



SPORTS

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

TUESDAY APRIL 3, 2001



At rest and at play

A Dreamcar Garage TV player (above) tries to split the defense of Brian's Auto Repair during atom championship play while (at left) Timbit White's Jack Goncz, 5, awaits his turn during the beginners' game at Saturday's Milton Minor Hockey House League Championship Day at Memorial Arena. For another photo and full results of the house league season finale, see page 19.

Photos by
GRAHAM PAINE

Losing weekend puts Jr. Merchants on the brink of elimination

By **STEVE LeBLANC**
The Champion

The Merchants' greatest ally heading into battle last night was a good short term memory.

Set to host the offensively potent Couchiching Terriers, Milton faced elimination in semifinal play — with a three-games-to-two series deficit.

Just 15 days earlier the local juniors were in a similar predicament, yet overcame it to topple the then defending league champion Brampton Capitals.

So the plan was fairly straightforward — remember what it took to prevail last time and use that to fashion a comeback sequel.

"What it comes down to is having the same will against these guys that we did against Brampton," stressed skipper Glenn Walsh. "We've got to come in emotionally and mentally prepared."



Not enough finish

Milton delivered its two highest shot counts of the playoffs over the weekend but weren't rewarded on the scoreboard — losing 4-3 Friday at home and 4-1 Sunday afternoon at the Rama MASK.

The Merchants held early leads in both contests until second-period letdowns turned the tide.

Up north Sunday, Walsh's charges gave up a couple of powerplay goals — the first of which was only awarded upon review — and another just after a penalty had expired.

Remarked Milton's bench boss, "You can't make mistakes against these guys, their powerplay's just too dangerous."

Captain John Nadalin made the lone deposit with a blueline blast midway through the opening frame.

One period later his list of aches and pains was added to with a nasty slash across the forearm by leading scorer Jason Pinizzotto.

A five-minute man-advantage was assessed to the visitors — who were repeatedly turned back by the fundamentally sound Terriers.

Pinizzotto assisted on his club's final

three goals, including the winner by Jaro Wojcicki.

Couchiching's other marksmen were Daryl Bat, Beau Moyer and captain David Wrigley.

Two nights earlier at Memorial Arena, Milton was stuck in neutral through much of the second half. A 2-0 advantage was subsequently surrendered — as was a two-games-to-one series lead.

Powerplay ailing

A punchless powerplay and rash of sloppy breakout passes stymied the hosts from the midway mark on.

Shane Remenda netted his second of the series and seventh of the playoffs early in the third to draw within one of Couchiching. Kevin Arruda — celebrating his 17th birthday — scored before the game was two minutes old and later set-up scoring leader Andy Rozak.

Bat tallied twice for the Terriers. Singles went to Wrigley and Sean Burke.

Both team's scored shorthanded goals in game four — within a five-minute span during second-period play.

Joel Cameron weathered a few storms to keep things close in both contests — the biggest of which came in game five, when he turned aside the Terrier's first 15 shots.

Should Milton have staved off elimination last night, a seventh and deciding game will be played tonight at the Rama MASK. Game time would be 7:30 p.m.

Waiting in the wings are the Thornhill Rattlers, who knocked off Trenton in five games to reach the Provincial Jr. A League finals.

Merchant notes: Andy Rozak's playoff point total stood at 40 going into action last night ... Captain John Nadalin and rookie sensation Kevin Arruda were tied for second with 27 points apiece ... Adam Sturgeon fought for the second time in as many trips to the Rama MASK Sunday ... As of last night, the Merchants were 0-for-12 on the powerplay, going back to the first period of game three ... In Northern League play, Rayside Balfour and Sault Ste. Marie are tied one game a piece in their championship series.

TOYOTA

WE ARE OPEN!!!

Come Join Us For Exceptional Savings During

RED TAG SALE DAYS

400 STEELES AVE.
905-875-1700

 **MILTON TOYOTA**
SEE OUR AD ON THE BACK PAGE

www.miltontoyota.com
(next to Gorrud's Auto Group)