

McKinnon named top sports personality

Bob McKinnon, who piloted the Stouffville Edwards Murphy Painting Bantam Clippers to both the Ontario Minor Hockey Association (OMHA) and Ontario Hockey Federation (OHF) Bantam A championships this past season, has been named Stouffville Sports Personality of the Year.

The seven-year veteran rep level hockey coach will be officially presented with the award at the Strawberry Festival Awards presentations Wednesday, July 1, at 7:30 at the Memorial Park Stage.

McKinnon said he was surprised at being given the Stouffville Sun-sponsored award, and that he felt the honor should be shared by the other members of the Edward-Murphy coaching staff.

"I appreciate being named Sports Personality of the Year, but you don't do it on your own," said McKinnon. "I had a lot of help with the team from Steve Ellis, Barry Sullivan, and Bob Legeer. It's a shame they don't get mentioned."

McKinnon was on the coaching staff of the Lakeshore Zone titlist Stouffville Novice Clippers in the 1985-86 season. He also helped coach the town's 1987-88 OMHA champion Atom Clippers.

His son John, 15, is one of many players who have played on all the rep teams McKinnon has coached. "One of my greatest satisfactions has been working with these boys all the way through."

He conceded it's not always



This year's sports personality, Bob McKinnon, talks to his Bantam players during a practice this past winter.

easy coaching one's own son. "You tend to be harder on your own son than on any one else's. Some people drop out of coaching rep hockey because of that. It's not a friendly drive home from Peterborough after a tough tournament sometimes."

He said his own sense of accomplishment was enhanced by the way he was able to succeed in turning the team around after a shaky start to the season.

"The dramatics of the way we won it, and to have done a complete reversal after Christmas, was just great. We had some problems with fighting in games early in the season, but we didn't have one fighting major (penalty) after Christ-

mas, and we only lost one game after that."

"When you can do that with teenagers, you know you are getting through to them."

McKinnon said he enjoys seeing the average players contribute to a team. "You know your big guns are going to do well, but to see one of your lesser lights score two goals in an important playoff game is very satisfying."

The Millard St. resident will serve as assistant coach to Wally Crowder with the Bantams next season. As for the future, McKinnon said he'll continue to stay involved until it's no longer fun. "I'll do it as long as I still get a kick out of coaching."

MERCHANTS

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championships. Ontario Amateur Softball Association president Bob Abbot, an Uxbridge area resident, met with Basilio, Burkholder, and officials of the Oshawa Juniors after the Merchants-Juniors game June 17 at the town park.

The Pickering Rep Softball Association had been trying to prevent the Pickering resident from playing with the Merchants. But the Juniors gave Basilio his release, paving the way for his joining the Merchants on a permanent basis.

"As far as I'm concerned, he's clear," said Abbot after the meeting.

The Merchants Eliminations roster is yet to be finalized. Mike Clausner injured his shoulder playing tennis last week, and his status is uncertain.

Burkholder said he has been considering making a lineup addition involving a player from Waterford, whom the team encountered in a recent tournament.

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