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THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

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Milton pair lead way for the Raiders

By **STEVE LeBLANC***The Champion*

The Georgetown Raiders' championship drive holds special significance for a couple of Miltonians.

However, Jeff Seeds and Adam Bertoli's appreciation for this current playoff run couldn't be any different.

Two years ago Seeds was a member of the Merchants squad that went all the way to the Royal Bank Cup. The team captured a handful of titles that season, although his role in each victory was small — to say the least.

Playing bigger role

But times have changed, and now Seeds — deemed expendable and traded to Georgetown midway through last season, in a move that helped rekindle the rivalry between North Halton's two factions — is a prime time player leading the Raiders to their best post-season showing since joining the junior ranks.

He sits second on the team in scoring, with six goals and 13 assists in 16 games, and is one of their most well-rounded performers.

"This (Georgetown playoff run) means much more to me," said the all-purpose winger, who's had a number of big offensive outputs through post-season play including a two-assist effort in the Raiders' 3-1 win over Burlington in game seven of the West Conference semifinals last Tuesday.

"It feels great to be one of the guys counted on and to have really contributed this season."

Raider co-skipper Arnie Parcels — who coached Seeds to an OMHA midget championship in 1997 — said his current playoff prowess is no surprise, that he's the same player he's always been but just now having the chance to prove to at the Jr. A level.

"Jeff's a rat, and the bigger the game the bigger he plays," said Parcels.

Unlike Seeds, Adam Bertoli has never enjoyed any previous playoff success at junior.

In fact while Seeds was winning titles with the Merchants, Bertoli had already walked away from junior hockey altogether — having become so frustrated with the Raiders' basement dwelling status and lack of direction that he simply up and left the club.

But after more than a year's hiatus he was lured back, and since then has been part of the most improved team in the league — perhaps all of Ontario.

"It's (Raider resurgence) unreal," Bertoli remarked. "At times, it's still hard to believe."

To some, so is his dramatic development into an impact player over the past several months. Struggling to find his way since a failed attempt at the OHL, Bertoli was brought back to Georgetown as the 12th and final forward but just a year-and-a-half later is now one of their top four defencemen.

And according to many, he's become their steadiest blueliner when it comes to breakout passes and creating chances for the more offensively gifted players.

"Adam's really worked hard and has been showing a lot of leadership qualities. He rarely makes a mental error and he reads the ice so well," said Parcels.

Added Bertoli, "I'm not the kind of player who's going to go coast-to-coast or beat guys with my speed. I have to use my head more. I'm pretty happy with my play lately. I think I'm making some good passes and smart decisions out there."

And while Georgetown now finds itself trailing Brampton 2-0 in the division finals, the club's Milton connection isn't pushing the panic button just yet.

"We've got a lot of character on this team," said Seeds.

"I wouldn't count us out, even if we go down 3-0."

Georgetown will try to avoid that tomorrow night when they host game three at Alcott Arena. Game time is 7:30 p.m.

