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Sabres falter on home ice

By COLIN GIBSON
 Herald Sports Editor

"Maybe they were paying too much attention to their press clippings!" offered head coach Ken Green, only half-jokingly, in attempting to put the Acton Tait Realty Sabres disastrous 1989-90 season opening two-game home-stand pratfall at the Acton Community Centre, Friday and Sunday, in its proper perspective.

The Sabres had opened their 1989-90 Mid-Ontario Junior "C" Hockey League season with two impressive victories on the road (8-4 over Alliston Hornets and 8-5 over Bradford) so should have been ready to 'strut their stuff' in front of appreciative and interested hometown supporters.

Instead, what the hometown fans saw in the two weekend tilts, was a blowout on Friday night and a culmination of numerous third period breakdowns on Sunday afternoon - that resulted in a pair of Sabre losses to bring the team down to earth with a resounding 'thud.'

The Sabres were humiliated 14-3 by Orangeville Crushers Friday night and downed 7-5 by Alliston Hornets in the Sunday afternoon matinee.

"Obviously," suggested Green, "the guys' heads just weren't in the game. It happens. Maybe it will teach them a lesson."

Unfortunately for the Sabres, a crowd of over 800 had turned up at the Acton Community Centre for the Friday night debacle.

The game was interesting through the first period with Orangeville opening up a 5-2 lead after 20 minutes of play.

Major Atoms tie Dundas

Coaches Bob Craig, John Andrews and Bill Briggs took their Major Atom team to Dundas Sunday, which turned out to be an excellent game.

Dundas scored early in the game to take the lead. Gary McNiven, Keith Hunt and Darrin Finlayson were right there banging on Dundas' door a few times but couldn't break through to score. Our scoring machine Peter Mashinter picked up an excellent pass from Steven Markham and fired in by the Dundas goalie to tie the score. Andy Kerslake and Stretch Robbie Pilgrim were right there the whole game making some nice plays.

Shane Thompson who is a Minor Atom we brought up to play had a tough job ahead of him, filling in for Jamie Briggs, but he proved he was the right pick when he made some great passes and played a good game.

Defencemen Ken Armstrong, Chris Corney, Ryan Taylor and Chris Goodhew all played a tough game defensively as well as throwing in a few offensive rushes to just miss scoring chances.

Early in the third period Peter Mashinter picked the puck from a scramble at centre ice and drove on to put by Dundas' goalie to make it 2-1. With two minutes left to go in the game Dundas scored to tie the score 2-2.

Georgetown turned on the pressure to try for the win scoring a disallowed goal with seconds left but the clock ran out and they had to settle for a tie. Goalies Geoff Beauparlant and Andrew Craig played outstanding in net even when knocked down and swiped at when they kept their cool and played tougher.

The Crushers put the game out of reach in the second stanza by surging for four goals with but one reply from Acton to lead 9-3 after two periods.

The visitors potted five more markers in the third period with nary a reply from the Sabres to round out the 14-3 decision.

Dale McNiven, Tim McDonald and Bob Gagnon accounted for the Sabre scoring. McDonald also added an assist.

Wayne Rivers, John Van Dam and Craig Cullen notched assists.

Suffice to state, the Orangeville scoring was liberally sprinkled throughout the team roster.

Sunday's joust with Alliston featured a more disciplined and determined Sabre squad - until the third period melt-down.

That the Sabres had thumped the Hornets 8-4 in their home hive should have alerted the Sabres to the fact that you play heads-up hockey for 60 minutes. Unfortunately, the Acton swashbucklers had their buckles swashed in the final 20 minutes and suffered the 7-5 defeat.

Sabres coach Green felt that the game was there for the taking by his charges. "We deserved better," he said. "We controlled the game for 50 minutes, but you have to play the full 60 if you want two points."

He might have been a bit over-generous in his game estimation.

Granted, Sabres had two goals disallowed (a right call on one potential score - dubious on the other) but the Acton crew played the third period as if their heads were in the fog that plagued the ice surface.

Acton led 2-1 after the first period Sunday, and 4-3 after 40 minutes of play. Then the fog descended - in more ways than one.

The Sabres were continually hemmed in their own end and poor clearing attempts combined with scrambly defensive attempts in front of their own net proved their undoing.

The Hornets took advantage of the Sabres confusion and jumped in front 5-4 before the period was eight minutes old.

The Sabres rallied to tie the score but then the sixth Hornet goal, on a sharp angle shot, appeared to signal the end of the Acton quest for a win.

The final Alliston goal was scored into an empty net with 17 seconds left in the game.

Bob Watson, John Van Dam, Bob Gagnon, Pete Cargill and Dale McNiven accounted for the Acton scoring. Van Dam and Gagnon also added assists.

