

## BARRHAVEN BUSINESS PROFILE



Jeffrey Morris photo

Barrhaven Source for Sports owner Rob Raistrick has seen his business boom in the last two years thanks to exceptional customer service and meeting the needs of recreational and competitive teams and athletes.

# Growing business now more than just Barrhaven's Source for Sports

BY JEFFREY MORRIS

When Rob Raistrick bought Barrhaven Source for Sports on Greenbank Road beside Sobey's, he certainly did not envision sitting at his desk two years later, running a business that has more than doubled and is approaching tripled in sales.

But that is the reality.

"It's a simple formula," said Raistrick. "We provide the best customer service, and we give the consumer what they want."

Barrhaven Source for Sports has transcended being a store and is more like its own little community. He can't stop talking about his staff, and how much expertise they have in both the products they sell and the needs of the customers – from recreational weekend warriors to serious athletes. Teams in various sports from throughout Eastern Ontario are making Barrhaven Source for Sports their, well, source for sports.

"We have become the store that fills the needs of the athletes," said Raistrick. "We have really grown our team business, and we have become a destination for teams throughout the region."

As Raistrick walks around the store, he stops at his new lacrosse section. "Lacrosse is a growth sport right now," he said. "We are

a supplier for the Nepean Knights, and now there are a number of high schools with lacrosse teams. We identified a need for lacrosse, because nobody was meeting the needs of the lacrosse players."

Beside the lacrosse section is a large football section. Not only is Raistrick a supplier for the Nepean Redskins, but the reputation of his store's customer service has led to deals with minor football organizations throughout the region. The National Capital Amateur Football Association (NCAFA) is the largest minor football association in Canada. Players from throughout the city make Barrhaven Source for Sports a destination.

"We have found success specializing in niche sports," Raistrick said. "We have become the leader in the area for soccer, lacrosse, rugby and football."

Aside from uniforms and equipment, Barrhaven Source for Sports has done well with footwear for the sports he supplies.

"We will sell between 4,000 and 5,000 pairs of cleats in a season between the various sports," Raistrick said.

He has done so well with soccer shoes that Under Armour, one of the leading athletic brands on the market right now, has selected Barrhaven Source for

Sports as one of the 10 stores in Canada to take part in their launch into the soccer market.

He also has a strong community of runners who use his store as a focal point.

"We have a group of runners that leaves here every night," Raistrick said. "We are serious into running, and we even sponsor a running show on Team 1200."

Although he supplies track suits and jackets to many hockey and ringette teams in the area, the store is different from other sports stores because it is not a hockey store. For those that have known Raistrick going back to his days growing up in Winchester, that may come as a surprise. Raistrick has been involved in hockey all his life and ended up coaching the Winchester Hawks of the Eastern Ontario Junior B Hockey League. One of his players was Ottawa Senator Jesse Winchester.

Raistrick said that the hockey market is competitive and cut throat, and that his store has done well with the "other" sports.

"When it comes right down to it, we have a great reputation because we will go the extra mile for our customers," said Raistrick. "We are getting business from all over Eastern Ontario because people hear about what a great job we do for clubs like Ottawa

South United or the Nepean Redskins or the Nepean Knights or the Barrhaven Scottish. We take care of our customers. We turn their orders around for them quickly and we are always up front and honest with them. They know that we will give them the best service possible.

"We also have an outstanding staff – Mark Curcio, Mel Byers, Tammy Gibson and Dominique Marcotte all really know their stuff. They know what the athlete wants and needs."

Barrhaven Source for Sports is also involved as a sponsor in next month's Barrhaven Run for Roger's House. The run is a high priority for Raistrick, who uses the event to give something back to the community.

"Barrhaven is a great place," he said. "It's a great community with great people. The run far exceeded our expectations last year, and this year's event will be even better."

Barrhaven Source for Sports is located on Greenbank Road beside Sobey's.

*The Barrhaven Business profile is a weekly feature brought to you by the Barrhaven BIA and the Barrhaven Independent. We ask you to support and strengthen your community by spending your shopping dollars locally.*