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# Champion Sports

Wednesday, October 5, 1983

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## Steamers edged in opener but some play encouraging

While losses are seldom encouraging, Milton Steamers 8-7 defeat to Burlington Cougars Thursday at Burlington showed that even with an inconsistent effort, Steamers will be highly competitive this season.

In a sloppily played game by both clubs, the two clubs kept the score close for the entire game until Cougars rifled home the winning goal with three minutes left in the contest.

Played at tiny Nelson Arena in Burlington, neither club was able to control the play for any length of time. The smaller arena seemed to have an effect on all players' inability to connect on more than one pass in a row.

Despite the defeat, Steamers had several plus factors on their side. Centreman Jeff Martin looks like he might easily step into the vacated spot of Tim Pollen. Martin scored three goals and added two assists and was far and away the most effective Milton player on the ice.

In his third year with the Milton junior team, Martin has shown all kinds of potential but has never put together the kind of season, with regard to points, many observers see him as having.

However, Martin came out flying with two goals in the first nine minutes of the game to give Steamers leads of 1-0 and 2-1.

The close score held up until late in the period when Cougars scored two quick goals to take a 3-2 lead. In the second period, the two clubs alternated scoring with Steamers tying the score three times only to watch Burlington come back to take the lead.

The trend continued in the final frame with Steamers tying the score 6-6 and again at 7-7 before Cougars pulled it out of the fire.

Other strong showings for Steamers was the play of midget-aged Mike Mangotich. Playing on a line with Bob Mills and Bob Landry, because of the absence of Brad Warden, Mangotich certainly didn't look out of place and delivered a solid two-way effort throughout the contest. Mangotich also picked up two assists and set up a goal by Mills with a strong second ef-



Milton goalie Rick Landry covers up in front of the goal while two Burlington Cougars are poised for the rebound. Cougars won the game 8-7 scoring the winning goal with

fort and some smart play from behind the goal.

Both clubs showed weaknesses defensively. Although no shots on goal totals were kept, the total number of shots was not especially high and neither club had an abundance of good chances. However, both goalies, Rod Kirk for Cougars, and Rick Landry for Milton, suffered from a lack of good communication with their defencemen and forwards allowing many poor chances to quickly result in good chances and goals unnecessarily.

The contest was cleanly played with just nine minors called by referee George Graham to each team. In the first semi-fight of the contest, Rick Serafini, of Milton, tussled with Cougars' Scott Young. Late in the game, Bob Landry jabbed after a loose puck in front of the goal and Cougar John

Staios took exception by running Landry into the boards. A clenching duel ensued and both players were sent to the penalty box to cool down.

Martin led Milton's shooters with three goals while Mills added a pair. Bill Lynch and Bob Landry added singles. Heggie, Mangotich and Lynch added two assists apiece.

