

# Wheelihan gets game-winner as Merchants back on track

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his defensive cohorts are capable of more than they've shown through most of the season.

"During the whole downward spiral we had a lot of meetings and talked about concentrating more on our own end," said the native Miltonian. "It was just a matter of time before things got better. Hopefully, we're back on track now."

The Merchants were a little sharper on puck possession in their latest win — which upped their record to 15-4-0-3 and kept them within two points of top seated Georgetown — and enjoyed superb penalty killing from captain Chad Blundy and James Coleman.

Goalie Joel Cameron also delivered a rock solid performance for his second straight win. Another bright spot was the return of gritty winger Mark Beisel. However, he did put a bit of damper on the festivities by foolishly charging the opposing bench late in the third

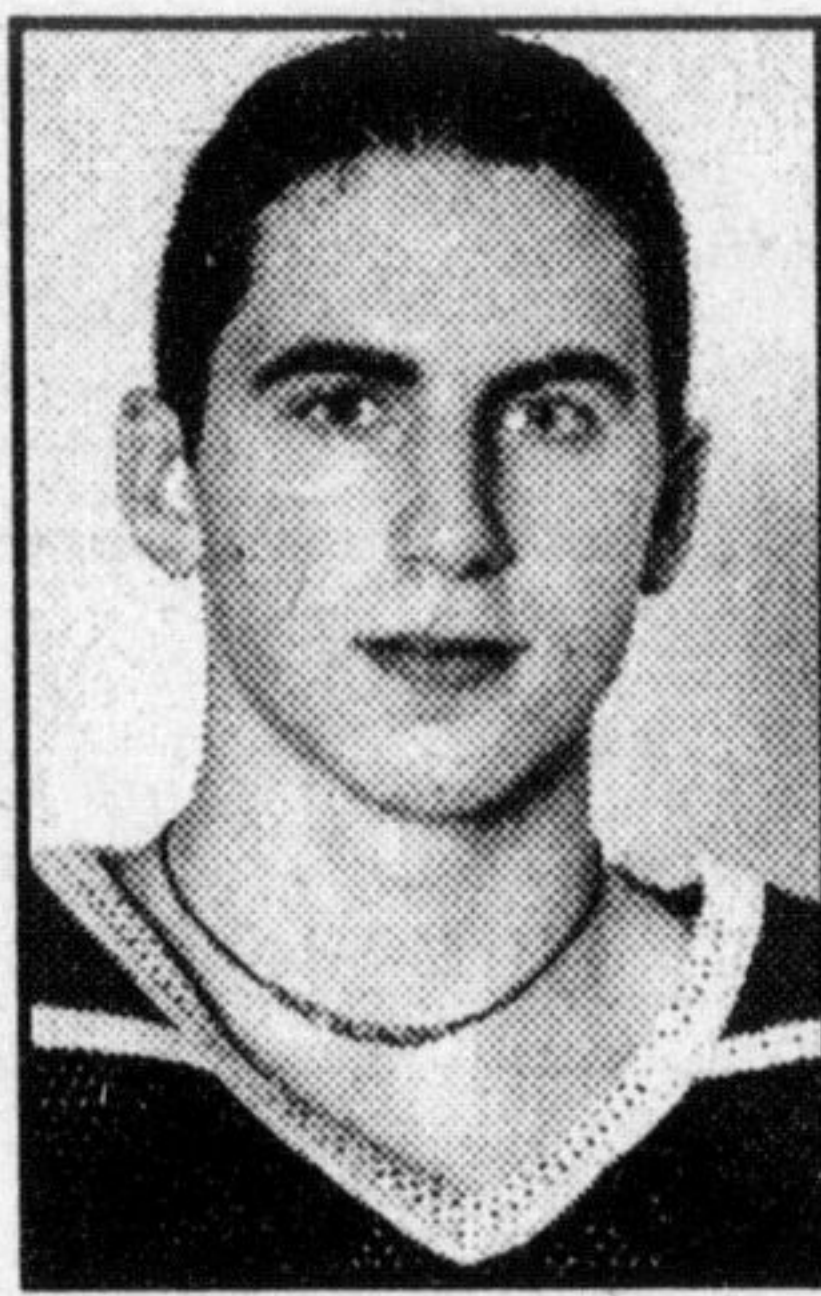
and drawing an ejection.

