

# Sports & Leisure

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## Two out of three ain't bad, but Raiders remain third

The Georgetown Raiders celebrated like they had just won game seven of the playoffs, but the celebration was short-lived.

After pulling out an exciting 4-3 victory over the Hamilton Kilty Bees on Saturday, the Raiders lost any ground they made up on the West Conference front runners with a 5-2 loss in Hamilton Monday. The end result is as the Raiders hit the halfway mark of the Provincial Junior A Hockey League season, they remain seven points back of the Bees with the Milton Merchants sandwiched in-between.

Heading into the weekend the Bees had only lost twice in 23 games. So, handing them two more defeats in three days was a tall order. The Raiders started things off right, though. Power-play goals by T.J. Manastersky and Brent Hughes gave them a 3-1 lead Saturday. Hamilton then seemed to have swung the momentum in their favour by scoring twice in the final three minutes of the second period to tie the game.

The teams battled through a tense third with neither side giving much ground. Then with overtime looming Ryan Busby was rubbed out along the boards as he carried the puck into the Hamilton end. But when the Bees' defenceman lost his helmet, it gave Busby just enough time to get free. He went directly to the net and arrived just in time to shovel home Hughes' pass.

"That was a huge win for us. We've been talking about that game for two weeks," Busby said. "We had two lines out there to score and one line to shut down (Josh) Soares' line and everyone did their job," Busby said.

While Busby had two goals and Hughes had four points, the line of Ryan McCarthy, Vince Laise and Rick Varone was equally important to the victory. Soares, who, with 60 points in 23 games, leads the Provincial League by a whopping 12 points, was held pointless thanks to the Georgetown line's checking efforts.

With the Raiders not having the benefit of the final change

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Ryan Busby celebrates his game-winning goal in the Georgetown Raiders 4-3 victory over the Hamilton Kilty Bees on Saturday.  
Photo by Herb Garbutt



## Symmes wins coaching honour

Jennifer Symmes is standing tall in a game she said she took up because she "was too short to play other sports." The Georgetown District High School grad has been named the Canadian Interuniversity Sports (CIS) field hockey coach of the year. Symmes was presented with the Marina van der Merwe Award after leading the University of Western Mustangs a 5-4-3 record and a fourth-place finish in Ontario.

"I'm flattered, but you can't help but look good with a strong team behind you," Symmes said.

Symmes first played field hockey in high school and continued to play when she went to Western. In her final year, she served as an assistant coach and was also named the team's most valuable player. Taking over as head coach just before the next season left her playing catch-up.

"The first year was just keeping the program alive and trying to patch things together," she said of a trying 2-7-3 season. "There was no off-season workouts, no training program. The first couple of months were just fitness and basic skills and if you're doing that at this level, you're way too far behind."

But the Mustangs improved dramatically this year, more than doubling their point total before being edged 1-0 by Queen's in the Ontario bronze medal game.

Symmes said her coaching style was a hybrid of the three coaches she had at Western, although she did institute a more offence-oriented game.

"Western always had strong defensive teams so we could tie games but we couldn't win them. The group we had were fast and fit and they had the confidence to go out and get goals."

Three of Symmes' players were teammates before she became coach and she said they were very supportive, "but I had to keep the back-in-my-days stories to a minimum," she said.

Symmes said assistant Shannon Baskin and U of T coach Beth Ali also made the transition to head coach much easier but also credited her Centennial and Georgetown coaches Jim Atkinson, Brian Cosgrove and Jim Hall.

"I saw what a difference a good coach could make. I always had lots of energy but if you don't have a focus that can go into bad things. Instead, I learned about time management, dedication and respect."

For next season, Symmes said she'd like to win the Ontario medal they came so close to but also hopes to see the team get more involved with clinics to help promote the game.

—By Herb Garbutt, staff writer

Ryan Busby is buried under a pile of Raiders after his goal with 4:35 to play gave the Raiders a 4-3 win over Hamilton Saturday night in Georgetown. The Kilty Bees got a measure of revenge with a 5-2 victory on Monday. The Raiders remain seven points back of Hamilton in the Provincial Jr. A Hockey League's West Conference.