Craig Cullen couldn't be faulted in his attempt to pull his mates back into the game, as he assisted on three goals.

Jason Lucas, Adam Hiltz and Wayne Rivers also collected assists.

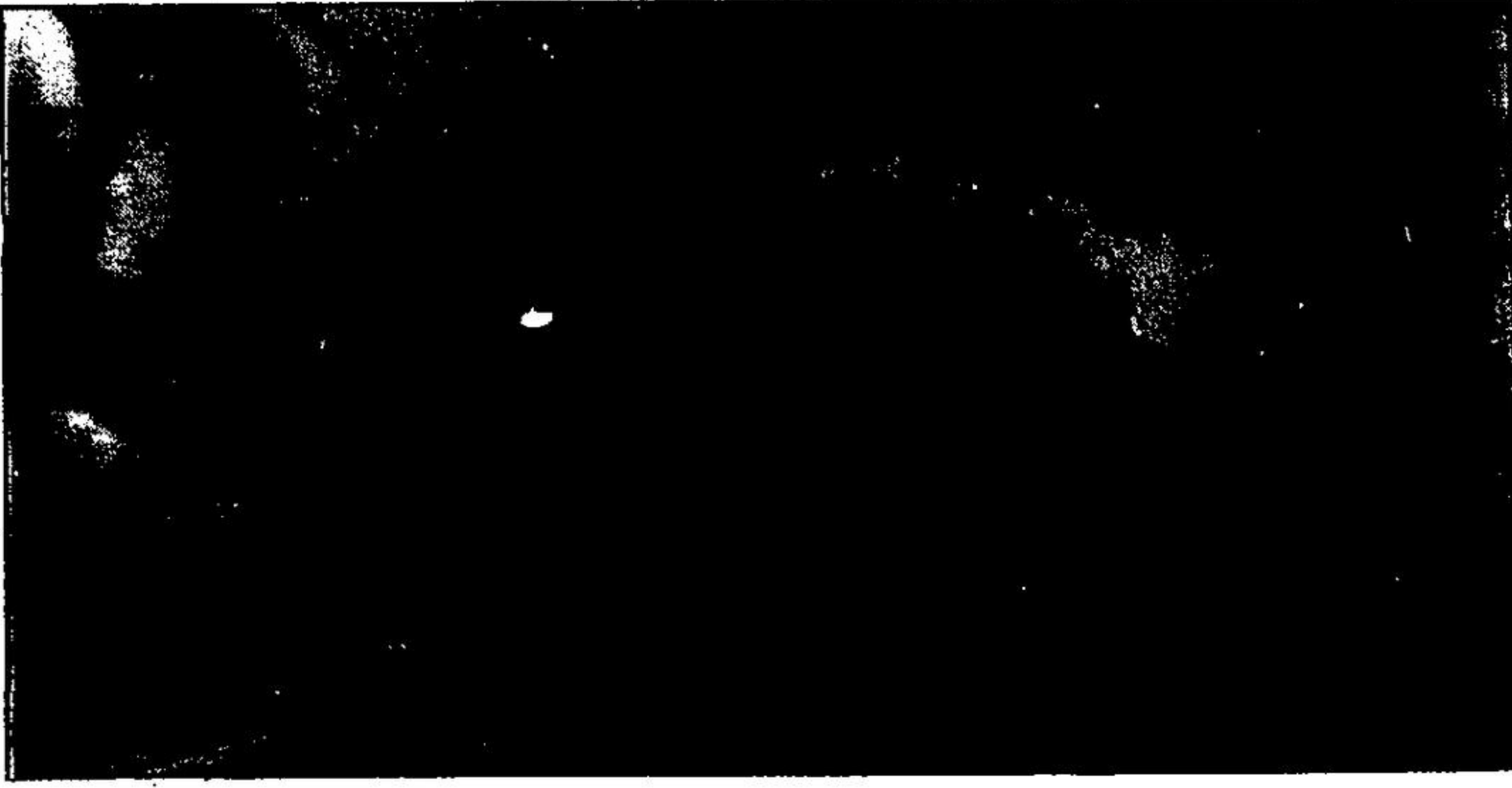
It's time for the Sabres to regroup and based on their opening-season road victories, the team is quite capable of getting back on the winning track.

As Ken Steen noted, the players have to remember to play within themselves, do their allotted job and play a full game. If they can do this, the press clipping - and fan support - will come.

Sabres have two games scheduled this week.

Tuesday, the Acton crew journeyed to Caledon. At press time, the score was not available.

Friday, 8 p.m. at Acton Community Centre, the Sabres play host to Bradford.



