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Rep hockey
roundup

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Special pullout section

Raiders can't finish Chargers despite holding five leads

EAMONN MAHER
Staff Writer

The people who run the OHA Provincial Jr. A Hockey League might want to think about changing the name of its most competitive conference to the Wild Wild West Division if recent results continue to unfold.

The upstart seventh-place Mississauga Chargers are serving notice to the West Division's top teams that they're going to be a factor in the slimmed-down playoff picture come February, having beaten front-running Oakville last week and then the fourth-place Georgetown Raiders 7-6 on Wednesday night.

Just six teams in each division will make the post-season in 2007-08, down from eight in past years, and the Chargers appear to have their most-talented squad in years, headed up by top scorers Bruce Crawford and Adam Bevilacqua, who combined for seven points against the Raiders.

Although host Georgetown held the lead on five separate occasions, the 8-12-1 Chargers kept answering back, evening the score at six by the end of the second period and chasing Raider starter Paul Claxton. Mississauga went on to pot the winner eight minutes into the third, capitalizing on a turnover behind the Georgetown goal by its captain, Evan Zych.

It's not uncommon for the Chargers to surrender 50 shots or more in their visits to the Alcott Arena, but they actually outdid the Raiders 28-21 on Wednesday, allowing just four shots on goal in the final frame. Head coach Jay Anderson, a Georgetown resident, said the addition of Quebec Major Junior League veteran Jason Swit has helped stabilize the blue line.

"(Wednesday) was a bit crazy with some of the shots that were going in and you thought that the last shot was going

to win it," said Anderson, who is assisted behind the Charger bench by local native Blaine McCauley, also a former Raider head coach.

"After things settled down, we really put our systems to work. We forechecked well and the defensive zone coverage was strong in the third period. Our kids really needed a win like that to see that the systems work and it's also a big win for us because Georgetown is still Georgetown."

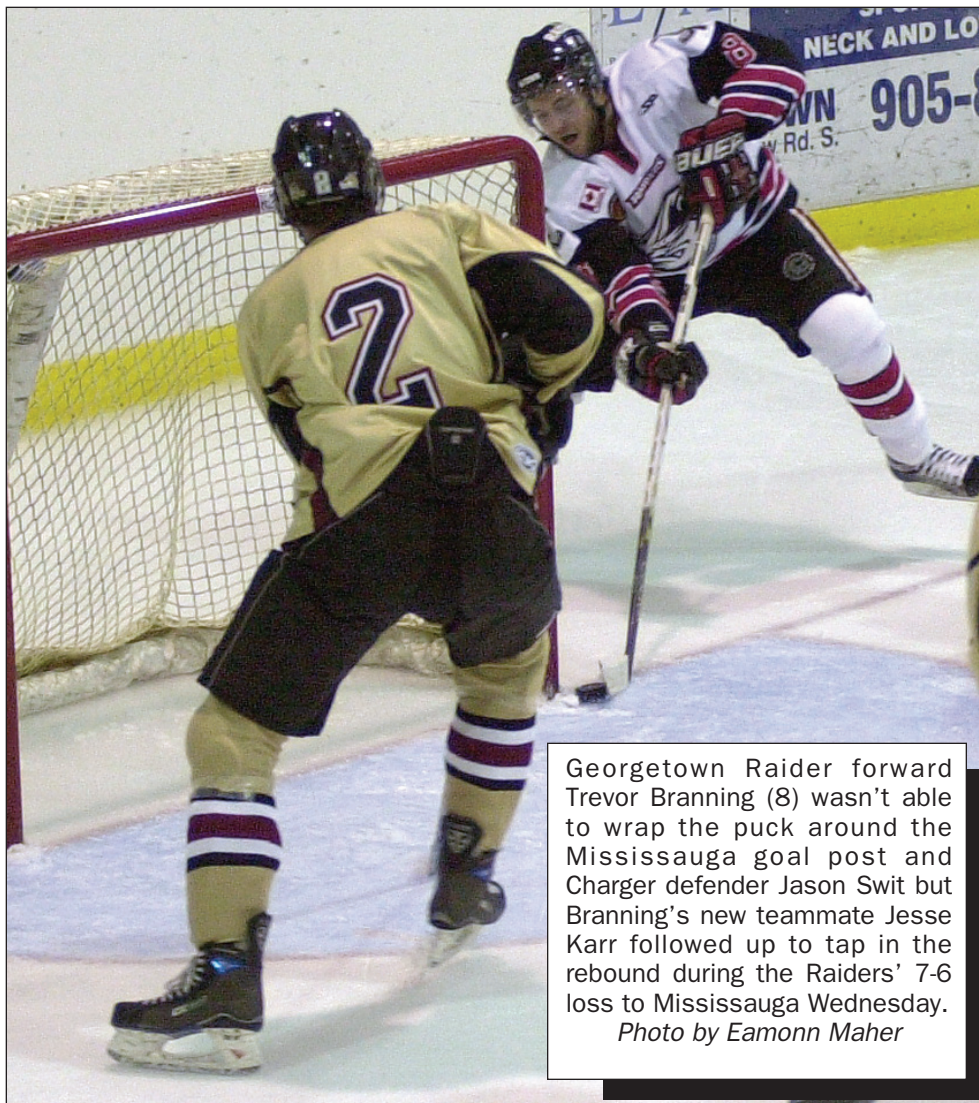
A wide-open second period resulted in the teams scoring four times each, including two apiece from newcomer Jesse Karr and Marcus Pryde for the Raiders. Karr, a 6-foot-4, 200-pound winger from St. Catharines, was acquired early this week from the Port Colborne Sailors of the Golden Horseshoe Jr. B loop and had three points in his debut.

Trevor Branning and Mark McGowan also tallied for 13-7-1 Georgetown, which will visit Milton tonight (Friday) and then get another shot at the Chargers Saturday evening in Port Credit.

(Eamonn Maher can be reached at emaher@independentfreepress.com)



JAY ANDERSON



Georgetown Raider forward Trevor Branning (8) wasn't able to wrap the puck around the Mississauga goal post and Charger defender Jason Swit but Branning's new teammate Jesse Karr followed up to tap in the rebound during the Raiders' 7-6 loss to Mississauga Wednesday.
Photo by Eamonn Maher



'Bare'cat pride?

Some of the home supporters showed their Bearcat school spirit at halftime of the Ontario Federation of Schools Athletic Association qualifier game between Acton and Brampton Christian on Wednesday afternoon. The Bearcats rolled to a 34-16 victory to earn a spot in the provincial high school senior girls' single-A-category basketball championships next week in Port Hope.

Photo by Brittany Cubitt



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