



SPORTS

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

FRIDAY OCTOBER 13, 2000

- Quality, Reliable Late Model Vehicles
- Low Everyday Prices!
- Short Term Leasing
- Free Pick-up & Delivery
- No Charge for Additional Drivers

842-8892

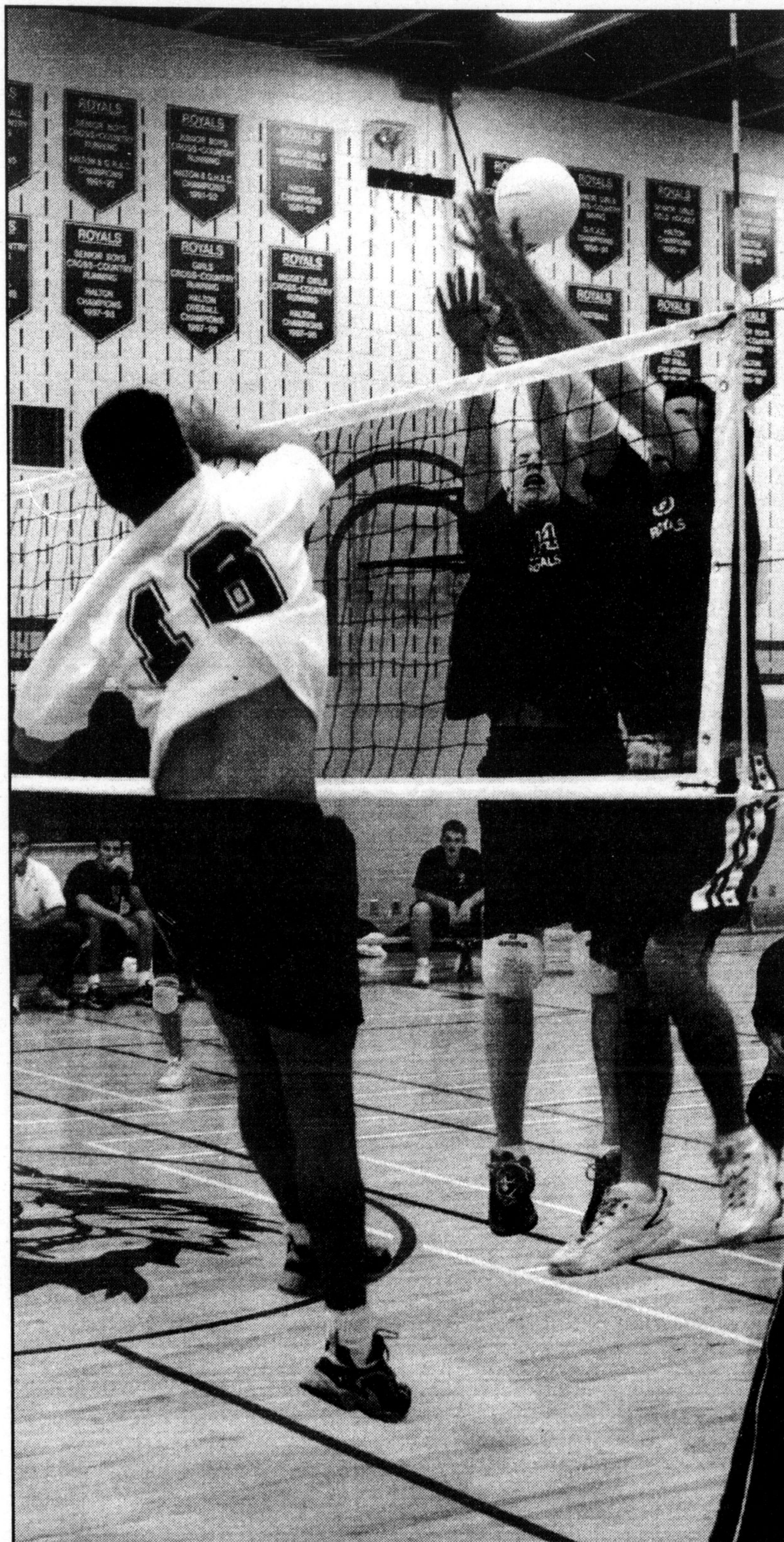


Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Hands up

A St. Thomas Aquinas player spikes the ball past two Bishop Reding defenders during game one of senior boys volleyball play at BR last Thursday. The Royals lost in straight games, 25-13 and 25-12.