THE ACTON SABRES goal area was no place for the weak-of-heart in Mid-Ontario Junior "C" Hockey League action over the weekend at the Acton Community Centre. The Tait Realty Sabres faltered in

front of hometown supporters and lost 14-3 to Orangeville on Friday evening, and 7-2 to Alliston Hornets in a Sunday afternoon game. (Herald photo)

Redmen take second

Acton High School's Junior Boys Volleyball team captured the silver medal in weekend competition in Milton at the E.C. Drury Invitational Tournament.

Facing teams from Hamilton, Ancaster, Dundas, Waterdown, and Halton, the Redmen once again showed that they love tournament pressure.

The Acton squad captured first place in their pool by virtue of victories in the opening rounds. The first match of the day saw the Redmen split games with Burlington's Nelson High School - Acton winning the first game 15-13 and Nelson the second 15-7.

After overcoming opening day jitters, the red and white Acton boys stormed out to defeat Waterdown High School by scores of 15-5 and 15-0. The Redmen next faced Lester Pearson High School, the division-leaders in Halton West.

Acton took the first game 15-7 while Pearson grabbed the second 15-10. In the final games of pool play, Acton defeated Cathedral High School of Hamilton by scores of 15-8 and 15-11.

It was then on to the semi-finals where the Redmen once again - as in their victory two weeks ago in Kitchener - faced the Ancaster High School Royals. Again, the Redmen dominated play,

defeating Ancaster by scores of 15-4 and 15-9.

Acton then entered the championship game against E.C. Drury who had gone undefeated in their pool.

The two teams put on an exciting display of volleyball, splitting the first two of three games.

Drury won the first 15-8, and Acton took the second 15-11.

What then followed was a thrilling cliff-hanger final game with the lead see-sawing back and forth several times and eventually going to overtime.

In a gut wrenching final few moments, the Drury team emerged victors by a 16-14 score leaving the Redmen with the silver medal.

Coaches Ken Ellis and Brad Thorpe felt the Redmen steadily improved throughout the day-long tournament and the proof was that the final victory could easily have gone the other way.

"Our middle blocking is beginning to shine," said Ellis who singled out Chris White, Jason Schonnop, and Kevin Argudin for their work up front. Medal winners for Acton were Bill Andrews, Jim Sale, Chris White, Brad Thorpe, Jason Piper, Jason Schonnop, Jake Jovanov, and Kevin Argudin.

The junior Redmen face Oakville

Trafalgar and Milton High Schools in regular league play this week.

Saturday, they travel to Bishop Reding for a tournament where they will once again face E.C. Drury.

Said coach Ellis, "With gold medals for each of us in two tournaments this season, the rubber match will be on Saturday. We are looking forward to the challenge."

Tabbies top AHS

Wednesday, T.A. Blakelock Tabbies defeated Acton Redmen in Junior girls basketball, 38-29.

The Redmen started their game slowly and were behind 9-2 at the end of the first quarter. Strong play by Kelly Ambrose, Nici Haessler and Andrea Leeking brought the junior Redmen even with the Tabbies by the half.

Missing two of his starters, coach Larry Marin relied heavily upon Ambrose, Haessler and Leeking to keep Acton in the game and as the game wore on they ran out of steam. By the fourth quarter Blakelock had put the game beyond reach.

Bob Donker qualifies for national competition

By COLIN GIBSON
 Herald Sports Editor

Georgetown District High School cross-country runner, 17-year-old Bob Donker, will be journeying to Halifax on Nov. 18 to compete in the Canadian national club cross-country finals as the result of his efforts on the weekend.

Donker, who is also a member of the GDHS Rebels cross-country team, represented the Phoenix International cross-country club (based in Toronto) at the Ontario Track and Field Association club cross-country finals, staged at Saugeen Bluffs, near Port Elgin.

In the 19-years and under five-mile event, Donker placed seventh in a field of approximately 80 runners, but his team placed first overall to qualify for the national club competition in Halifax.

Should Donker place in the top

six in his category in Halifax, he would qualify for the Canadian team which will compete in the World cross-country championships scheduled for March in Paris, France.

The young Georgetown harrier has had his fair share of success lately.

On the Thanksgiving weekend, Donker trekked to Rochester, New York and competed in the prestigious McQuaid Invitational cross-country meet.

The meet attracted elite runners and teams from across United States and Donker stunned his American hosts by winning the three-mile race in the senior boys "AAA" category.

This south-of-the-border triumph is expected to garner Donker some scholarship enticements from a number of American universities.



Bob Donker

Today (Wednesday) as a member of the GDHS Rebels cross-country team, Donker will be competing in the Halton Championships at Kelso Conservation Area near Milton.

At press time, results were not available.