

Junior C Bandits in exhibition play ? Home opener scheduled for May 14

By Brian Lockhart

The Caledon Bandits Junior C Lacrosse club had a chance to see how the squad is shaping up in a pre-season game against the Newmarket Saints at the Bolton arena last Thursday.

Head Coach Mike Gillian said it was their first test, as well as the chance to see what they have heading into the season.

Although it won't count for the season record, the Bandits came out on top, winning 7-5 over the visitors after playing to a third-period tie when the Saints scored twice to make it an even game at five.

The Bandits were scheduled to play their first game yesterday (Wednesday) against Halton Hills (results not known at press time), followed by a second road game against Mimico tomorrow (Friday).

With the short time left before the start of the season, Gillian said the roster still wasn't finalized by the end of last week's exhibition game.

"Me and coaches will talk it over and make some decisions," he said. "It's tough being in Junior C. We've got a lot of kids that want to play at a higher level."

Even so, there are a lot of players who won't make an A or B squad and will come knocking at the Bandits' door later.

The squad has "nine or 10" returning players this season, he said.

"We lost a big chunk of our defensive core," Gillian added.

Several players have moved on to other things since last season, but the coach said the offensive side of the team looks solid.

"Last year, we finished first in the division, but didn't get past the second round," he observed, adding the team got better as the season went on. "After a few games, the players bought into the system."

The Ontario Junior C Lacrosse League has 16 teams playing in two divisions, with the Bandits in the West division.

The two divisions won't meet during regular-season play, so the first time the Bolton team will meet squads from the East division will be in the playoffs.

The Bandits' home opener is scheduled for this coming Tuesday (May 14) at Mayfield Arena, when they will host the Shelburne Vets.

Game time is 8 p.m.