

Red Raider girls take WECSSAA basketball championship

BY FREE PRESS STAFF

The Essex High School Junior Girls' basketball team got their wish Sunday afternoon—a chance to play for the WECSSAA AAA/AAAA championship against perennial superpower St. Anne's Saints.

Hoping to atone for their only regular season loss—a mid-October 39-30 defeat at the hands of the Saints—the Essex girls responded with their best effort of the season, cruising to a 43-26 win before a raucous crowd of staff, student and parent supporters at the St. Clair College gym.

The Red Raiders arrived pumped and ready to prove that, in spite of being the underdogs, they were determined to take the game to St. Anne's right from the opening tip-off. Led by balanced scoring from forwards Cortney Johnston (13 points), Laura Chittle (12

points) and guard Amy Bjorkman (11 points), the Raiders took an early lead that they never relinquished.

Raider guard Kelsey Balkwill put on her usual show of excellent defensive persistence while running the offence like a pro. Centre Jill Lappan contributed with fine defensive play and timely rebounding.

Head coach Dave Harrison was very happy with the team's overall effort.

"You can't expect to beat a really good team like St. Anne's unless everyone contributes and stays focused on the little things," Harrison explained. "Today our girls did just that. They should be as proud of themselves as the coaches and parents are of them."

Assistant coach Kathy Corchis was impressed by the team's poise under pressure.

"They saved their best effort for the championship



Kyle Walker / Free Press

Kelsey Balkwill takes the ball through the Sandwich Secondary defense during a junior girls semi final match at Essex District High School Nov. 15. EDHS won the game 50-35.

game and they truly defined what team work is all about," Corchis said.

Adding to the girls' accomplishment in winning the championship is the fact that the Red Raiders moved up a division this year from the A/AA to the more diffi-

cult AAA/AAAA level.

The final stop on this season's journey for the girls will happen Thursday when they play for the SWOSSAA championship against the representative from the Lambton-Chatham-Kent region.

Gagnon, Josh Amyotte and Jake Maisonneuve kept Belle River away from the Essex net most of the game and when Belle River did have a shot on net, the goaltending of Adam Amicarelli and Josh Scratch was up to the task. The game looked like it would end in a tie, but late in the third after some pressure by Belle River, Dylan caught up to an outlet pass by Brett and went in all alone to put the Ravens up 2-1.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 19



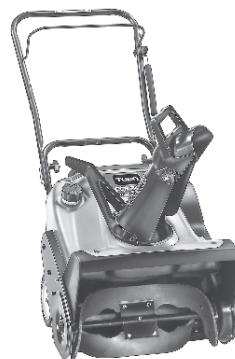
CRIMINAL DEFENCE LAWYER

Impaired... assaults... threats...
traffic tickets
Criminal Pardons at a reasonable cost.
Why miss work or school for court?

CHRISTINA SWEET
Barrister-at-Law

Weekend and evening appointments in Essex
253-0140 Res. 776-8983

**Guaranteed to start.
Guaranteed to work.
Any questions?**



- Throws snow up to 30 feet.
- Patented Power Curve rotor system cleans down to the pavement.
- 5-year starting guarantee.*

Starting at
\$569

Visit us at www.toro.com

Toro® Financing Available*



Count on it

**Great Lakes
Outdoor
Power Equipment**

35 Victoria Avenue,
Essex, ON.
(519) 776-8778

(In rear next to Siefker Machine)

Hours: Mon-Fri: 8:30-5:30pm Sat: 9:00-Noon



Novice A Drs Hager/Kniaziew

Christmas came early for the Ravens Novice A team this past weekend. As the coaching staff predicted, through hard work and a few extra practices, the team's first victory was not far away. The prediction came true on Saturday in Belle River against a team who had beaten the Ravens rather easily in earlier meetings

this season. But not this time.

Belle River went up early in the first period but at the 6:48 mark of the second Dylan Dent and Brett Schmidt broke in two on one, with Brett finding the back of the net to tie the game at one goal each. Strong defense by Nash Prieur, John Chittle, Jacob

LOOK

WHAT WE HAVE NOW!

T-Shirts, Knit Beanies,
Caps, Bags
Prices starting at
\$16⁹⁹-\$19⁹⁹ & up

NHL, NFL, MLB, NBA,
NCAA, Nascar, Harley Davidson,
Corona, UFC, Wrestling, ROCK
plus much more...

Check out the new NHL Ice Breaker
Action Board Game demonstration -
Sat. Dec. 2 from 12pm - 3 pm
in the Sports Store at Colasanti's



**CHRISTMAS IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER...
SHOP EARLY FOR BEST SELECTION!**

**1550 Road 3 East,
Kingsville, 326-3287**



\$500

*excluding Ford GT

CERTIFICATE ON ALL NEW FORDS COME IN AN SEE HOW TO REGISTER



'07 RANGER SUPERCAB SPORT

Air, sliding rear window,
16" rims & more

\$190

36 MONTH LEASE

Per mth.
lease +
\$1250
freight & tax
1.0% O.A.C.



'07 FOCUS ZX3

Air, remote
entry & more.

\$204

48 MONTH LEASE

Per mth.
lease +
\$1150
freight 2.9%
O.A.C.



'07 FUSION SE

Auto, power windows, locks & seat. tilt &
telescoping wheel, cruise, ABS,

\$281

48 MONTH LEASE

Per mth.
lease +
\$1250
freight 1.9%
O.A.C.



'06 F150 SUPERCREW XTR

4x4, 18" chrome wheels,
chrome step bars, loaded

\$339

36 MONTH LEASE

Per mth.
lease +
\$1300
freight &
tax 0.5%
O.A.C.

Ken Knapp 776-6447



390 TALBOT ST. N. ESSEX, ONT.
"In Beautiful Downtown Essex"

**ONLY 15 MINUTES
TO A GREAT
DEAL!**

* Leases plus freight, taxes & admin. fee, rebates assigned to dealer. Leases 20,000 kms/yr. 12¢/km overage. Ford A. X. Z plan rules apply. Previous balance may be rolled into one new payment, O.A.C.

www.kenknappford.com