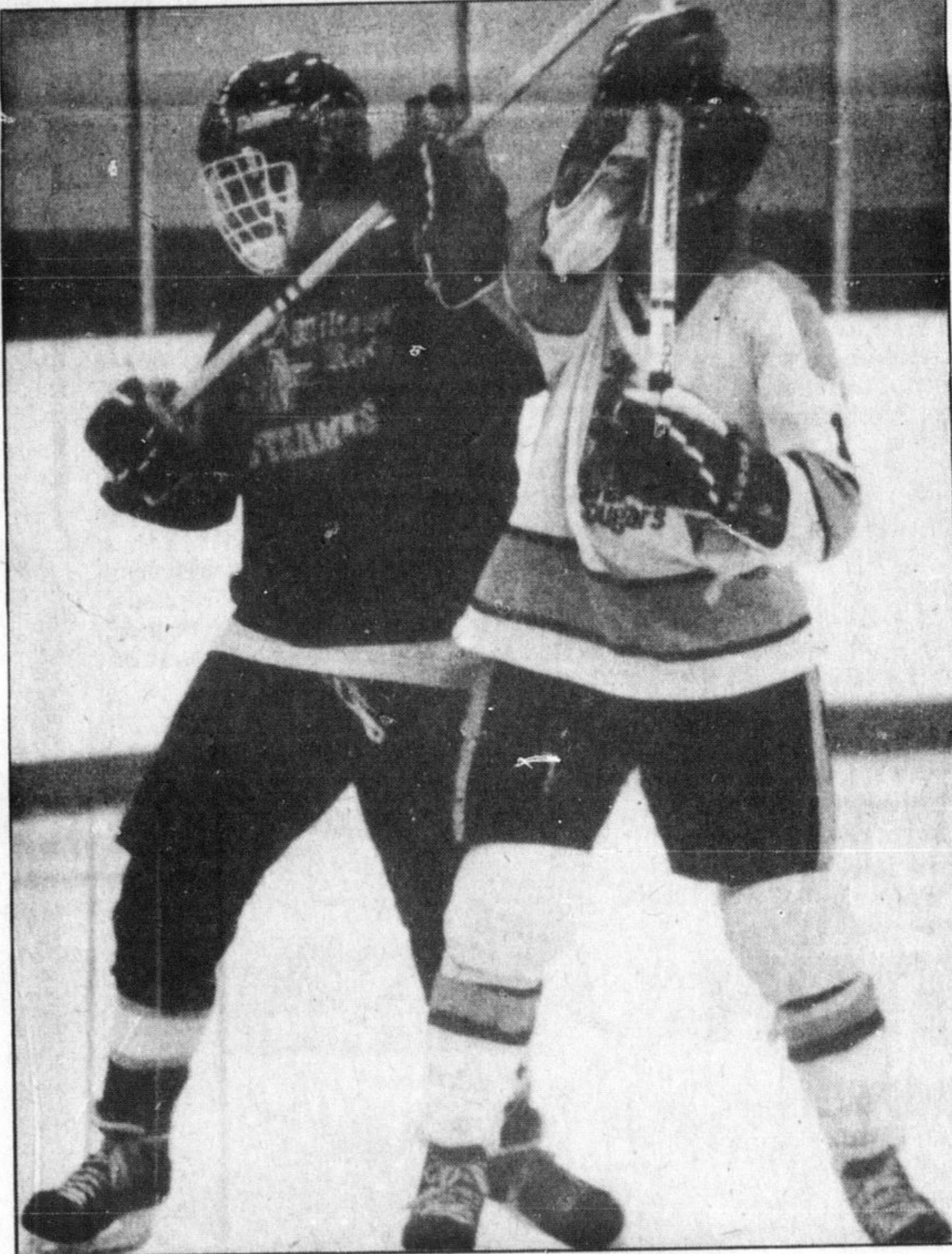
Steamers' goaltending corps was reduced to three prior to the game when Dave Doucette, of Brantford, was released. That leaves three goalies, Derrick Neelands, Mark Lamarche and Rick Landry vying for the two spots. Coach Ray Tonelli said

he intends to keep the trio until one goalie plays his way off the team. Off the track: Steamers played last night (Tuesday) in Streetsville but results weren't available at press time. Steamers host Georgetown Gemini Friday at 7:50 p.m. at Memorial Arena before playing Oakville Blades Tuesday at 8 p.m. also at Memorial Arena.

In the most lopsided score of the week, Oakville beat Mimico Monarchs, the new entry, 15-1 last week. Blades look like they will return to their form of two years ago when they lost just twice during the season.



Steamer Bob Landry gives Burlington Cougar Rob Anthony a shove on the back of his head. Because of his relatively small size and fine stickhandling, Landry is often victimized by cheap shots and does his best to get even.



Guarding the front of the net, new Steamer Rick Serafini is involved in a high-sticking duel with an unidentified Cougar. Serafini played well in his first game with the juniors this year since coming over from Dixie Beehives.

### Many clinics planned

## We're 'Moving Ahead' into 1984

For the next few months, I'll be taking you through the minor hockey system. We'll be looking into and explaining the different systems used in rep, tier two and houseleague, the purpose of the beginners program and the people and roles of the executive.

