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Lose four games by total of five goals

Gemini show spirit despite being swept

The Georgetown Pontiac Gemini made a good go of it, but the inevitable came early, as they were swept four games straight in the opening round of the Central Jr. B hockey league playoffs, by the Oakville Blades.

After losing the divisional quarter-final opener 3-2 last Tuesday, the Gems forced the Blades to overtime Thursday at the Alcott Arena, before losing, again by a 3-2 margin.

The third game of the series saw Oakville take another one-goal decision, as they won 7-6 on home ice Friday.

The Gems tried desperately to stave off elimination in Georgetown Saturday night, but three goals by Darren Hunter in a 36-second span of the third period, sewed up the victory and the series for the Blades.

Despite losing the series though, Gemini coach Peter Sturgeon was happy with the way the team performed.

"You take a look at our kids," he said following the final game. "They gave it all they had. They beat us by five goals in four games. The players showed they've got a lot of heart and a lot of determination."

The Blades were overwhelming favorites in the series, finishing third in the Central loop's east division, while the Gems were sixth.

"Every game, we stugged it out to the finish," Sturgeon says. "I never thought we were out of the series at any time. We came into every game thinking we could win."

Sturgeon gives due credit to the Blades, and particularly to their No. 13, Hunter, who had the winning goals in two of the four games.

of the first, when Adam Bennett connected with a shot from the blueline along the ice.

The Blades replied at 18:45 when Chris McEachern deflected an Ian Moffat shot to make it 1-1.

In the second, Oakville took the lead when John Duff slid a pass across to Hunter on a two-on-one, and he put it by Georgetown goalie Todd King.

The Gems tied the game with a powerplay goal at the 3:17 mark of the third. Bennett slipped a pass to Kevin Dance and he skated in to beat Kevin Alcock.

Mid way through the period, the Gems were presented with a good opportunity to go ahead when Dance and Moffat had words at centre ice. The Oakville player went after Dance, and tried to pry off his helmet. Moffat received a five-minute major for grabbing the face mask, and another for fighting, while Dance received a two-minute minor.

That left Georgetown with a man advantage for a full eight minutes, but they were unable to capitalize.

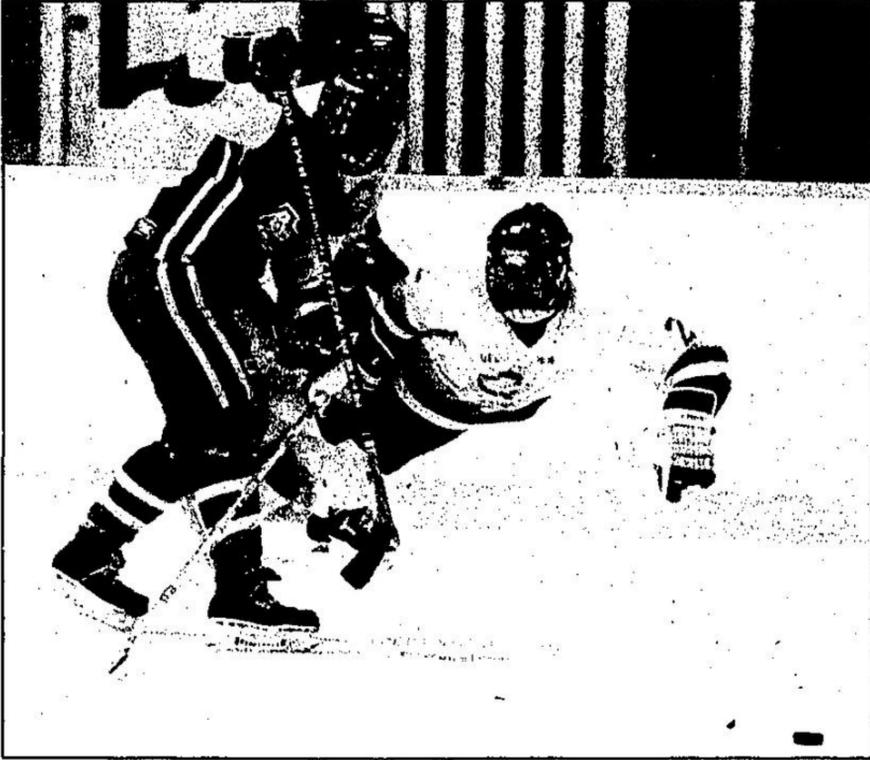
The teams went scoreless through the first 10-minute overtime, and then went into sudden death.

