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**SUMMER FUN** – Mason Lauzon and Logan McMurren listen for instructions during a carnival day July 26 behind Essex District High School. The boys are enrolled in a day camp hosted by the Town of Essex's parks and recreation department. Around 40 children participate in the camp each week. The camp runs from the beginning of July to the first week of September.

the best defensive team as well.

They led the league in numerous defensive categories including their average of allowing only 10.1 points per game, thanks to veteran standouts such as Nate Fitzsimmons and team captain Shawn Spina. Spina had a successful season at safety-back demonstrating all season why he is an integral part of the Ravens defence.

"Shawn demonstrates every game why he is the leader of this team, consistently showing courage and great all around play," Mills said.

Spina's teammate, Fitzsimmons, had a successful year at middle-line-backer, proving himself to be an anchor of the Ravens' defensive core. Fitzsimmons was also selected by Team Canada as part of their 2006 World Junior Football Team that

won the WJF Championship last January in Detroit.

Spina said he's ready for the game against Guelph and for the playoffs. He said the Ravens beat the Bears by one point when they met early in the season, but that more experience and better team chemistry should give the Ravens an edge Saturday.

"I'm ready. I'm prepared," Spina said July 31. "I've been waiting for this forever. I think of plays over and over in my head and I always have my game face on. ... The boys are ready."

Saturday's contest with Guelph gets underway at 7 p.m. at Raider Field in Essex. The winner will advance to the Adams Conference finals in two weeks to play the winner of the Niagara Spears-London Falcons game Aug. 5.

## Ravens ready for playoffs

BY TIM LAW

The Essex Ravens are preparing for the first round of playoffs following a successful season in the Ontario Varsity Football League.

The Ravens once again finished on top of the Western Conference of the OVFL with a convincing 7-1 record and will meet the Guelph Bears in a semi-final game Aug. 5.

Ravens head coach Glenn Mills was pleased with his team's overall performance for the 2006 regular season and has been putting the team through stringent workouts during its 'playoff bye-week' leading up to Saturday's game.

"We're using our time wisely preparing for

Guelph," says Mills who is not taking the Bears too lightly. "They have a good little team and even though we beat them earlier this season, anything can happen in the playoffs. We need to be ready."

Led by Kyle Quinlan at quarterback, the Ravens' explosive offensive unit ranked first in the OVFL in rushing with over 2200 yards. The 17-year-old enjoyed his first year as starting quarterback and proved to many he was ready for the challenge, passing for over 900 yards, scoring eight touchdowns and offering up only two interceptions along the way. Quinlan's all-star like performance also earned him a spot on Team Ontario's junior squad that recently com-

peted at the Canada Cup Tournament in Winnipeg July 7-16.

"Kyle has been just a great leader out there for us all year," Mills said. "He makes sound decisions out on the field and executes plays very well."

Quinlan is a just one component to an outstanding offensive unit that saw over five different ball carriers run for over 200 yards on the season.

Tailback Rondell White led all running backs with an 800-yard rushing performance, while fullback Kostas Spyridis rushed for 365 yards during the regular season, both contributing to the Ravens' second place ranking in the league in total points scored by a team.

Besides boasting the best offence in OVFL for the 2006 regular season campaign, the Ravens also earned bragging rights as

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