

Sports & Leisure

Wednesday, September 15, 1999

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Raiders hoping to get defensive in new season

The Georgetown Raiders defensive corps was the biggest question mark coming into this season but it just may prove to be one of its best assets.

"Our defence is better than last year and that was one of the areas we were concerned about," said Raider coach Jay Anderson following a 6-6 tie with Milton that wrapped up a flurry of four exhibition games in three days.

Though it was a defensive lapse that allowed Ryan Eby to get free to score the tying goal with 13 seconds to play in Saturday's game, the defence—and the rest of the Raiders for that matter—were pretty much running on empty as their second game in six hours wrapped up.

What has Anderson excited about his blueliners is their progress along the learning curve.

"It takes a year to get used to the league and the speed," said Anderson. "We saw that

last year with Stace Page. The first year is a learning process."

While replicating a jump such as Page experienced (he went from 34 points in his rookie year to 123 and OHA player of the year honors last year) might be a stretch, there is no doubt more expected from a Raider defence that by the season's end featured six rookies.

Second-year defencemen Brydon Butterworth, Ryan Fairbairn and Billy Fetherston will be looked upon to provide stability and leadership. The returning trio is joined by Todd Meehan, who played with Durham last year, and rookies Corey LeClair and Travis Parent, both 16-year-old draft picks of the Brampton Battalion.

Though the Raiders were only in need of three replacements up front, their success has put them in an enviable position. They were able to be selective and not content with



Joe Tenute of the Georgetown Raiders splits through a pair of Milton Merchants Ryan Carrigan, left, and John Natalin during Saturday's exhibition game. The teams played to a 6-6 draw. The Raiders open the regular season Friday in Bramalea and host Brampton on Saturday.

Photo by Yvonne Gaynor

merely being competitive, the Raiders have revamped half of their forward units.

The successful trio of Stace Page, Jeff Seeds and Scott MacDonald was reunited late in the exhibition season. Behind them, second-year Raider Mike Knoepfli joins new recruits Doug Orr and Joe Tenute. Orr had six points over the weekend and the line had

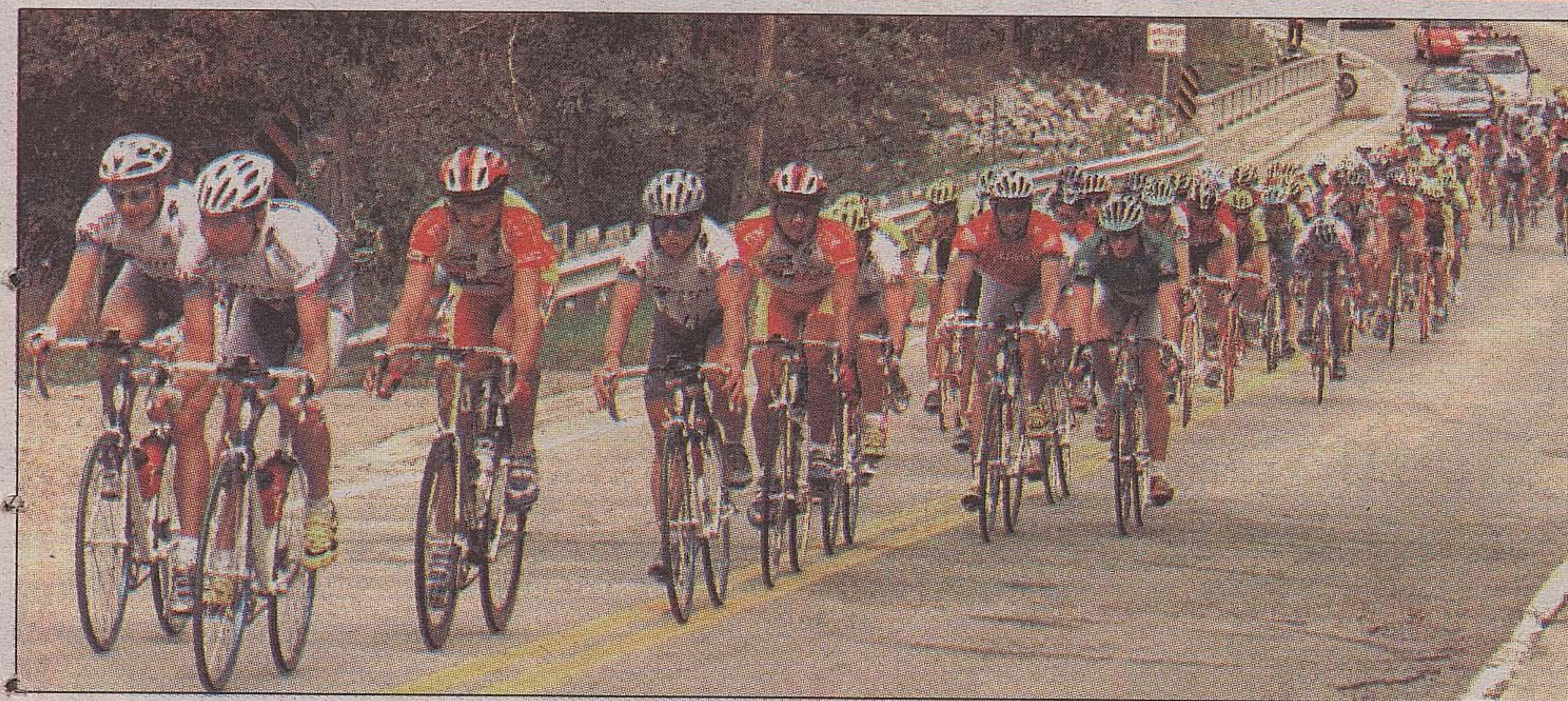
three of Georgetown's six goals in a 6-2 win over Vaughan.

The third line features three newcomers—Tristan Fairbairn, Dave Dainard and Chris Berry. Fairbairn had four points in a 7-2 exhibition win over Orangeville. Berry played Jr. A in St. Louis last year while the 15-year-old Dainard got his first taste of Jr. A three years

ago with the Shelburne Wolves. Bernie Scanlon, who comes from the Mississauga Reps and returnees Tim Williams, Adam Bertoli and Rob LaRose round things out.

In net, Jeff Hladysch is back for a third season and will share the crease with former Huntsville goalie Dan LeClair.

Raiders 1999-2000 schedule pg. 30



Brief visit

The first Trans-Canada Cycling Tour passed through Halton Hills briefly Friday as 96 of the world's best cyclists zipped along Winston Churchill Blvd. through Norval during the eighth stage of the 10-stage tour. Riders began the eighth stage in Vaughan Friday morning and finished the day in Hamilton. The tour wound up Sunday in Fort Erie with the cyclists having covered 1,479 kilometres through 116 municipalities in Ontario and Quebec. A total of 16 teams from 11 countries vied for more than \$130,000 in prize money. Guido Trentin of Italy was the overall winner.

Photo by Ted Brown

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