

?It's been a special year? for hockey at Mayfield says coach Mattachini

Written By ROBERT BELARDI

During this unprecedented period of time in the 21st century, while social distancing and staying at home is continuously enforced, this means it is the right time to work on home projects that you didn't have the chance to do before.

In this case, extending a fence for your dog.

In these past few weeks off from teaching grade 12 calculus and vectors, as well as grade nine applied math, Robert F. Hall employee and head coach of the division two hockey team, Mike Mattachini is doing just that.

He is currently extending his fence for his dog to have a dog run. He told The Citizen he has a farm dog, a cross between a Shepherd, a Beagle and a Lab. This big boy, is 75 pounds.

He walks him three times a day to get out of the house since school closed a few weeks back.

When he was at school and everything was operational, his hockey team had concerns. The boys on the team were concerned the Ontario Federation of School Athletic Associations (OFSAA) would be cancelled because of the strikes.

The outbreak of COVID-19 added an extra layer of worry on top of that.

?OFSAA had said originally, the guy who was running it in St. Catherine's said, that we're not sure if it is going to be cancelled or postponed to a later date in April,? Mattachini said.

Within the first week of March break, a decision was made.

?I think the Thursday of March break, the convenor sent an email out that OFSAA had cancelled, boy's hockey, girl's hockey and boy's and girl's curling.?

Mattachini had to be the bearer of bad news and presently, it is still a bummer. Most of the boys already knew. As of now, he has not conversed with his players over the phone, but over email, the resonation of disappointment loomed within the replies.

The team thanked Mattachini for all he did for them this past season.

This team had never been to OFSAA before. The last time the program had been to OFSAA was in March of 2015, when the Robert F. Hall Wolfpack returned to the school with a silver medal from Pembroke, Ontario under Mattachini's tutelage.

Now, grade 12 students Justin Pulis, Adam Carbonara, Patrick Duffey and Domenic Fischer will graduate without the opportunity.

Another grade 12 student, Jake Merante, might return for a fifth year to upgrade his marks for a chance at a baseball scholarship in the United States; however, there is no guarantee he plays hockey.

?It was a fantastic year for them. Probably not enough for them to be honest with you, but hopefully they'll look back. It was a special year and we're going to have another one next year,? expressed, Mattachini, sad for the boys this season and optimistic for next year's chances.

When/If, the students return to the school, the hockey team will collectively choose what apparel they would like. Annually, before the hockey account closes, all the extra money remaining is used to purchase apparel for the team to remember the year.

As for Mattachini, his job continues. He is past his retirement date; however, he did express his intentions to the team that he would remain as the hockey coach and will be there next year.

As for his classrooms, he is concerned about his grade 12 Calculus and Vectors classes due to the school's closure. He awaits phase two from the board, that would include online teaching from home to his class, such as e-learning.

This past Monday, Mattachini received his answer. Peel District School Board Director of Education, Peter Joshua, announced, he is finalizing plans to get students into the virtual classroom by April 6th and will share this plan by the end of the week, CityNews reported.

Mattachini did explain to The Citizen, a few of his students do not have access to online resources. That is problematic, of course.

But, one thing is for certain. Wolfpack hockey will be back next year. Back on their A-game as the team, coaching staff and teachers, wishes the best of luck to the graduating students.