

OFSAA title for St. Michael's senior boys' soccer team

By Bill Rea

The senior boys' soccer team from St. Michael Catholic Secondary School in Bolton are provincial champs.

The boys took the Ontario Federation of School Athletic Associations (OFSAA) title in a weekend tournament in North Bay.

Coach Paolo Ceccarelli said his men had seven games in the tournament, and three went into extra time, meaning they had to play the equivalent of eight matches in three days.

They came out of the opening round of four games with a pair of wins and two ties, putting them in second place in their group; good enough to advance to the quarter-finals.

That match was against a team from Ottawa, and it went to an extra period, with the local crew notching a goal with about a minute left to advance.

The semifinals saw the St. Michael squad facing opponents from Kingston. Ceccarelli said the score was 1-1 at the end of regulation time and 3-3 after the extra frame. "We had to come back both times," he said, adding the issue had to be settled with a shoot-out.

The championship match was against a team from Burlington, and the local guys got out to a 1-0 lead, but their foes tied things before time ran out. There was no scoring in the overtime session, and the first two saves in the shoot-out had to be repeated, but it all ended with a victory for St. Michael.

Ceccarelli commented Monday that he had been "exhausted" by the events of the weekend. He also commented on the instrumental contribution of assistant coach Sean Raposo.

"I think as the tournament went on, there was a certain amount of belief that permeated through the team," Ceccarelli said.

"We're just happy and proud to bring home the first OFSAA gold medal in the school's short history," he added.

And it wasn't just boys bringing home medals. The varsity girls travelled to Thunder Bay for their OFSAA tournament, coming home with fourth-place honours.

Coach Nicole Indelicato pointed out this squad had a lot of young players, "which is good for the future."

The tournament didn't get off to a great start, as the team was held to a loss and a tie the first day.

"It was kind of a tough one," Indelicato said.

But things improved the next day, as they posted two wins to advance to the quarter-finals.

That match was against Father Bressani Catholic High School of Woodbridge, and it ended in a 2-1 victory for St. Michael.

The opponents in the semifinals were Saint Michael Catholic High School from Niagara Falls, who had finished at the top of their pool.

The match ended 1-0 in favour of the crew from Niagara Falls, and then they dropped a 2-1 decision to St. Roch Catholic Secondary School of Brampton, who St. Michael had previously bested to take the ROPSSAA title.

"It could have gone either way," Indelicato observed. "We just couldn't get one in the semifinal."



The senior boys' soccer team from St. Michael became OFSAA champions Saturday.



The St. Michael varsity girls' soccer team brought home fourth place honours from OFSAA over the weekend.