We'll be talking to the players to discover from them their likes and dislikes as well as improvements they would like to see. Most of the opinions expressed are from parents, adult coaches or the executive. Yet, who is playing this game?—the kids!

We are going to bring you into the board room and let you know how and why decisions are made.

Also, this year a new constitution will be presented at the annual general meeting. Your input would be more useful prior to rather than after the constitution is presented and voted on.

This Saturday from 7-9 a.m., a goaltending clinic will be held at Memorial Arena. It'll run for 10 consecutive weeks at that time under the direction of Dave Murray, Bob 'Pie' Lee and Dave Smith.

Rep team goaltenders will be eligible with priority given to the younger goalies. If more goalies

### around the rink

with LARRY SCOTT

are needed, house-league goalkeepers will be notified. All rep goalies must call Terry Brandt, at 878-4627 by tomorrow (Thursday).

A goalie clinic exclusively for house league will follow the rep clinic.

We felt it was about time we devoted time to skill development and goaltending is an essential part of any hockey team. These instructors will divide the goalkeepers according to age and ability and will be able to give them 10 hours of individual attention.

All aspects of goaltending will be covered from choosing equipment, off-ice preparation, pre-game preparation and on-ice instruction.

Again, this follows this year's motto — Moving Ahead. Later in the year, we hope to run a clinic for defencemen after the goalie clinic is over.

To do this, we need to hear from you defencemen out there who are available from 7-9 a.m.

Saturdays for about 8-10 weeks. We need people who can assist in setting up this clinic. Anyone interested in helping either reply to MMHA, Box 37, Milton, or call the MMHA office at 878-8340 and leave a message.

This weekend the rep teams start their regular schedule at Memorial Arena. Passes are available for \$18. Gate prices without passes are \$1.50 adult, 25 cents for students, and no charge for senior citizens.

The Tier Two teams will play exhibition matches until their season openers at the end of October.

House-league teams are practising with the schedule to start within a couple of weeks.

In two weeks time, this column will look at house-league hockey in Milton. We'll look at its make-up, use of practice time, and our plans to feature house-league teams during Minor Hockey Week Jan. 24-31, 1984.

We'll tell you why practice times are limited and explain the balancing of teams to answer questions concerning the movements of players.

## Competitive leagues facing many obstacles

A guess it comes as no surprise to anyone, but there has been several indications in the past few years of a swing in adult sports in Milton away from competitiveness and toward recreation.

Followers of the Milton Fastball League this summer are aware that the league is in trouble. After supporting eight teams just two years ago, the league dwindled down to six in the 1982 season and was further reduced in 1983 to four clubs.

The league itself didn't have what you call a banner year. The MFL was competitive and interesting for about two months. And then, with OASA play on the horizon and fed up with playing the same teams week in and week out, the league virtually forgot about playing in the month of August.

Now, the Milton Hockey League, a bastion of support and interest for several years now, announced last week that Lou's Place Hawks, the present champions, have disbanded. The MHL was considering admitting a pick-up team called the High Flyers to give the league a sixth club but that decision was reached last night (Tuesday) and I don't know which way the league decided.

By contrast, the fastest growing leagues in town are of the 'oldtimer' variety. During the summer seasons, leagues such as the Oldtimer Slo-Pitch League, while being somewhat competitive, is still a recreational-oriented league bent on fun flourishes. That league has grown from four to eight teams in a span of three years and the word is that there is a waiting list of players and sponsors lined up for more teams.

In the winter, the Milton Pleasure League, a Sunday morning league of oldtimer hockey players, is growing in size. No records are kept and no champion is declared at the end of the year.

This trend away from competitiveness and toward recreation is not restricted to Milton. All across the province, recreation seems to be the order of the day.

In spite of a large population growth in the past half-dozen years, Milton's senior athletes are either getting older or are becoming recreationally oriented. And I think it's a little bit of both.

The competitive leagues in town are, perhaps, becoming too competitive. Players air-lifted from neighbouring towns and cities, while improving the calibre of the play, are making the competitive leagues too strong for the average local player.