Merchants climb into West Conference lead

By STEVE LeBLANC
The Champion

The Milton Merchants gave their opposition little to be thankful for this past holiday weekend.

Instead of a bountiful harvest or goodwill, the local juniors came bearing a gritty attack and deep desire to take over top spot in the West Conference.

And when it was all said and done, they met that goal with back-to-back victories over Buffalo and Georgetown.

Actually, Milton enjoyed a little assistance in climbing the division ranks before the weekend began — with an Ontario Hockey Association decision regarding their college weekend game against Wexford.

The Merchants had lodged a formal protest to the OHA claiming Wexford had used ineligible players — who'd not been released from their previous junior clubs — during the contest.

Officials have ruled in favour of the allegation, so both the win and two points that go with it will be awarded to Milton.

This put the team within striking distance of first place heading into action against top-seated Buffalo Friday.

The Lightning are vastly improved over last year and the hosts didn't exactly perform to their potential — a combination that could have easily spelled disaster.

The puck stops here

But Joel Cameron donned the role of spoiler, delivering what was arguably his finest goaltending effort as a Merchant.

Overall, he stopped 41 of 43 — guiding Milton to a 6-2 triumph — and made a dynamite glove save on what most in attendance assumed was a sure goal in the second period.

"I don't think I've ever seen Joel play better since he's been a Merchant," remarked director of hockey operations Nick Slawson, whose team now sits atop the conference with a record of 8-1.

Cameron's crafty cage work and a fairly potent powerplay allowed the locals to shake off a rusty start and battle back for the win.

Captain John Nadalin and Andy Rozak led with three-assist nights while six different Merchants dented the twine.

Goal scorers were Dan Bognar, Dan DeLong, Flavio Fagionni, Frank Fazio, Ian LaBrash and Scott Malcolm.

Up from Erin's Jr. C squad were defenceman Bryan Gent and Darren Halls, who continued to aid a depleted blueline unit.

The following night in Georgetown, Milton's short-staffed lineup — which included just four rearguards and 10 forwards, with veterans DeLong and Elliot Altberg nursing minor injuries — came out awfully flat and by the midway mark of the opening frame were down 3-0.

However, Fagionni helped turn the tables with back-to-back unassisted markers before first intermission.

Remarkable rally

From there, Cameron's solid netminding and an impressive team effort — especially from some of the rookies — allowed the visitors to complete the rally and prevail 5-3.

Rozak provided the heroics, sinking the game-winner with just 33 seconds remaining and then adding an empty net insurance tally with six seconds left on the clock.

"It felt really good (to score first game winner as a Merchant)," said the veteran junior.

"We've got a lot of new guys from other teams but things are really starting to gel for this team."

Knotting things up at 10:34 of the third was veteran winger James Coleman, who has now surpassed last year's goal total of four.

He also assisted on the go-ahead goal — which pushed Rozak into a five-way tie for team scoring lead with Coleman, DeLong, Fagionni and Vince Laise.

All five have lit the lamp a handful of times.

Merchant notes: Defenceman Adam Sturgeon is having some problems with the OHL Sudbury Wolves and could possibly return to the Merchants ... Andy Rozak has collected nine points in his last four games to take over top spot in the team's points race ... Milton traveled to Brampton last night. They host Hamilton tonight and finish out the weekend at Mississauga's Iceland Arena Sunday at 7:30 p.m.

Sign up now for ski racing

The Milton Heights racing club, which skis out of Glen Eden, is gearing up for another season.

