

Sabres draw first-place Burlington

It's been a year of firsts for the Acton Sabres and tonight another one is about to take place.

The first central junior B playoff game at the Community Centre is about to happen, when the Sabres face off against first-place Burlington Cougars in a best-of-seven quarter-final.

Sabres finished in fifth place (only one point behind the hoped-for fourth) placing them in the bottom half of the playoff teams. The top four teams draw the bottom four, and the Cougars drew the Sabres.

Bad luck? Coach Jules Russiani doesn't think so. "I think we can beat Burlington, if we play the hockey we're capable of playing," he said. "But it's going to take a full effort."

The Cougars record of late is impressive. Not only are they top team in the league with 73 points, 10 points ahead of second-place Oak Ridges, but they also have the top scorers on their team. They were in the midst of a winning streak at the end of the season, losing only to Oakville.

Of course the Sabres have beaten the Cougars before. Their record against them stands at one win and three losses, but two of the three losses were by only one goal.

They lost 10-6 Thursday, October 2, before the Sabres started their turnaround, then won 8-6 at the Community Centre Wednesday, November 12. At that point Russiani said, "They're a nice team to play against."

One month later the Sabres were back in Burlington and lost 7-6, starting them on a mid-season slump.

Then on Saturday, January 3, with the Sabres attempting to get back into earlier form, they fell 3-2 to the Cougars.

Russiani said he scouted the Cougars in

Thornhill Sunday, but couldn't find many weaknesses.

"Perhaps their defensive position, but I don't see a whole lot of weaknesses. They're good shooters and they move the puck well," he said.

"They're the type of team if you want to beat them you have to skate with them. We are definitely going to have to play man on man hockey."

Russiani says Sabres weaknesses lie in

Table with 6 columns: Final Standings, W, L, T, F, A, P. Rows include Burlington, Oakville, Oak Ridges, Brampton, Acton, Streetsville, Orillia, Thornhill, Dixie, Georgetown, Barrie, Milton.

League honors winners

Four award-winning Sabres will be honored between the second and third periods of Saturday's Sabres-Burlington Cougars playoff match, at the arena.

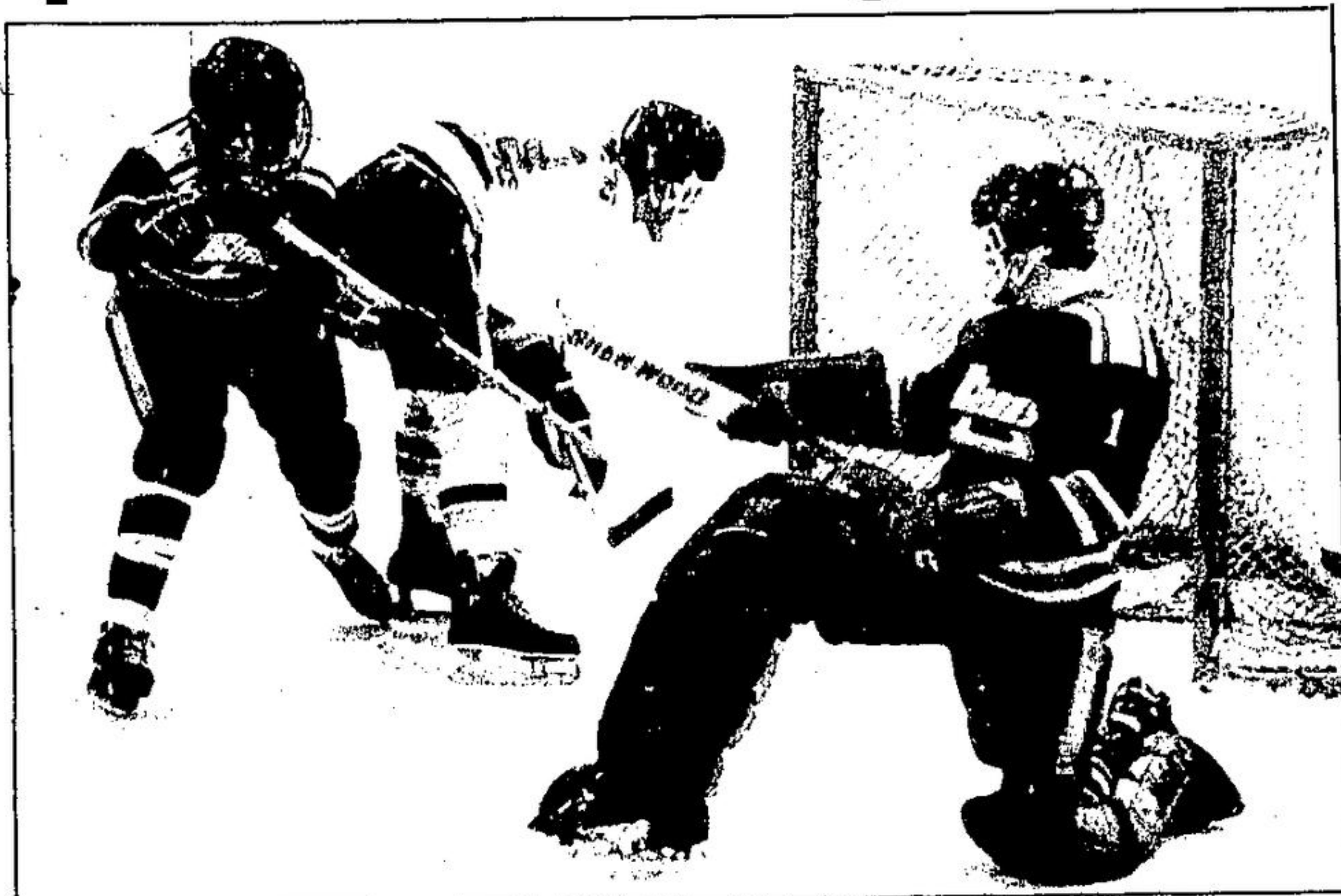
That's when the central junior B league will honor the Sabres individual award winners and present the league trophies.

