

HTI Stars won't ice a Jr. 'A' team in Shelburne

There won't be any Junior A hockey action in Shelburne this season after the new start-up club the HTI Stars backed out in an eleventh hour cancellation of the team's involvement in the Greater Metro Hockey League's 2014/15 season.

GMHL president Bob Russell confirmed the cancellation on Thursday (Sept. 11th) after a meeting with club owner Jenya Feldman on Tuesday.

The club was previously known as the Shelburne Redwings before being bought out by Feldman in July and making the name change to reflect Feldman's hockey school in Innisfil.

He didn't acquire the team until July, Russell said. They started late and didn't have enough players. He only had 12 players and two goalies.

The cancellation came as a surprise to League officials as the team had paid all their fees and the schedule was set for the season. Despite the late start, Russell said they were sure Feldman could fill the roster in time.

He's one of the best recruiters I've seen, Russell said, adding It caught us off guard. We really didn't expect this. At the last minute he didn't get the four or five players he needed.

Several players who had been selected for the Stars roster backed out included some that decided to stay in Europe.

As a result the League had to do some last minute changes in the schedule to accommodate the gaps left open by the Stars departure. The cancellation of the Stars' 2014/15 season doesn't mean they are done as club. Feldman asked for a 'delay' until next season when he is hoping to re-group and get the team back in the GMHL's line-up.

Since he already had an agreement with the Town of Shelburne regarding ice time, the plan is now to use that ice time for girls hockey base out of the HTI hockey school.

The GMHL season is now underway with 23 teams in the line-up, but hockey fans in Shelburne will have to wait until next year to see if Junior A hockey will be returning to the Centre Dufferin Recreation Complex.

By Brian Lockhart