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THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

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Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Peter Sturgeon's Pro Bound Program, which attracts talented young players such as those pictured here, has had some major successes since its inception eight years ago.

He has hand in many successes

By **STEVE LeBLANC**
The Champion

Peter Sturgeon no doubt kept close tabs on last week's World Under-17 Hockey Challenge in Cornerbrook, Newfoundland.

Why? Because Ontario's team includes no less than four players — Paul Ballantine, Nathan Harington, Chris Newbury and Bobby Turner — who the former NHLer turned instructor had a role in developing.

It marks another chapter in the ongoing success story that is Sturgeon's Pro Bound Program, which has operated out of Milton Memorial Arena for the past eight years.

Designed as an in-depth training ground for those whose skill and desire separate them from the pack, it began with a simple phone call from the father of Los Angeles

Kings' goaltender Jamie Storr.

"I was retired, but still had a great love for the game," recalled Sturgeon, who has never advertised for Pro Bound, and recruits players into the program rather than just accepting applicants. "Jim Storr had been looking to get his boys some extra development and asked if I could help."

Sensing a new opportunity — in which he could stay involved in hockey and aid promising prospects — the ex IceDogs skipper quickly secured local ice time and began developing contacts.

It wasn't long before the top players from Milton and across the Greater Toronto Area were champing at the bit to sign up.

Sturgeon stresses that the program has

always been about assisting and developing players — who already have a foundation but may just need some extra guidance in order to get to that next level.

Pro Bound has certainly succeeded, with numerous graduates now competing in Tier 2 Junior A, the OHL and the NCAA.

Among them are homegrown defenceman John Nadalin, who said the program helped give him the mental toughness needed to make an impact on the Merchants' blueline.

Frank Fazio of the AAA Hurricanes' major bantams added, "My skating and shot improved through the program, but it was focus on the one-on-one battles that was really beneficial. Pro Bound rates right up there with any hockey school around."

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G'town game but struggling with Merchants

By **STEVE LeBLANC**

The Champion

Georgetown has made major advances up the tier two junior hockey ladder as of late but they don't appear ready to knock off the top rung tenants just yet.

That point was illustrated Tuesday night at Memorial Arena, where in front of roughly 700 fans the Merchants claimed a 6-1 decision in game one of the West Conference semifinals.

The defending provincial champs had fewer quality scoring chances but capitalized on most of them — going 2-for-2 with the man advantage and tossing in a shorthanded tally for good measure.

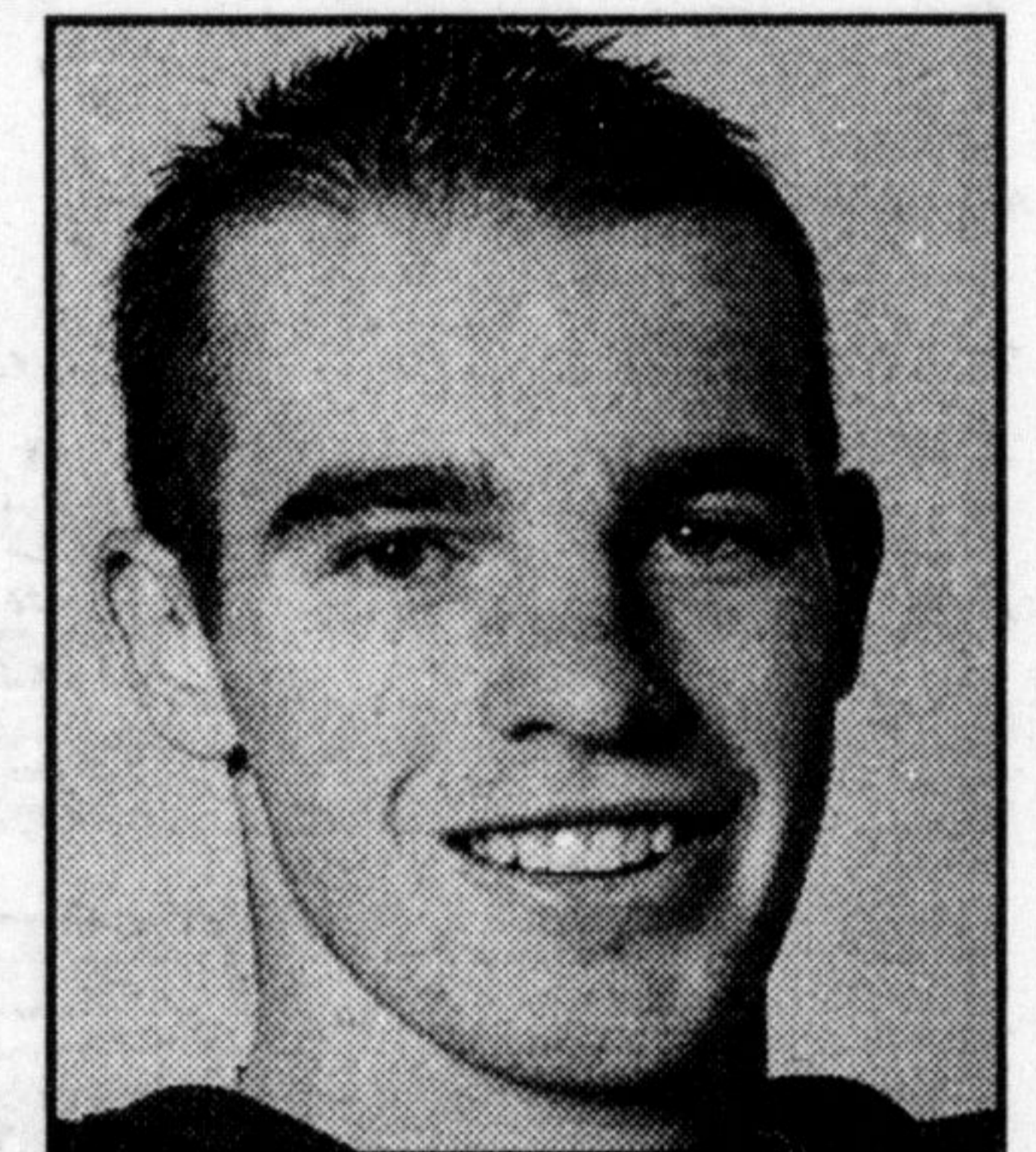
This despite missing leading scoring and powerplay point man Ed McGrane, who was ill and unavailable for series opening play.

The Raiders meanwhile, showed little in the way of finishing power and their goal-tending paled in comparison to that of Milton.

Crafty Jeremy Wenzel — whose postseason goals-against average (0.50) is so low it flies undetected beneath most radar systems — continued to shine with another sublime effort while counterpart Jeff Hladysh simply wasn't able to make the big saves.

"He (Wenzel) is playing great right now and we've got a lot of depth that's showing through," remarked captain Kevin O'Flaherty. "Ed (McGrane) puts up big numbers alright, but there are many other guys that can contribute as well."

Over in the visitors' dressing room area, Georgetown bench boss Jay Anderson suggested the outcome had less to do with his opponents' balanced attack



Kevin O'Flaherty

and more to do with one particularly goal that was courtesy of a blueline blunder.

He was referring to a mis-played breakout attempt late in the second period by defenceman Billy Fetherston, who foolishly tried to clear the zone with his skate and instead coughed up a breakaway goal to Geoff Schomogyi.

Before this, the Raiders were only down 2-1 and their second line was starting to heat things up with plenty of zip and creativity.

Said Anderson, "One bad bounce and the complexion of the game completely changes. Up until then was I looking at Milton and thinking what an extraordinary team they are? Not at all."

Surprisingly enough, the

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