

## New basketball program launched in Caledon

By Bill Rea

The Caledon Basketball Academy is up and running.

The team suited up for their first two matches over the weekend, winning the first one against Louis-Riel Secondary School in Ottawa Friday night in thrilling fashion, finally prevailing 46-45.

The official opening ceremonies for the club took place Saturday, prior to a match against the Capital Courts, also from Ottawa. The team is playing as part of the Ontario Scholastic Basketball Association (OSBA), and the affiliation is the result of a partnership between the Caledon Cougars Basketball Association and the Peel District School Board to offer the women's basketball preparation (prep) program locally. Humberview Secondary School is hosting the program.

"At the Peel board, we're committed to providing all students a high-quality education while they achieve their personal academic and athletic goals," commented Poleen Grewal, superintendent of curriculum and instruction support services in a media release issued by the Board. "We look forward to working alongside external coaches who are committed to helping high-performing student athletes achieve excellence 'on the court,' while we support their academic success."

Trustee Stan Cameron, Caledon's representative on the Board, said the Cougars approached the Board, seeking the partnership to put a squad in OSBA. He added players can be recruited from all over Ontario, although the vast majority are from Caledon. There are eight players from Caledon, and one each from Beeton, Orangeville and Mississauga.

Joe Grdisa, coordinator of health and physical education for the Board, congratulated the Cougars' organization at Saturday's ceremony for getting the program going. He said it will bring energy and development, both to Humberview and the community.

"We wish you all the luck in the coming season and the future," he said

Academy President Mike Dodig was appreciative for the support the program has received from the Board and Humberview.

"It's part of what we do and helping athletes be what they are," he said.

"This program is not just a basketball program," he added. "It's a community program."

"Caledon Basketball Academy is excited and honoured to work alongside a tremendous group of coaches and support teams to provide a high-level experience for student-athletes," Head Coach Gord Everett said. "We look forward to contributing to the league's growth and to elite women's basketball in Ontario."

Student athletes will be expected to meet the full academic requirements of their courses and adhere to the secondary schools' codes of conduct. Students in the prep program will be coached by staff from the Caledon Basketball Academy, and will compete in the Ontario Scholastic Basketball Association (OSBA). Humberview will continue to have their own basketball teams separate from the prep team.

Future home games for the Caledon team are scheduled for Oct. 25 at 6:30 p.m., Oct. 31 at 5 p.m., Nov. 23 at 6:30 p.m., Feb. 7 at 6:30 p.m., Feb. 15 at 6:30 p.m. and Feb. 22 at 6:30 p.m.



Referee Saif Rehman conducted the opening tip-off in Saturday's game, taken by Naziah Charles of the Capital Courts and Andrea Dodig for Caledon. Photo by Bill Rea