Dance almost settled the matter a few minutes into the period when he fired a backhand at Alcock, but the Oakville goalie made a stabbing glove save.

Hunter finally ended the game at 7:40 when he scored on a set-up by Bryan Morgan.

The Gems were forced to play the game without Joe Washkurak, who was unable to reach Georgetown from Guelph due to stormy weather.

Jim McCabe was in uniform after suffering a broken wrist a few weeks ago, but saw limited action.



The Georgetown Gemini were thrown for a loop in the opening round of the Central Jr. B playoffs as they were eliminated in four straight games by the Oakville Blades. Here, Mark Pries of the Gemini goes for a loop during action at the Alcott Arena. (Herald photo)

Blades. Here, Mark Pries of the Gemini goes for a loop during action at the Alcott Arena. (Herald photo)

three goals for the Blades, while Brad Demone had a pair, and Hunter and John Duff had singles.

Blades 5 Gems 3

The fourth game of the series Saturday night in Georgetown, saw the Gems jump out to a 2-0 lead.

Cole was allowed to skate out from behind the Oakville net and he banked a shot in off goalie Sean Gauthier's skate at the 7:23 mark.

In the second, Chuck Loreto scored when he picked up the rebound of a Washkurak shot and put it past Gauthier with just 19 seconds gone.

Duff scored to make it a 2-1 game at 3:38, and then Hunter scored his first of four goals in a row to tie the game at 14:37.

The Gems regained the lead in the third when Cole dropped a pass to Washkurak and he beat Gauthier to the glove side at the 16-second mark.

But then the roof caved in, as Hunter put on a one-man show.

Duff was breaking in on the Georgetown net, and had been effectively tied up by a defenceman. But Hunter was trailing on the play and swatted the puck past King to make it a 3-3 game at 9:58.

After the ensuing faceoff, Oakville again broke in and just nine seconds later, Hunter took a drop pass from Cole Sefc and scored to make it 4-3.

Hunter's fourth goal of the game was a strange one. He innocently flipped a shot at the Georgetown net from outside the blueline, and the puck bounced once and flipped in under King's arm at the 10:34 mark.

The Gems' hopes sank lower when Dance and Don Cruise took themselves out of the game with misconducts, and the team was unable to rally in the late going.

Oakville now advances to the divisional semifinal. The Burlington Cougars, as division champions will have their choice of the three remaining teams for the next series, and the other two squads will square off in the other semifinal.

Blades 3 Gems 2 (OT)

Thursday in Game 2, the Gems opened the scoring at the 13:04 mark

Blades 7 Gems 6

Friday, the Gems trailed 3-2 after the opening period, but fought back

Gems, Orillia eliminated

Georgetown and Orillia are the first two teams to be eliminated from competition in the opening round of playoffs for the Central Ontario Jr. B Hockey League.

The Gemini were swept four straight in their best-of-seven divisional quarterfinal series with the Oakville Blades, and Orillia suffered the same fate in the East, at the hands of the Richmond Hill Dynes.

In the other West Division match-ups, the Streetsville Derbys came back to win three straight games, after dropping their opener to the Mimico Monarchs, and Etobicoke took a 2-1 lead over Milton.

In the East, Vaughan was up 3-1 on Markham and had a chance to wrap up the series Tuesday night. Aurora held a 2-1 lead over Newmarket 87s, and the two teams were scheduled to play last night, as well.

In the league's Super Series, the Barrie Colts took a 2-1 lead over the Burlington Cougars in their best-of-five, with the third game slated for Tuesday.