Glenn Murray, who won the Most Valuable Player award, Pat Fung, who earned recognition as the Lady Byng winner and Barry Trood, who picked up the Most Improved Player award, will be

presented with their trophies. Sabres rookie coach Jules Russiani, who brought the team from the depths of the junior B cellar to a respectable fifth place finish this season, will be presented with the silverware as coach of the year.

For Sabre fans, it will not only be an opportunity to applaud their team's success, but as well witness something they have been waiting for a long time—a junior playoff game at the Acton Community Centre.

PLAYOFF MATCH-UPS (all best-of seven series). Series A-Acton vs Burlington, Series B-Oakville vs Orillia, Series C-Oak Ridges vs Streetsville, Series D-Brampton vs Thornhill.



Roy Dollman scores the tying marker in Saturday's night final league game against the Oakville Blades as the Sabres tie 7-7. Friday they won 9-4 in Milton. Tonight they play Burlington in the first game of the quarter-finals.



Captain of the Sabres Pat Fung presents Murray Walker, general manager of the Oakville Blades a \$100 cheque from Dave Dryden, an ardent supporter of the Sabres. He also presented Walker with a \$125 cheque from Sabre players towards the Dave Hawkins benefit fund.

Redmen raid Sudbury capture tourney title

The AHS junior Redmen walked off the basketball courts in Sudbury this weekend, tournament champions for the third year in a row, while one of their star performers Paul Gorjup, was honored as most valuable player of the entire tournament.

Junior Redmen needed three victories to cop the championship. They defeated North Bay 56-35 in the first game. Gorjup was lead point getter, although scoring was spread out over the team. He netted 16 points. John Lobello scored 13 while Glenn Scott and Matt Vuk each hooped eight.

The Redmen faced St. Charles, who are undefeated in Sudbury high school basketball, in the next game and came away with a 46-38 conquest. Bob Little was top offensive player, netting 13 points. Brent Vickery scored 11 and Lobello netted 10.

The Redmen handed O'Gorman of Timmins a 58-38 loss in the championship match. Vickery led the way with 14 points. Gorjup scored 12 and Scott 11.

Besides choosing Gorjup as MVP, both Vickery and Scott were named to the tournament allstar team.

The juniors resume their league schedule this week with one third of a tripleheader at White Oaks Wednesday. Friday at AHS they play Queen Elizabeth Park.

The Redmen are in a three-way tie with both W.O. and Q.E.P. after dumping Oakville Trafalgar 73-25 last Wednesday.

Since none of the three are defeated, Wednesday and Friday's matches will determine first place. Redmen's final league game is next Tuesday in Oakville against Blakelock, but they will be travelling to Stayner Saturday.



Medal winners at the interclub competition are Cheryl Genoe, Heath Norton front, and Sarah Homer and Mike Creighton back. Missing is Karen MacEachern. The Acton Figure Skating Club sent 11 competitors in all to Brampton Sunday for the interclub.

Last second goal ties final game

With three seconds left showing on the clock at the Community Centre Saturday night, referee Ted Casson whistled down play in the Oakville Blade zone.

The Sabres could have kissed him for it. That's all they needed to score the tying goal and end the best season of their lifetime on an upbeat note, a 7-7 tie with Oakville.

It wasn't a win and it kept them out of fourth place by a single point, but it was a darn sight better than last year's closing episode and a good hockey game to boot.

Sabres now enter the central junior B playoffs against Burlington Cougars with the first game scheduled for tonight at the rink.

