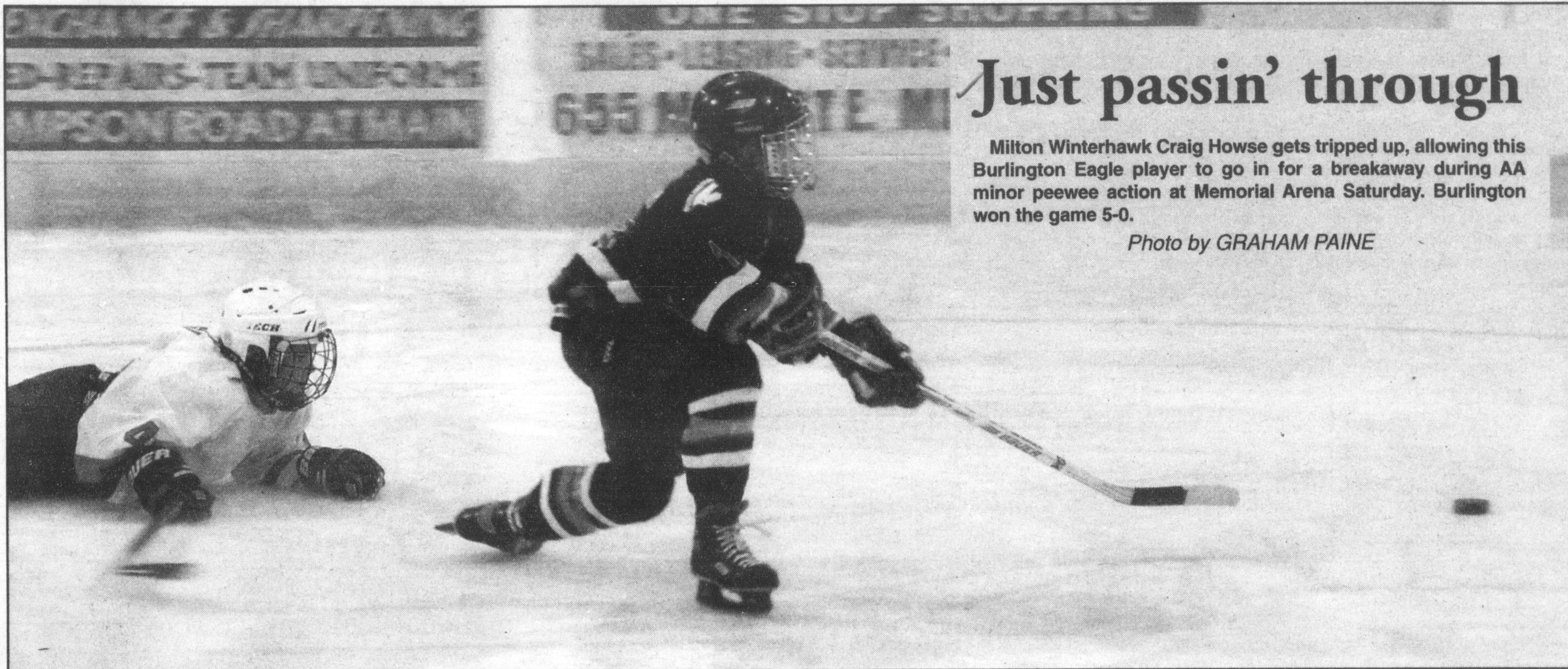




SPORTS

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

TUESDAY OCTOBER 30, 2001



Just passin' through

Milton Winterhawk Craig Howse gets tripped up, allowing this Burlington Eagle player to go in for a breakaway during AA minor peewee action at Memorial Arena Saturday. Burlington won the game 5-0.

Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Merchants' comeback win caps weekend split

By **STEVE LeBLANC**
The Champion

A Merchant win in itself is cause for serious celebration these days.

But Saturday night the local juniors offered its frustrated fans a sense of optimism not so much as a result of victory — but more so in the way it was delivered.

Milton battled from behind for the first time all season — scoring four unanswered goals on the way to shading the host Georgetown Raiders 5-4.

The win — another step toward re-acquiring a playoff spot — featured other encouraging elements, including a rock solid performance by Sean Samuel.

The Merchants netminder held opposing snipers scoreless for almost two-and-a-half periods and stopped all eight shots in the middle stanza to give his teammates the opportunity to rally.

Also, Milton killed off Rick Janco's high sticking major at crunch time and were beaten just once on eight shorthanded stints.

Michel Bond provided the heroics with a tipped shot in low midway through the final frame. He then set up the insurance marker by freshman winger Dan Carcillo.

Earlier in the night, the visiting defense were the impact players with the lion's share of penalties and goals by a returning Chris Krieg as well as fellow blue-liners Janco and Shawn Mole.

Each team was missing one of its top defenceman. Milton was without Vince Guiducci — who's out for two weeks with back problems — while Georgetown's Billy Featherston was sitting out with a four-game suspension.

At home Friday, Milton gave perhaps its most lethargic showing this year and were humbled by steadily-improving Oakville 7-1.

The score was actually flattering for the struggling squad — who could have easily lost by double-digits if not for the red-hot glove hand of Samuel.

Samuel kept his club within striking distance until the third period with nearly two dozen saves.

Dan Bognar made the lone deposit on the night, jamming in Rich Meloche's doorstep leftovers late in the first period.

The 6-9 Merchants scored one power-play goal in each of this past weekend's games to offer a glimmer of hope for this particularly punchless department of their game.

The weekend split also saw the addition of three new faces to the local lineup including rookie defenceman Justin Nattress, all-purpose veteran Jacob Vanderbreggen and young left winger Warren Wheeler — who comes over from Marty Williamson's Aurora Tigers.

The Oakville native had been caught in a number's game in Aurora and should now enjoy more ice time with a Merchant team that is finally back up to full strength.

The next step will be getting in a few practices to figure out where all the pieces fit.

Milton hosts Bramalea tonight and closes out a two-game home stand against Mississauga Friday. Both games start at 8 p.m.

Merchant notes: Former Merchant

team president Gregg Carrigan recently joined Williamson in Aurora ... Ex-Merchant Matt Bannan has been traded from St. Michaels to Sarnia ... Four Milton players are averaging a point a game. Bond and Jason Harshaw share the scoring lead with 17 points apiece. Bognar and Meloche each have 16.



Sr. 'Stangs earn home field with forfeit win

Milton District's senior football team enjoyed a clear path toward securing home field advantage for the opening round of playoffs.

While clearly the favourite for regular season-ending play Thursday, MD wound up not being challenged at all — as the Georgetown Rebels forfeited the contest.

"They (Georgetown) had lost some real blowouts and were probably having trouble fielding a team," suggested head coach Keith Pearce.

The default win squared the Mustangs' 2001 record at 3-3. They'll

now host Oakville's White Oaks Wildcats Friday afternoon in the division two quarterfinals. Game time is 2 p.m.

MD could have top rusher Greg Van Es back in the lineup Friday. He saw spot duty in an exhibition game against Belleville's Centennial Chargers last week and — if able to compete — will add some much-needed punch to what's been a rather enigmatic offensive unit.

Meanwhile, MD's juniors begin tier two playoff action at home Thursday against White Oaks. The junior contest will also start at 2 p.m.



Milton Vs Mississauga
Catch all the Action & Excitement

Friday, November 2nd
at 8:00 pm, Memorial Arena
(Thompson Rd.)



This week's GRAND PRIZE: Hockey Stick autographed by the Merchants!

TICKET PRICES

Adults.....\$7.00
Seniors/Students ...\$5.00
Children 12 & Under ..\$3.00