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## Woolwich makes top 10 in Hockeyville contest: Here's how to vote

GREG MERCER  
RECORD STAFF

Visit the Hockeyville website, at [www.cbc.ca/sports/hockey/hockeyville](http://www.cbc.ca/sports/hockey/hockeyville). Or vote directly for Woolwich at [www.woolwichhockeyville.ca](http://www.woolwichhockeyville.ca). You can also phone toll-free, 1-866-533-8066, or text message 222111 with the community's name.

ELMIRA — Couldn't get through on the phone to anyone in Woolwich Township last night?

No wonder -- most townsfolk were probably on the line to the CBC, trying to push their community into the last five towns vying to be named Hockeyville for 2009.

At stake is a chance to host an NHL pre-season game and \$100,000 in arena upgrades. The other four finalists get \$25,000 for their rinks.

Last night, the group behind Woolwich's bid gathered in a Waterloo sports bar, and found out via the CBC broadcast they made the top 10.

They were armed with laptops and cellphones, and plan to lodge as many votes as they can between now and 11:59 p.m Sunday night.

There's already a Facebook website up, and emails are flying around Woolwich faster than slap shots, urging people to vote.

"The whole town has gone crazy," said Val Martin, who runs Elmira's minor hockey office.

Students also got into the act yesterday, showing up at their schools wearing their favourite hockey jerseys.

Bid organizer Graham Snyder borrows a phrase from Elmira native Malcolm Gladwell when he said he hopes the excitement hits a "tipping point" that sends Woolwich to the top.

"There's been a real buzz the last few days. We want this thing to snowball," he said.

"The next four days will be crucial."

Also in the running are Harbour Grace, Nfld., Stanley, N.B., Lincoln, Ont., Thetford Mines, Que., Acton Vale, Que., Terrace, B.C., La Broque



Mathew McCarthy, Record staff



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Man., Humboldt, Sask., and Penticton, B.C.

To prove how mad it is about the sport, the township is planning a Hockeyville Day in Woolwich marathon. Between 7 a.m. Saturday and 9 a.m. Sunday, the township has scheduled more than 20 hockey games. It will be on-ice carnival, of sorts -- including an all-Mennonite mat with girls in long dresses and bonnets.

There will be former NHL players such as Cam Stewart, Mike Parson and Ric Seiling, a game featuring only people with the last name Marti and one with the "largest hockey family in Canada," the Wangs, who have eight kids in the sport. Visit [www.woolwichhockeyville.ca](http://www.woolwichhockeyville.ca) for more details.

The idea for an all-Martin match comes from local lore, dating back to an infamous Elmira Sugar Kings game where the coach put his five players who shared the Martin surname on the same line, just to confuse the game's radio broadcasters.

This is Elmira, after all, where you can't swing a hockey stick without hitting a Martin.

"Close to 10 per cent of the registered players in our minor hockey league are named Martin," said Val Martin. "They're everywhere."

If Woolwich Township wins the Hockeyville contest, it's planning to host the NHL game at its new Dan Snyder Memorial Arena. The community raised \$5 million to build the complex, named after Graham Snyder's son, the late Atlanta Thrashers player and hometown boy.

Votes can be placed on the Hockeyville website, at [www.cbc.ca/sports/hockey/hockeyville](http://www.cbc.ca/sports/hockey/hockeyville). To vote directly for Woolwich, visit [www.woolwichhockeyville.ca](http://www.woolwichhockeyville.ca) or phone 1-866-533-8066 or text message 222111 with the community's name.

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