In the next round of playoffs, the Colts and the Cougars will have their choice of a divisional semifinal opponent, and the two remaining teams in each of the divisions will square off in the other semifinal.

to tie it up at five in the second. Brent Presswood scored at the 3:38 mark of the third to put Georgetown up 6-5, but the team was

shortlived. Danny Deluca scored at 4:25 to tie the game, and then fired the winner at 9:03.

Other scorers for the Gems included Dance, with a pair, Washkurak, Greg Brazeau, and Travis Cole. Deluca finished the night with

Sabres slipping in series with Flyers

Give the Acton Sabres credit for at least making their Mid-Ontario Jr. C hockey playoff series with the Caledon Flyers an interesting one.

"The team has got us on a roller coaster ride," is the way Acton general manager Jules Russiani sums up the current situation. "I just can't figure it out."

You and everybody else, Jules. After taking a 2-0 lead in their best-of-seven series, the Sabres dropped a 6-3 decision in Caledon last Tuesday. Unfortunately, but not nothing to start fumbling for the Panic Button over.

Friday, back on home ice, the Sabres were fortunate to take a 4-3 decision, as Steve Wagner scored the winner with just 35 seconds remaining in regulation time.

But then on Saturday, with the Sabres again enjoying the home ice advantage, they were practically run out of the rink, suffering a 10-4 drubbing at the hands of the Flyers.

"They're working hard," Russiani said of the Flyers' win Saturday. "They're facing elimination, and they came out skating and hitting.

Our guys have to learn to accept the challenge in playoff hockey like this."

The Sabres built up a 3-0 lead in the game Friday by the mid way point of the second period.

Peter Cargill put Acton on the scoreboard at the 4:58 mark of the opening frame when he scored from Chris Turner.

Todd Cull gave Acton a 2-0 lead on the powerplay, with just three seconds left in the period. The puck came back to Cull after a face-off in the Caledon end, and he moved in on the left side to beat Flyer goalie Greg Powell.

The Sabres' third goal caused some controversy, as the Flyers argued the puck was punched in by the Sabres' Mark French. A waist-high shot came to French at the side of the Caledon net, just as he was being checked from behind by a Flyer defender. It appeared the puck went in either off French's glove, or his stick shaft. But the marker stood for a 3-0 Acton lead. Cargill and Greg Yates drew assists. Caledon finally got on the

scoreboard with just under seven minutes left in the second, as Pat O'Leary put one in from Doug Rayner.

The Flyers closed the margin to one goal when Eric Ursic scored at 11:26 of the third, and then Jeff Sheppard tied the match with a goal at 14:05.

The Flyers thought they had scored the go-ahead goal with just over a minute remaining, when Andy Cadeau put a shot by Acton goalie Dan Halliburton. But referee Ron MacLean ruled a Caledon player had interfered in the crease, and called the goal back.

With the Sabres enjoying a powerplay, and pressing in the Caledon zone, the puck came out from the corner through the goal crease. Wagner was planted in front of the net, and managed to stop the puck and jam it in under Powell for the game's winning goal, coming at 19:25.

Things almost got out of hand after the final buzzer had sounded, when the teams were leaving the ice. The Sabres had congregated

around their goalie, while the Flyers were leaving the ice. As he skated by, Powell waved a stick menacingly at the Sabres, and the two groups came together in a mass shoving match. The teams were eventually separated, and nothing more came of it.

Saturday, the Sabres made a strong start, but quickly fizzled.

"We scored the first goal, and came out like we wanted to win," Russiani said. "Then we just seemed to back off."

The Sabres trailed 4-1 after the first period, and 7-1 after the second.

Pat Daly had three goals for the Flyers, while Jay Moulton and Paul Samek had a pair each. Singles went to Rayner, Paul Collella and Jeff Campbell.

French, Tom Fisher, Steve Scanlon, and Mike Dorion replied for Acton.

The Sabres had another chance to end the series last night (Tuesday) in Caledon. If a seventh game in the series is necessary, it will go tonight (Wednesday) at 8 p.m. in Acton.