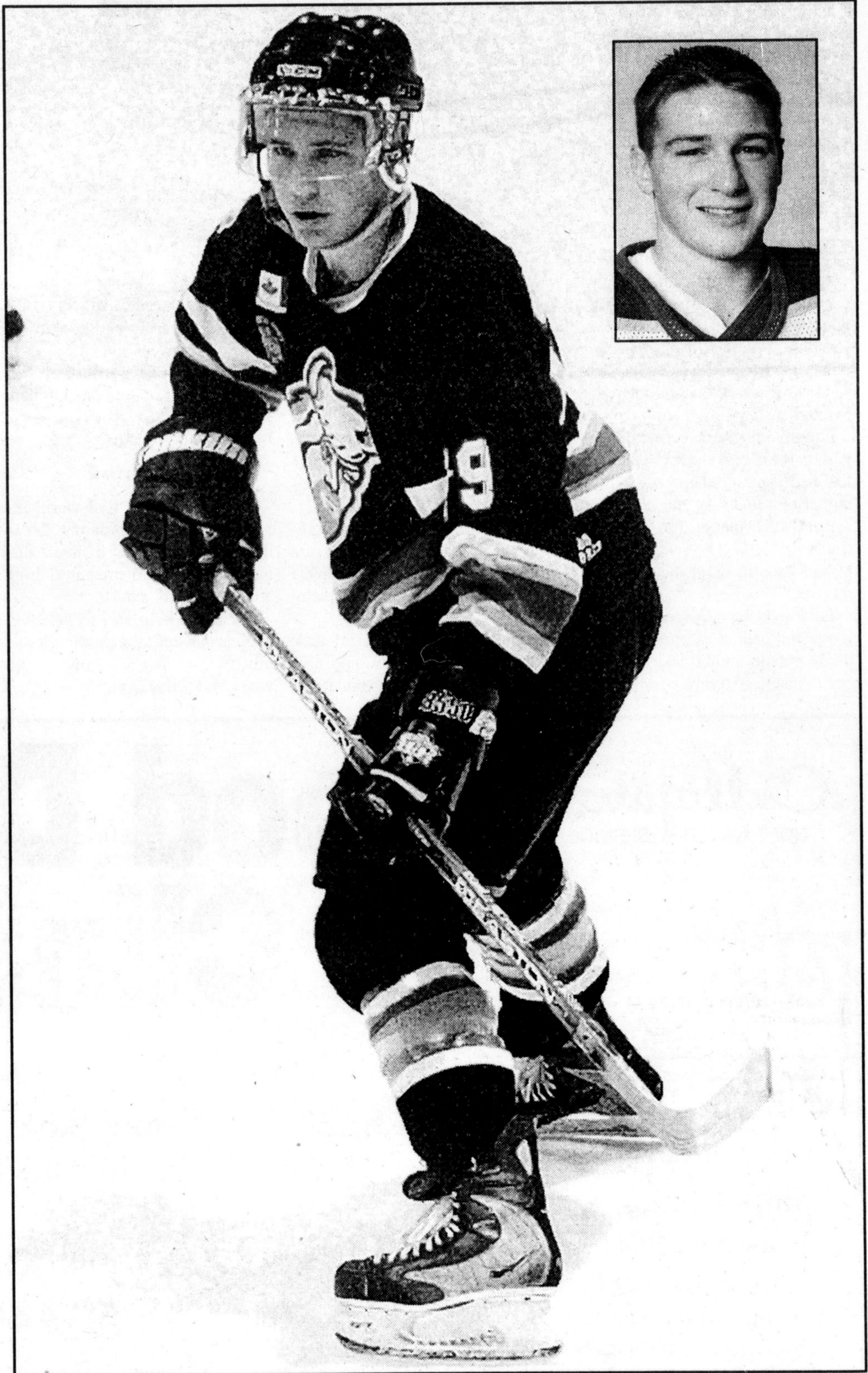


Photo by HERB GARBUTT

Miltonians Adam Bertoli and (inset) Jeff Seeds are playing pivotal roles in the Georgetown Raiders' finest playoff showing ever.

Sherratt beaten in finals

Watch that last step up the regional boys basketball pecking order — it's a doozy.

The Sam Sherratt Shamrocks learned that the hard way, falling to Burlington's Rolling Meadows 53-28 in the finals at Oakville's T.A. Blakelock High Thursday.

Milton's hoopsters gave a respectable effort for much of the evening. However, a shaky start and significant size disadvantage conspired to end their title hopes.

Jon Jeysman, Sherratt's top marksman, led with eight points while chipping in six was Dan Krebs. Steve Ellison and Steve Hicks added a handful of points each.

The Shamrocks finished the year with a record of 11-2.

They upstaged Georgetown's Centennial for the North Halton crown and then outdistanced Burlington's Brant Hills 44-36 in the regional semifinals last Tuesday.

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