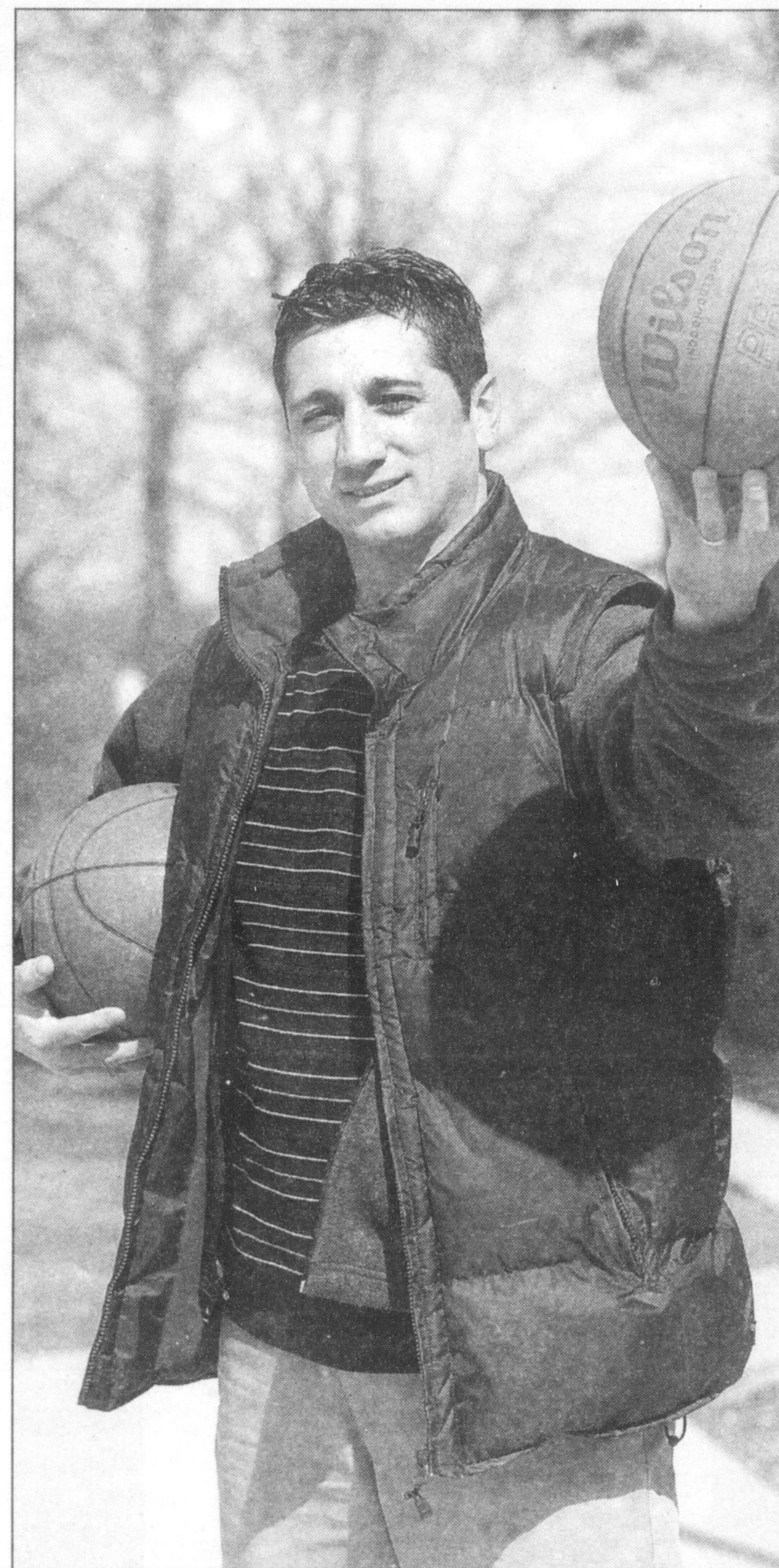
Iera said the objective in elementary school sports is to introduce students to the game.

"Hopefully it instills some confidence in them," he said.

Often that confidence will carry over to the classroom. And Iera said he is in a unique position to teach all of his players because he teaches French in grades 6 to 8.

And that's just fine with his students/players.

"Our team knows that he is one of the best coaches and teachers that we have ever had at St. Peter school," Camick said.



GRAHAM PAINE / CANADIAN CHAMPION

APPROACHABLE COACH: Andre Iera, a grade 6-8 French teacher, is in his second season coaching the St. Peter Panthers girls basketball team. "He makes basketball so much fun to play," said Sarah Camick, one of his players. When the hoops season wraps up he'll move on to his next coaching venture, the boys soccer team.

PITCH IN CANADA

SPRING INTO RUNNING!
COME INTO
FOOTFOOLS
AND GET GEARED UP FOR WARMER WEATHER!
WE HAVE ALL YOU NEED TO SPRING INTO RUNNING!

- Performance running shoes
- Technical running apparel
- Socks, belts, hats, gloves
- Winter wear and accessories

adidas, Mizuno, Nike, Montrail, Brooks, Saucony

FOOTFOOLS Milton's Newest Specialty Running Store
MONDAY - FRIDAY 10:30AM-5:30PM, SATURDAY 10:00AM-5:00PM
189 Mary Street, Milton
905-693-1164

Three skaters speed to gold in Brampton

Three members of the Milton Speed Skating Club claimed gold medals at the Brampton Invitational.

Matthew Kerwin, Lydia Geng and Alex Borthwick each won their division at the season-closing meet.

Kerwin set personal best times in the 500m, 666m and 777m races as he claimed the overall title in the Bravo Division. He missed breaking the one-minute mark in the 500m by 2.22 seconds.

Geng took 13 seconds off her best time in the 500m. That was one of four personal bests — she also set new marks in the 111m, 222m and 333m — she set on her way to claiming the division title.

Alex Borthwick won the Foxtrot Division thanks to personal bests in the 222m, 333m and 500m. His time in the 500m was eight seconds better than his

previous best.

Philip Geng earned the silver medal in three distances, the 333m, the 666m and the 500m, in which he took five seconds off his personal best.

Katie Lauer took the bronze medal in the 500m in the Charlie Division, taking five seconds off her best time. She also set new personal standards in the 333m and 666m.

If you received a blood transfusion or blood product before 1992, you may have been infected with hepatitis C.

Hepatitis C is a blood-borne virus that slowly damages your liver. Symptoms do not show up for years but you will eventually get sick. Before 1992, screening for this disease was not consistent and many patients became infected through the blood system. So ask your doctor about getting tested. Detection is key to controlling the virus and you may be entitled to financial assistance.

1-877-222-4977

www.health.gov.on.ca/hepc

Paid for by the Government of Ontario

Hepatitis C.
Find out if you have it.
Get tested.