Bishop Reding sends ski teams to OFSAA

Bishop Reding Secondary School will send two squads of cross country skiers to the OFSAA championships later this month, after claiming team titles at the combination Halton-GHAC finals last week.

Bishop Reding won both the boys' and girls' Junior division championships at Hilton Falls Conservation Area, and teams now advance to the OFSAA (Ontario Federation of School Athletic Associations) finals at Haliburton on Feb. 22-23.

In the past, Nelson High School of Burlington has always been considered the Halton-Golden Horseshoe cross country skiing powerhouse, but Bishop Reding has been making great strides in the sport, according to coach Brian Arsenault.

"We bought 40 sets of skis in the fall, and started training before Christmas," he says. "If it weren't for the warm weather, we probably would have had more students involved in the program. But to have 11 skiers going to OFSAA is great."

At Bishop Reding, students are only allowed to take part in one sport during a given season, but Arsenault says the school is attempting to offer as wide a variety of sports as possible.

In the Junior girls' 2.5 km race, Nelson skier Kristen Davies topped the field of 17 with an impressive time of 9:13.

Bishop Reding's Anna Petrilli was second with a time of 24:17 and Maria Sweeney, also of Bishop Reding was third in time of 25:44.

Other Bishop Reding skiers included Anna Hollett, seventh (28:18); Marie Brennan, 11th (28:45); and C.J. Deryk, 14th (33:58).

All five skiers will go to OFSAA, with the top four times counting in the team competition.

In the Junior boys' event, Bishop Reding had a total of 11 skiers in the field of 28 racers.

The winning time over the 4.5 km course was 12:54.

For Bishop Reding, Jim Lawrence was fifth over all, with a time of 18:05; Peter Blencowe was seventh (20:00); Giles Hodge finished eighth (20:12); Steve Klein was 11th (21:26); and Steve Kolozsvari was 13th (22:06). James Cole was 14th in the race and will be an alternate for the Bishop Reding team.

The Junior girls' team from Bishop Reding defeated Nelson for the team championship, and the Junior boys bettered team entries from both Nelson and White Oaks of Oakville. Nelson took both Senior titles.

Members of the Bishop Reding teams were presented with gold medals for both the Halton and GHAC championships.

When the Bishop Reding racers leave Sunday for Haliburton, and prepare for their events Monday and Tuesday, it will mark the first time a group this large has advanced to OFSAA competition, and Arsenault sees it as a step in the right direction for the school.

Arsenault expects competition to be exceptional at the meet, since many of the Northern Ontario schools have extensive cross country skiing programs.

On Monday, the skiers will race against the clock for best times.

On Tuesday, the three skiers with the best times from each of the teams will take part in a relay event.

Local skaters take tests

The Georgetown Figure Skating Club held a highly successful Test Day recently, with a number of club skaters completing various levels.

Passing tests were: Christine Dawson (Preliminary Figure); Bobbi Marchand, Amy Longworth, and Tracy Noblet (First Figure); Jody Johnson, and John Kovacevic (Preliminary Freeskate); Jennifer Cook and Bobbi Marchand (Jr. Bronze Freeskate).

Several skaters also completed their Dance tests: Dutch Waltz: Sarah Arneson; Canasta Tango: Tanya Little, Ashley De Jonge, and Denise Hannah; Swing: Lesley Watson; Ten Fox: John Kovacevic; Fiesta Tango: Ellen Louise Mathews, Jennifer Sheppard, Linda Lacroix, John Kovacevic, Emma Harrison Burgess, Julie Myers, Domo Kovacevic, and Yvonne Moore; Willow Waltz: Yvonne Moore, Bobbi Marchand, Julie Myers, and Danielle Dembie; Fourteenstep: Amy Longworth and Sara Hartley.



The Acton Sabres scored with 35 seconds left in regulation time Friday night to claim a 4-3 decision over the Caledon Flyers and take a 3-1 lead in their best-of-seven playoff series. The Flyers came back the following night

though to win 10-4. Here, Steve Wagner jams the puck in under Caledon goalie Greg Powell for the winning goal Friday night. (Herald photo)

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