In order to survive, weaker teams have been forced to go out and get some players of their own. This has upgraded the quality of play, and if fact, made some leagues more interesting, but the cost may be paid by the league's eventual decline.

I'd be surprised if the Milton Fastball League was around next year in the same form as this year. Some players on the Remax entry were discussing the probably of forming a team out of Kilbride and entering the club in the Inter-City League. Other players were a little put off, to say the least, on the turn of events this year and may look to the Halton Men's Softball League, Milton Fun Softball League or the Oldtimers Slo-Pitch League for their recreation next year. Holy mackerel, even the Inter-Church League split into two divisions of men's and mixed and had a good year with 13 teams.

Perhaps the decline of the fastball league will be a good thing. It's not dead yet and maybe the league will resurface next year with more teams and less competitiveness. The diamond time, I'm sure, would be better put to use by teams enjoying themselves.

This is also a lesson for the Milton Hockey League. The Lou's Place decision must have come as a shock to most observers of the MHL. Should a new entry be admitted and do poorly (a la Lowville of the MFL two years ago), will the league restructure itself to permit six teams of relatively equal value or go with five (or less) teams?

A Sunday night at Milton Sports Centre is still a thing to behold. The stands are filled with cheering and jeering fans. The players play hard to win. The hockey is entertaining. Familiarity of fans with players provides for strong fan involvement. It's still the best buy in town for under a buck and fans flock to the arena early to get a parking spot and a good seat under one of the heaters which works.

The MHL has been kept together by the strong efforts of people such as Bruce Hood, Sue Stoddart, John McLean and Murray Hood. Their efforts are being taxed to the limit and soon their families will want them back for Sunday nights.

As much as the players, they are the reason the league has prospered over the past few years. But something like one team disbanding can throw a well-balanced league into a quick frenzy.

Obviously, the league will need interested people to serve on the executive in coming years. They're going to need the help. Without a strong executive, any league can fall into disarray (witness the MFL).

Speaking of the Milton Hockey League, the early line is that the High Flyers, with a new sponsor, will be allowed to enter the league this year. The team seems to be interested in joining and the league would dearly love to go with six teams. That decision was made last night (Tuesday) too late for our deadline at the paper.

In the final pre-season games, B.W. Haggart edged Charles-Knight 4-3; still un-renamed John Burns Stable and Straight Line Fence played to a 3-3 tie; and Remax Realty beat High Flyers 5-1.

The league officially gets underway Sunday with three games on tap beginning at 7 p.m. at Milton Sports Centre. In the opener, Remax plays Haggart. At 8:15 p.m., Charles-Knight battles Straight Line while in the finale Burns either has a practice or plays High Flyers.

Salute to Summer Sports, a special issue featuring winners and articles with all sports of the summer, will be published Wednesday Oct. 26 in The Champion. It'll be a special tabloid insert to the regular paper. So watch for it. All team pictures taken on the various championship days will be printed in the issue.

Here are the results of the shoot-out at Milton Fall Fair organized by members of McCuaig Ins. Comets midget reps. The special booth allowed hockey players to have their shots timed with hockey sticks awarded to the top shooters.

The top player nine years and younger was Trevor Brandt at 53 km/h (33 mph). In the 10-13 yr. group, Jon Spagnuolo was tops at 59 km/h (37 mph). The top 14 years and older player was Sean Davidson at 78 km/h (49 mph). They can pick up their hockey sticks from coach Bob Davidson (878-1432).

Just a note to all managers of rep hockey teams. This year, the space for minor hockey will remain about the same but we're going to incorporate more pictures and a schedule listing all rep, tier two, girls and house league hockey games.

As a result, the write-ups will need to be smaller for each team. As a rule, one hand-written regular page will probably be more than enough.

If a team cannot appoint a person to write up the games, if it's possible can you either drop off game sheets (they'll be immediately returned) or call me at the office (878-2341) on Monday from noon until midnight. I want every team covered as well as possible. Thanks.