

Bombers Jr. B hockey team ready for the new year in Caledon

Written By ROBERT BELARDI

The Greater Ontario Junior Hockey League will be making the same adjustment as the Ontario Junior Hockey League and the Provincial Junior Hockey League.

When David Arseneault announced to The Citizen a few weeks ago, that two of his Brampton junior hockey teams would be moving to Caledon, it seemed to alleviate what was, a gloomy-aura within the town.

A town full of hockey players and no junior hockey outlet seemed off-setting. Yes, the Golden Hawks Junior C club is there, but for players looking to improve, there weren't many local options within a 15-minute radius.

Now there is. The Golden Hawks club is ready. The Admirals Junior A head coach Justin Teakle; as written last week, said this is how modern junior clubs should be modelled.

General Manager and Director of Hockey Operations Robin Inscoe of the Brampton Bombers (now, formally known as the Caledon Bombers) also believes this is going to be interesting.

"This is going to be interesting. We're all looking forward to it. It's something unique. It's been Dave's vision for a long time and now that it has come to be, we're hoping movement between the teams and everything else works," Inscoe told The Citizen over the phone.

It will be easier for players to move up the ladder. All teams will be practicing and playing games right out of Mayfield Arena.

It's also, much easier for minor hockey players in Caledon to seek future opportunities. No longer, do minor hockey players have to wind down a meandering road, travelling from town to city and back just to play the game they love. It's a straight shot to the top and a good opportunity for scouts to pick up on your game.

And Junior B fits that bill. It's the land of the in-between. On one hand you have Junior C hockey, competitive hockey, with the opportunity to still go to school or have a job and play the sport competitively. On the other hand, you have Junior A hockey that is simply a lifestyle and there isn't any other free time while you seek a pro opportunity.

For Inscoe and his coach Chris Taylor, the objective this year is quite simple.

"Our objective is to get a little bit bolder. If you look at our roster a year ago, 13 of those players that started the season could have played midget. We were very very young," Inscoe emphasized.

The team is taking young players and trying to advance them to the next level. So far, Inscoe has signed Andrew Reynolds, Nicholas Rotatore, Remy Dalben, Michael Asselin and Ivan Mikuljan for next season.

The recruitment process has been "different."

Inscoe is driving to his players' homes. He has spoken to almost every player on the Junior C roster to see who is interested in moving up. But, the struggle is combatting the unexpected. Some players; such as Christian Pelly for instance, have committed to school's out of town. Inscoe never expected them to return, but with school's finalizing their online class plans, players such as Pelly are staying home now and they want to play.

The Bombers finished the season last year with an 11-35 record. In the first round of the playoffs, the Bombers went toe to toe with

the Kitchener Dutchmen, ranked second in their Midwestern Conference. Inscoe loved their effort and the experience will carry them forward into next year.

?That experience will go a long way. They learned what they had to do at playoff time and how they had to compete at playoff time. That experience, can't be taught at a practice, on a chalkboard or anything else. That practical experience will do wonders.?

He noticed a considerable difference from the effort and will from the group. They were tentative at the beginning of the series. The Dutchmen lost four games at home all year and the Bombers beat them twice; once in the regular season and once in the playoffs.

With a few extra pieces, the Bombers hope to be a competitive team. But being competitive, also means being disciplined and that is something, Iscoe says is a prominent point of interest to address at the beginning of the year for Taylor.

The team accumulated 19 suspensions over the course of last season. Some multiple games and some receiving multiple suspensions.

Taylor, won the Midwestern Conference in 2012-2013 as a player with the Cambridge Winter Hawks. He knows what the boys have to do to be able to compete for a championship and instilling a championship mentality, might not crown them champions, but would improve the mindset of each individual in the dressing room.

Inscoe says this group has one asset to their game that could make them dangerous. They never stop working. It's a simple notion predicated within the locker room but for these boys, it's all been a learning curve at this level.

And they'll continue to learn. No question about that.