

Hometown Hockey lands in Newmarket



By Jake Courtepatte

Connor McDavid may be the brightest hockey star from Newmarket, but Ron Maclean and his crew took the spotlight on Sunday when they made their first stop of the NHL season.

Rogers Hometown Hockey kicked off their schedule with a trip to Newmarket for a weekend-long festival at the Riverwalk Commons, with hockey fans and players from across the GTA converging on Newmarket for the events and attractions.

?It's pretty fun,? said eleven-year old Cole, a member of the Newmarket Minor Hockey Association. ?There's lots of stuff to do.?

?It's a really nice way to take the kids out on a Sunday,? said Brian Wilkerson, Cole's dad. ?In our house it's hockey seven days a week, so this makes it even easier.?

Dubbed as the ?ultimate fan experience tour,? Hometown Hockey brought exhibition road hockey, a ?hockey circus? show, and shot power and accuracy contests to downtown Newmarket.

Signing autographs were Curtis Joseph and Darcy Tucker, two former Maple Leafs who each earned a long line of fans before they even reached the venue.

While CBC host Tara Sloane was pleasantly greeting fans for a good portion of the weekend, the event culminated with the arrival of Maclean for Sunday evening's marquee matchup between McDavid's Edmonton Oilers and the Buffalo Sabres.

Marcia Fillipo and her father Mark, both of Aurora, made the trip Sunday and decided to hang around for the game.

?He's like a celebrity,? said Mark, referring to Maclean. ?You don't get many chances to see something like this so you have to take advantage of it.?

As if to confirm that Newmarket was the proper choice to kick off this year's Hometown Hockey schedule, a rowdy cheer from the crowd was heard with every drop of the name ?McDavid.?