

# Young 'D' picks up family torch with IceHawks

Price follows in big brother's footsteps with hometown club

By Steve LeBlanc  
CANADIAN CHAMPION STAFF

Milton has a fairly strong history of local siblings playing for their junior hockey club — a tradition Jeremy Price is only too happy to resurrect after a somewhat lengthy drought.

The 15-year-old defenceman has taken the first step toward that, recently signing on with his hometown IceHawks as one of the two 1990s allowed for each Provincial Jr. A club.

Picking up the torch passed down by speedy big brother Matt — who's set to begin competing with NCAA Division I powerhouse Boston College next month — the Halton Hurricanes graduate isn't a complete newcomer to the local juniors.

Much like Matt did three years ago, Jeremy was part of a number of team skates last season — which the elder Price believes will be a big benefit.

"It definitely gave him a sense of what's expected and what he needs to expect from himself," said Matt from his new residence in Beantown. "Jeremy should do all right. He's a smart player who's willing to learn."



GRAHAM PAINE / CANADIAN CHAMPION  
Jeremy Price is hoping to make a solid jump to the Jr. A level this season with the IceHawks.

Echoing those sentiments was the young blueliner's former coach, Hurricanes skipper Mike Kalapaca, who stated, "He definitely has the potential to follow in his brother's footsteps. He's very mobile and handles the puck well."

IceHawks bench boss Pat Cocklin feels likewise.

"Jeremy's got all the tools to be a solid Jr. A player. He just needs to mature now."

Helping expedite development of the team's lone Miltonian is a likely pairing with blueline standout Evan

Zych, a Sutherland Cup champion with last year's Jr. B Cambridge Winterhawks whom Price skated with for much of the pre-season.

"Evan's definitely a great player and I think we can work well together," said six-foot, 175-pound Price, who begins the regular season tonight against former Hurricane teammate Matt Clark, another 1990 Milton defenceman who's now with the Brampton Capitals. "It would be great to play with an experienced guy like him."

Added Cocklin, "I'm hoping to keep those two guys together, at least for a while. It's better when the youngest defenceman's with someone seasoned. The experience usually rubs off."

An 11th round draft pick of the Oshawa Generals, Price recognizes that he won't be enjoying anywhere near the type of regular season success that his big brother did last year — when the IceHawks lost just a handful of games and spent most of the season atop the national rankings.

But being part of a young, inexperienced team has one obvious advantage: "Being a rookie, I'm coming into an ideal situation in terms of development. I should get a lot more ice time than I would have last year."

Set to turn 16 later this month, Price knows he's not going to set the league on fire right away, but certainly plans on being more than just a warm body on the blueline.

"I can't just sit back and be a rookie," he said. "I've got to try to make things happen and basically just be as effective as possible."

## New era for club begins tonight

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needs right now is some offensive cohesion — which has been practically non-existent through exhibition play.

"Hopefully the chemistry will come soon, because right now we're all over the ice," noted Heinz.

Perhaps the one thing in the IceHawks' favour this season is the fact that a few other Western Conference clubs are in pretty much the same boat as them — with the recently sold Derbys in a total rebuild phase and both Bramalea and Buffalo expected to maintain their 'have-not' status.

With that in mind, Cocklin recognizes that well-developed systems and a strong work ethic could well be the difference between a respectable finish around the middle of the pack and occupancy in the division basement.

"We've got to come every night and be ready to outwork the other team," he stressed. "Hopefully the new rules (crackdown on obstruction and stick violations) will help us with that. If they keep calling the games like they have, I think the changes will be to our advantage because of our youth."

So what does the IceHawks' new brass expect from their 2006/07 contingent?

"We're looking for the guys to progress. We'll work at making the playoffs and any kind of damage we could possibly do in the first round would be a bonus," said Pandovski. "We've got to be realistic. If I said we were going after a championship this year people would wonder if I was smoking something. But remember, this team wasn't much when Brad Grant first took over."

### 2006/07 home schedule

SEPTEMBER		
DATE	OPPONENT	TIME
Tonight	Brampton	7:30pm
Friday 15th	Mississauga	7:30pm
Tuesday 19th	Bramalea	7:30pm
Friday 22nd	Georgetown	7:30pm
Friday 29th	Buffalo	7:30pm
OCTOBER		
Friday 6th	Oakville	7:30pm
Friday 13th	Hamilton	7:30pm
Tuesday 24th	Burlington	7:30pm
Friday 27th	Streetsville	7:30pm
NOVEMBER		
Friday 3rd	Buffalo	7:30pm
Tuesday 7th	Burlington	7:30pm
Friday 10th	Bramalea	7:30pm
Friday 17th	Hamilton	7:30pm
Friday 24th	Streetsville	7:30pm
DECEMBER		
Tuesday 5th	Oakville	7:30pm
Friday 8th	Brampton	7:30pm
Friday 15th	Mississauga	7:30pm
Friday 22nd	Georgetown	7:30pm
JANUARY		
Friday 5th	Georgetown	7:30pm
Friday 12th	Bramalea	7:30pm
Tuesday 16th	Oakville	7:30pm
Friday 19th	Brampton	7:30pm
Friday 26th	Streetsville	7:30pm
FEBRUARY		
Friday 2nd	Mississauga	7:30pm

• all games at Milton Memorial Arena



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