



Amina Mohamed of the Craig Kielburger Spartans reaches down to fire the ball up the field in last Thursday's Halton junior girls field hockey game against Aldershot. Mohamed scored on a penalty flick late in the first half to help the Spartans earn a 1-1 draw. *Nikki Wesley / Canadian Champion (Follow on Twitter @halton_photo)*

Spartans thriving in gridiron debut

By Steve LeBlanc
CANADIAN CHAMPION STAFF

Hard as it may be to believe, just eight months ago there was still plenty of question as to whether Craig Kielburger Secondary School should — or even could — join the gridiron scene.

Many teachers and prospective coaches had come over from E.C. Drury — which closed in June 2012 to make way for the new school, and where (due partly to its smaller size) there had never been any football.

To that end, the cause for doubt was clear.

"We just didn't know if this (starting junior football team) could be done," admitted head coach Dave Forsyth. "There was a lot of rumblings that this wouldn't happen, simply because it had never happened before."

But with a much bigger student body to draw from, the potential was there.

Recalled Grade 10 quarterback Steven Aichele, "With that nice turf field out there, I'm sure a lot of guys were thinking they wanted a team." That's something of an understatement, as it turned out.

Needing to gauge student interest before proceeding, Forsyth and company held a meeting in February that drew roughly 75 football hopefuls.

That number swelled to 100 for last month's tryouts, and the Spartans — enjoying ample coaching support as well, with seven assistants — have been firing on all cylinders ever since.

"Suddenly there's a football culture at this school," said Forsyth, following Tuesday's 41-6 dismantling of host Milton District that lifted Craig Kielburger to 4-0 in Halton's Tier 3 ranks. "It's exciting to see. They're riding the wave."

The Spartans' instant success is especially impressive given that only three players on the team had ever played the game before.

"Yeah, you could say commitment and enthusiasm has overcome our inexperience," said Forsyth, who has four years coaching experience in the Hamilton minor rep system. Of course, having a fairly seasoned hand at the controls has been a major benefit as well.

Having suited up for three different clubs over the past eight years — including with the Halton Cowboys — Aichele has a lot more poise and knowledge than the average Tier 3 junior quarterback.

That was evident once again at MD Tuesday, with the Spartans' pivot connecting on lengthy touchdown passes to Indjot Sandhar and Kyle Postlethwait in the first quarter and exploiting the Mustangs' defence at just about every turn.

"It feels great to be having this

Locally-owned colt wins Little Brown Jug

Locally co-owned Vegas Vacation reigned supreme in the Little Brown Jug at the Delaware County Fair in Ohio — setting a new two-heat world record for geldings.

The son of Bettors Delight — owned by Milton's Adriano Sorella, West Wins Stable of Cambridge, Waterdown's Anthony Beaton and Phyllis Saunders of Hamilton — did that with identical 1:50 performances in the first two eliminations.

Driver Brian Sears was at the reins for the triumphant showing.

Vegas Vacation started from Post 2 in the second heat and left well off the gate, getting away third.

Sears tipped him in the second quarter and they grabbed the lead around the third-quarter mark en route to a convincing victory, which was capped with a 28-second final quarter mile.

"This is amazing," said Sorella told announcer Roger Huston after the win.

Vegas Vacation has won nine times in 15 starts this season and has now

banked \$902,898 in career earnings after collecting \$256,382 with Thursday's victory.

Another Little Brown Jug entry with local connections, Resistance Futile — trained by Milton's Blair Burgess — was a 24-1 upsetter in the third elimination.

The Real Desire bay colt came first up on the leaders before the opening half and was able to eventually clear to the front and pace away from his combatants in an open-length 1:49.3 win.

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