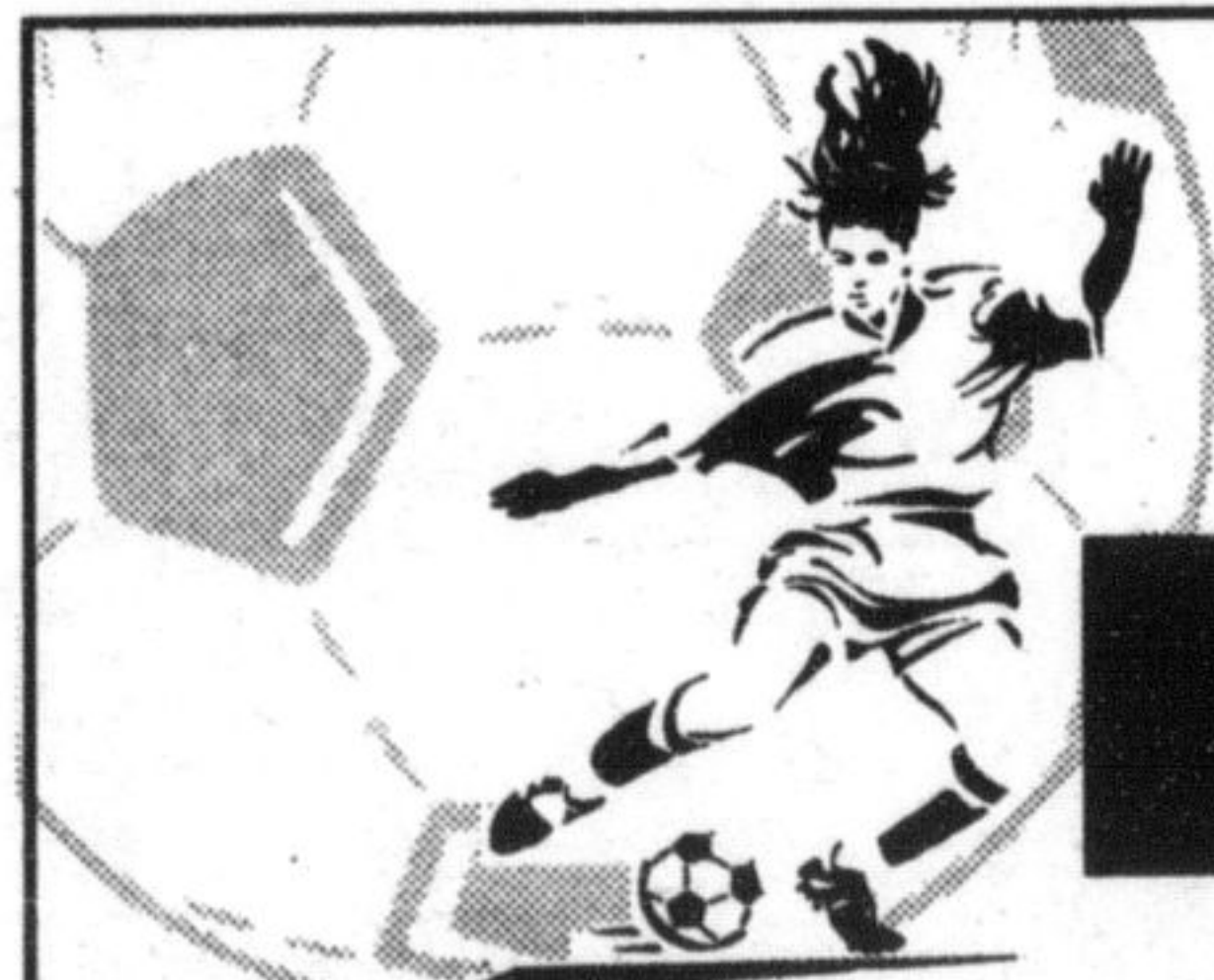
The regular travel leagues are back this year, including ...

- Nancy Green/Mackenzie Leagues (6 to 13 years);
- Hershey Alpine League (14 to 19 year);
- Masters adult ski racing (20 years to 80+ yrs.);
- Snowboard racing (7 to 19 years)

As a special addition this coming season, the club will be offering both adult and youth house league racing (non-traveling teams) for recreational purposes.

For further details please contact Lin Lesson by phone at 336-5382 or e-mail inquiries to Stephenleeson@hotmail.com.

Also, check out the website for more information at www.miltonheights.com.



Milton Youth Soccer Club

Tryouts for Rep 2001 Summer Soccer Season

New Board members are always welcome!

Boys Under 10 - Oct 15th & Oct 22nd - 11:30am to 1pm @ Brian Best Field: **Ralph Williams: 878-1898**
 Boys Under 13 - Oct 15th & Oct 22nd - 3pm to 4:30pm @ Brian Best Field: **Andrew Bowman: 876-0066**
 Girls Under 14 - Oct 7th & Oct 14th - 10am to 11:30am @ Brian Best Field: **David Hamon: 878-8773**
 Girls Under 17 - Oct 15th & Oct 22nd - 1pm to 3pm @ Brian Best Field: **Louie DiPalma: 876-1363**

Annual General Meeting
 Wednesday October 18th, 7pm, Police Station, Childs Dr. **All Welcome!**