

Merchants fall to Rayside 4-1

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Wenzel after six straight goals against. Milton held 1-0 and 2-1 leads before going in the tank. Scoring were Matt Van Arkel and Mark Cooper.

Merchant notes: After leading Provincial Jr. A League playoff scoring with 40-plus points, Travis Riffin was completely shut off the score sheet against Rayside Balfour ... A combined 318 penalty minutes

were levied against Milton and Rayside-Balfour in games three and four in Sudbury ... Milton's final 1996/97 outing also brought a number of players' junior careers to a close. The Merchants will lose Bill Emra, Cory Holland, Jeff McArthur, Trevor Downey and Lloyd LaFrance to overage restriction, while Matt Van Arkel, Doug Janjevich and Jeff White will be moving on to the NCAA.

Baseball Mustangs are rebuilding year after championship

By STEVE LeBLANC
Special to The Champion

For the Milton District High School boys baseball team, 1997 will be what is commonly referred to as a 'rebuilding year'.

The term seldom holds as much weight as it does for the Mustangs this spring. With just two starters back from last season's Prentice Cup championship roster, a return trip to SkyDome is basically out of the question.

Even a Halton County three-peat seems improbable, with Nelson and Notre Dame's veteran squads heavily favoured to reach the finals.

MD's personnel aren't preoccupied with winning titles this year, but with creating a blueprint for future success.

The following is a preview of the Milton District High School boys baseball team.

Coaching — This year's out with the old, in with the new trend starts right at the top with former player and assistant coach Adam Flatt taking over the reins left by Jim Ridley.

While obviously unable to match Ridley's vast coaching experience, Flatt has been part of back-to-back Halton championships and garners a great deal of respect from the younger players — who are in abundance this year.

Joining him are former players turned assistants Mark McPhail and Kevin Wilson, part of last season's crew.

Hitting — The Mustangs will need season-long production from returnees Nick Aalbers and Jeff Langille if they hope to contend in Halton.

Aalbers is expected to be the leadoff man, while Langille will likely hit cleanup.

Bishop Reding transfers Chris Mutcheson and Chris Scherer could also see plenty of at-bats.

Mutcheson hits for average and may fill the number two spot. Scherer meanwhile, has shown signs of power and will bat third or fifth.

The mainly rookie team won't record as many extra-base hits, and will need to capitalize on other teams' mistakes to score some runs.

Pitching — Of all aspects of their game, MD's pitching will suffer the most from graduating players with aces Pat Lynch and Jeremy Ridley moving on to class A ball and the NCAA respectively.

Langille and Adam Finkbeiner are the key starters, and will have to log plenty of innings for an extremely tight pitching staff.

Among the handful of others who will see mound work are Adam Gertzbein and Andrew Neilson.

Defence — When he's not pitching, Langille will log time at second base or shortstop. Joining him in the middle infield will be second string returnee Paul Van Cedar.

Scherer will split his duties at the hot corner and behind the plate while Aalbers will anchor the outfield crew. Gertzbein and Brett McClure are others who can contribute defensively.

The bottom line — "Hitting will be our power, while pitching and defence will be our weaknesses. Team work and player development will be the keys to us winning some ball games this year," said Flatt. "Realistically, I'd like to finish top four in our division and reach the second round of the playoffs."

Opening day — The Mustangs kick off their season with a double-header Thursday. They begin the day with an 11:15 a.m. outing against Lord Elgin at Glen Abbey and then host Nelson at Shell Park in Oakville at 3:45 p.m.

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Hiking and biking treks

The Halton Cross County Ski Club is beginning its hiking and cycling season, with a variety of groups available to participants of all ages and skill levels.

Practice hikes are held Monday evenings with graduated sessions scheduled for Saturday mornings. Cycling programs will take place Wednesday nights and Sundays with a trip to Chippewa slated for June 1.

For more information, call (905) 634-2012.



PEGGY-SUE GELLEY

EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

PEGGY-SUE GELLEY is Georgetown Toyota's Account Manager/Controller. She has been with the company for 3 1/2 years. Peggy-Sue has always loved working with numbers and customer relations. She is proud to work for a company that supports local sports and sells a great product.

Peggy-Sue has been married for 2 years to her husband Pat and is presently living in Georgetown.

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