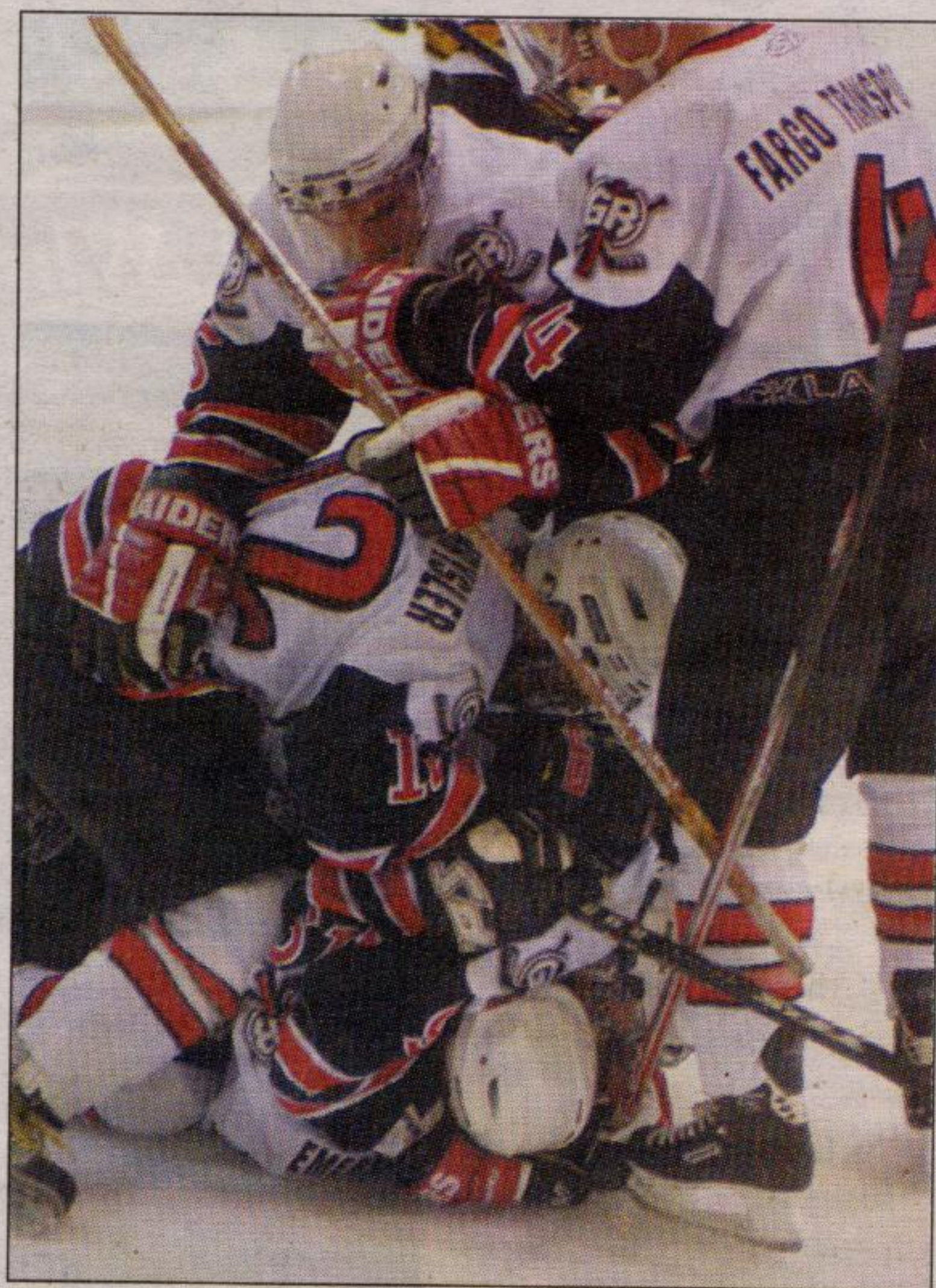


Photo by Herb Garbutt

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