Sabres played catch-up hockey all night Saturday. The Blades took a one-goal lead at the two minute mark of the first period, but at 8:01 Mark Duval tied it up. A few seconds later Tony Dulisse rang one off the outside of the Blade's post. Blade's picked it up from there, skated up ice and knocked another one in, off the post, at 8:45.

Steve Miller tied it up once more for the Sabres at 16:55 from Bob Allison. A lightning-fast wrist shot found its way in to the left corner of the Oakville net. That tied the game 2-2.

But the Blades weren't finished. With 42 seconds left in the period they connected again. Denis Kirton passed the puck in front of the Sabre net, the Blades jumped on it and scored.

Miller wasted no time in getting the goal back in the second frame, scoring just 38 seconds into the period. Pat Fung and Duval assisted.

But at 5:47 the Blades did it again, scoring on a rush after Sabres had applied pressure in the Oakville end.

Denis Kirton connected after a scramble in front of the net to tie the game again, by now 4-4, at 9:35.

But a few seconds later Blades scored, after Wayne McDougall juggled the puck. At that point Jules Russiani pulled McDougall and placed back-up goaltender Steve Kruk in net.

It gave Sabres a lift because at 12:27 Fung found an open Oakville net and picked his spot. Roy Dollman, who shot first and missed, received the assist.

Once again the Blades came back, going ahead 6-5 at 14:27 to end the second period and once again at 14:28 of the third Sabres came back to tie it. Kirton countered on the powerplay, with Barry Trood and David McGilloway nabbing aids.

Sabres began to press for a winning goal. After all coach Russiani staked his coaching career on a win against the Blades, but with only 1:29 left in the game it was the Blades who found the niche. Dollman found himself out of position when he dropped to block both player and puck in the Oakville zone. Blades neatly hopped over him, zipped into Sabre's end and scored to take the lead.

Blades may have thought they had the game won, but Sabres weren't about to give up. They pressed on, pulling Kruk in favor of the extra attacker coming close on several occasions before Dollman performed his game-tying heroics. Trood helped him out on the play, at 19:59.

Saturday's game was another Russiani said the Sabres "should have won". "We outplayed them and outshot them. It's a case of just being inexperienced. Many of our scoring opportunities were muffed up. They're not taking the extra seconds to find the net."

He said many of the Oakville goals were scored because the defencemen weren't taking the man completely out of the play.

Russiani was pleased with his goaltending however, despite pulling McDougall. "I'm not too concerned about Wayne," he said. "And I'm really feeling good about Steve. He's become more aggressive (since Russiani had a little chat with him) and it showed in the games in Milton and Oakville."

"He made some key saves in the third against Oakville."

He was strong in the Milton game Friday night, as Sabres won the game 9-4, with the last two goals being scored on their own goalie.

With six minutes left in the game Milton goaltender Mike Shepard suffered a mild concussion. He recovered in the dressing room, but the Flyers had no other goalie dressed for the game.

Their allstar goalie Paulo Zulfan, injured himself skating last week. So the Sabres loaned McDougall to the Flyers to finish the game and then scored two more goals.

Seniors clinch fourth midgets alone in first after doubleheader

AHS senior Redmen clinched a playoff spot in high school basketball action last week thanks to a 49-43 victory over Georgetown Rebels.

Rob Faber was the seniors leading scorer netting 22 points. Bob McClure hooped 13 and Steve Springle scored six.

The midgets who are all alone in first place played the second half of the doubleheader nabbing a convincing 62-25 victory over the Rebels.

Scoring was evenly spread. Scott Allonby netted 13 points. Dave Leslie 11, Gord March eight points, Cliff Nibbs seven and Randy Laver and Cliff Kahn six points apiece.

Rebels were close early in the game, with an 11-9 score at the end of the first quarter. Redmen lengthened their lead by 11 points at the half-way point and were in full command with a 42-17 score at the end of three-quarters.

Last Wednesday against Oakville Trafalgar, midgets copped a 49-41 victory with Laver netting 27 points as Redmen's top

scorer. The seniors also won in Oakville with Faber and McClure once again leading the pack.

Both the seniors and the midgets play Wednesday against White Oaks and Friday here against Queen Elizabeth Park.

O'Neill nabs two for win

Chris O'Neill led the Alton McIsaac novices to a 2-1 victory over Elora Saturday in hub league action.

O'Neill scored both Acton markers in the third frame, each effort unassisted.

He opened the scoring at 4:31 in the third. Elora tied it two minutes later but with only 11 seconds left in the game O'Neill scored again, nabbing the victory for his team.

Russiani said he wasn't sure which goalie he was going to play in tonight's game against Burlington, a decision he usually makes at game time. But he was quick to add everyone is in tip top shape for the game.

