

Golden Hawks already building for next season ? Junior C club looks for prospects for 2013/2014 season

By Brian Lockhart

Just weeks after bowing out of the Georgian Mid-Ontario Hockey League (GMOHL) Junior C playoffs with a first-round loss to the Midland Flyers, the Caledon Golden Hawks are working on the roster for the 2013/2014 season.

"We've started on our rookie camp," commented Hawks General Manager Ben Davis. "We are out scouting different teams like midget AA and other minor hockey teams."

The team from last season was a young squad with only one player who graduated and is not eligible to play next year.

After three seasons in GMOHL, the Hawks have seen steady improvement. A tough 2011/2012 season saw the squad finish with a 14-26 record, but coming back in 2013 the team won 19 of 40 games.

At the Junior C level, spotting talent is something the club management does for both incoming players and those who are already on the team and may be looking to step up.

"We're actively trying to move some of our guys up to Junior A," Davis said.

Junior C leagues are typically viewed as development leagues. While some players are satisfied getting ice time, others see it as a step toward something bigger.

"We have some guys going off to university ? we'll have to wait and see what happens," Davis said of players who may, or may not return for next season.

As for the bench, Davis declined to comment on any possible changes.

"I don't want to comment on that right now, as we don't know what's going to happen," he said. "The important thing is the rookie camp. This is a great step for players from midget AA ? it can be a natural progression."

The camp will get underway May 24, 25 and 26 at Westwood Arena in Etobicoke. Prospective players can apply by submitting their information at the Hawks' website.

While the Hawks' season may be done, the Junior C provincial playoffs are still going on in Ontario.

The Alliston Hornets, GMOHL champions, have ended the first round with a win over the Walkerton Hawks. They will now go up against the winner of the Lakefield/Picton series currently being played out in the east end of the province in the semifinal round.

In the south, the defending champion Grimsby Peach Kings will face the Essex 73's in the other semi-final round.

The winner of these two series will go to the final in the quest for the provincial Schmalz Cup Junior C provincial championship.