Mike Wheelihan provided the heroics on the night by batting in a cross-ice pass for the game winner 6:06 into the middle stanza. It was his first goal in four games and 10th of the season.

Moments later Hamilton goalie Paul Schonfelder took a rising slapshot under his shoulder pad and sustained a deep bruise — leaving the balance of the evening's work for tandem partner Derek Paton.

Milton's insurance marker came in the dying moments of the second, when Elliot Altberg connected in close just a split second after a Hamilton penalty had expired.

The Kilty Bees grabbed an early lead midway through the opening



Mike Wheelihan

frame — but held it for a mere 90 seconds. Merchant sniper Ian Malcolm evened the count with his 19th season tally, managed on a terrific move inside and upstairs wrister past Schonfelder.

Phil Barski drew assists on goals two and three to boost his team leading points total to 39.

Milton has two games in hand on Georgetown and will look to reclaim first place with their busy schedule this week, which started last night in Hamilton.

**Merchant notes:** Rookie Richard Peverley has been looking better in recent weeks and picked up another assist Friday. His point total now stands at 18 ... Milton has killed off 86 per cent of its penalties so far this season, but capitalized on a disappointing 31 per cent of its powerplay chances ... The Merchants begin a two-game home stand tomorrow evening against Bramalea. Friday they host Bramalea, before closing out the week in Hamilton Saturday.

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Derby Brown

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Back Row: Whonda, Lisa, Jo-Ann, Jessica, Gerri, Brenda Miller. Front: Angela, Kelly.

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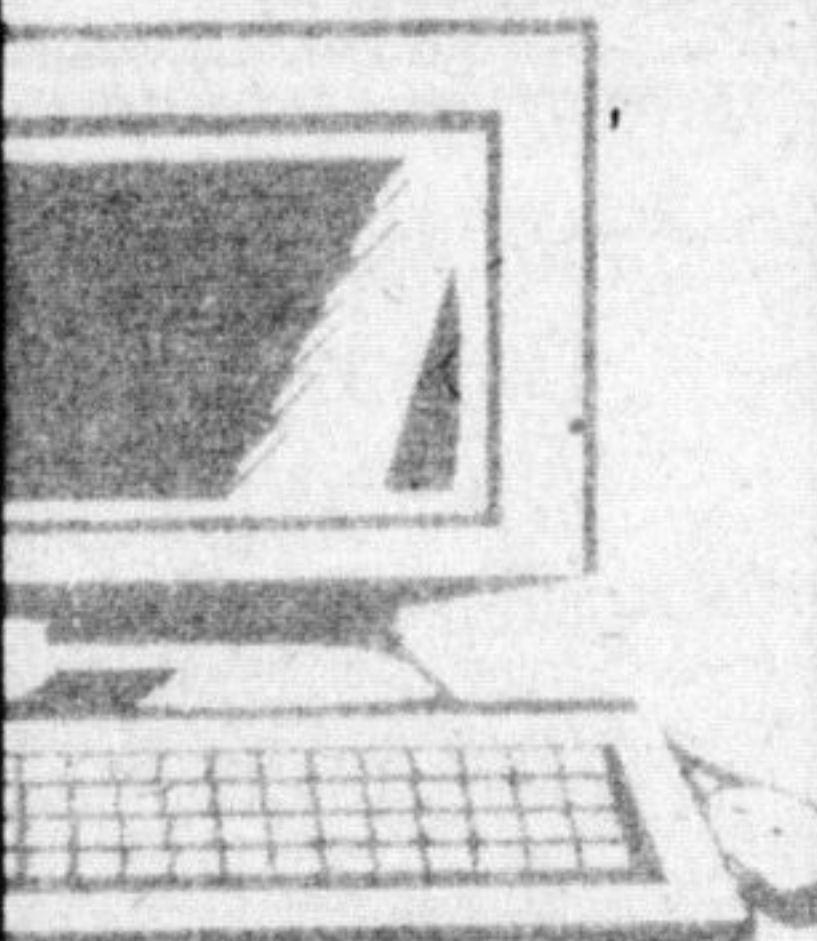
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