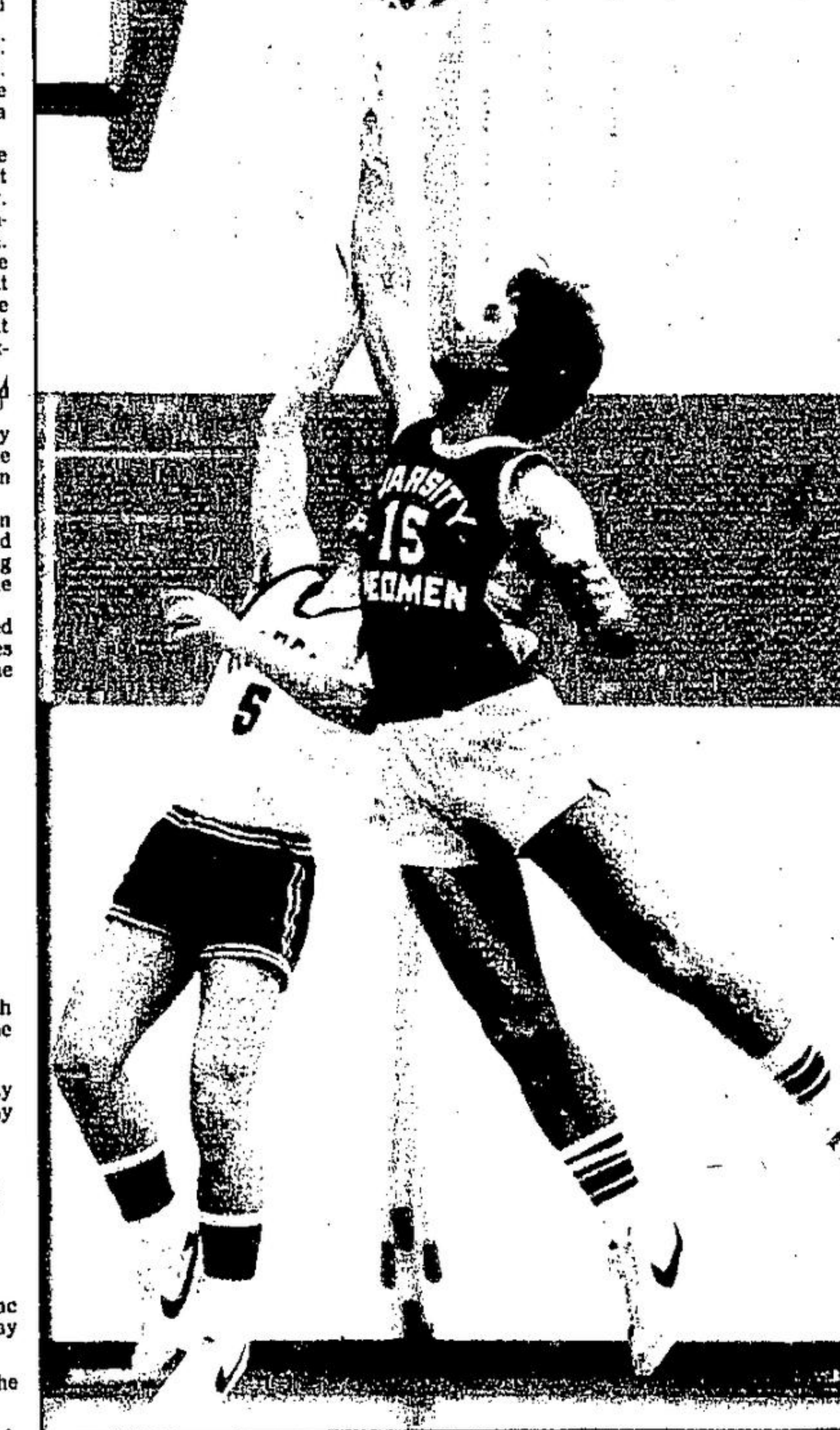
Fun starts at 8:30 p.m. Saturday night was also Dave Hawkins night and the Sabres held a special presentation between the second and third periods. Sabre captain Pat Fung presented Oakville Blade general manager Murray Walker with two cheques—a \$125 from Sabre players and \$100 from avid supporter Dave Dryden. Alternate captain Bob Allison presented Walker with a Sabre jersey with Hawkins' name on the back and Barry

Trood gave him an autographed stick and puck.

Ray Graham presented Walker with another cheque for \$400, proceeds from a dance last week, on behalf of the Sabre executive, and \$62 from donations collected at the gate.

They were honoring Hawkins, a 17-year-old Oakville boy who is paralyzed from the chest down after a hockey accident last September. Hawkins was playing with the Blades in an exhibition game when he was checked and fell to the ice.

All junior B clubs have raised money for Hawkins to aid in his recovery. Walker said the presentations and gifts were "doing a lot to help David keep his morale high."



Steve Springle attempts to block a shot by Georgetown Rebel during last Friday's doubleheader at AHS. Senior Redmen won their game 49-43. Midgets won their game as well.