

Bertoli's Titans are riding high — again

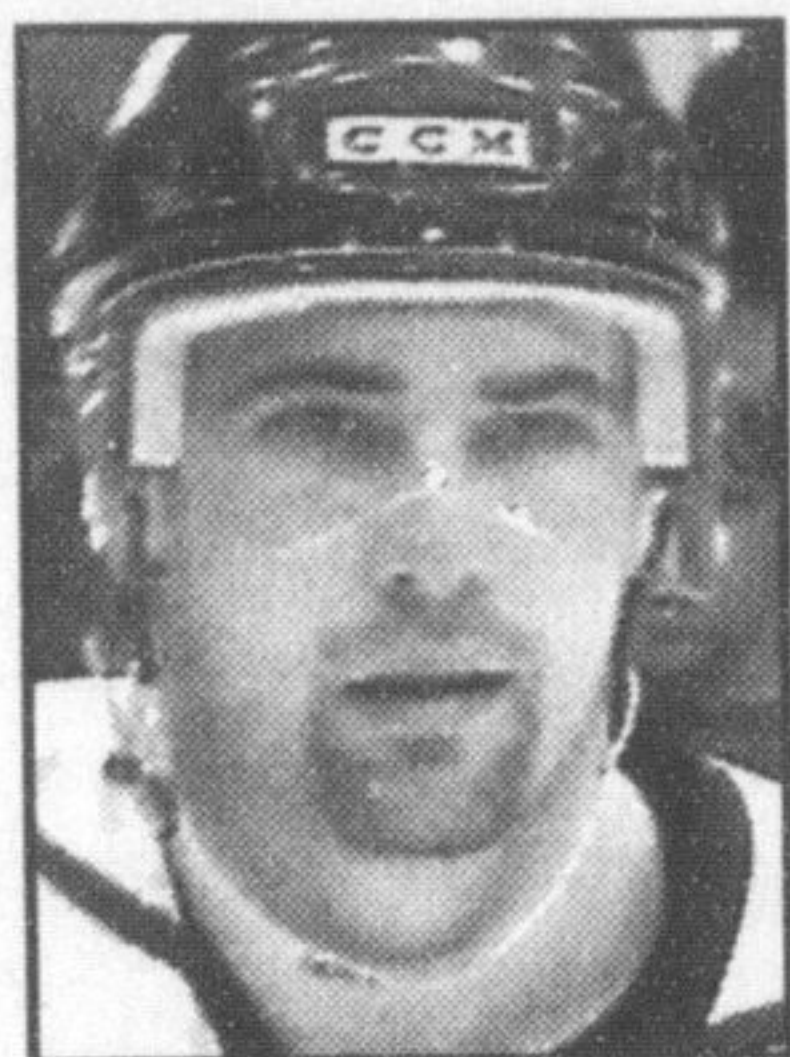
Scott Bertoli's Trenton Titans spent most of last season with a bird's eye view of the East Coast Hockey League.

And while not quite atop the pecking order these days, the third-year franchise certainly doesn't have to look up at too many clubs.

Louisiana is the only team in that department — as Bertoli's Titans sit second overall and first in the ECHL's Northern Conference with a record of 18-8-5.

A 2-1 weekend — with wins over Atlantic City (4-1) and Reading (3-1) — strengthened their hold on top spot in the north. Bertoli assisted on goal number one of the former game and did likewise in Sunday's 4-2 defeat to Richmond.

Overall, Milton's 24-year-old left winger — who earlier this year earned tryouts with both the NHL's Washington Capitals and AHL's Portland Pirates — sits with 10



Scott Bertoli

goals and 13 assists.

He's currently on pace to break his goals and total points for 2000/01 — 18 and 56 respectively — and could be headed for another trip to the league finals this coming spring.

Meanwhile, Trenton is now being aided by another former Merchant.

A recent graduate of Notre Dame University, Matt Van Arkel — Milton's first player to break the 50-goal plateau — joined the team earlier this month.

The highly gifted but often enigmatic right winger has one assist in five games so far.

Spartans win tourney

Another pre-holiday invitational meet, another first-place finish for the wrestling Spartans.

Within the friendly confines of their own sports complex Wednesday, E.C. Drury grapplers retained their own tournament title by out-pointing Brampton Centennial 104-74.

The hosts won a handful of divisions and 13 medals en route to their overall victory.

Lifting his season win total to 24, Ben Beech turned back all challengers in the 61-kilogram class for his third gold of the year. The sophomore has been beaten just three times so far.

Matching that gold-medal mark now are four other wrestlers including Adam Baxter, Chris Guard, Matt Knock and Jesse Ronan.

Baxter defeated 67.5 kg. rival Mike Hall of Georgetown 5-1 in one of two Drury/Georgetown finals to improve to

23-2 on the year. Guard won the other regional clash by blanking James Partidge 5-0 — which served as pay-back for a loss two weeks ago in Georgetown.

Also flawless in gold-medal competition, Ronan toppled Hagersville's Josh Staats 4-0 and now sits at 20-4. Meanwhile, Knock faced stiff opposition from Hagersville's Matt Miller — a top-six provincial finisher last season — but came through in fierce fashion.

Collecting their fourth medals of the year with second-place efforts were Matt Baxter and Tyler Saliba while also striking silver were Colin Burnham and Rob Petherick.

Bronze medals went to freshman Gary Ferrier — who now has three open-class medals in his young but extremely promising high school career — as well as Jeff Roberge, Adam Smith and Kevin Tyre.

'AA' midgets nip Brampton

Could Milton's AA midgets actually win Tri County?

That notion was utterly ridiculous just last season, but is gradually gaining merit — and continued to do so with a come-from-behind triumph over top-seated Brampton Sunday at Memorial Arena.

Persevering through a mid-evening slugfest and serious hand injury to defenceman James MacIntosh, Arnie Parcels' Milton Toyota Winterhawks gutted out their second victory inside a week against the league-leading Battalion.

The 3-2 decision was capped with a third-period powerplay marker by Paul Szafer. Erasing one-goal deficits earlier on were MacIntosh and Mike Winiarz.

Daryl Tielemans assisted on both efforts, while turning back nearly two dozen shots for the win was Jason Strong. Single helpers went to Winiarz, Derek Blanchard and Scott McLaughlin.

Besides MacIntosh — who'll now be sidelined until the playoffs — the local midgets lost three other players to two-game suspensions.

As a result, they were severely short-staffed for home-ice play against the fiery Oakville Rangers Monday. Though able to match their guests in terms of scoring chances, the 'Hawks enjoyed no finish on the night and were blanked 3-0.

Kyle Goertz' 26-save effort kept the hometown boys within striking distance.

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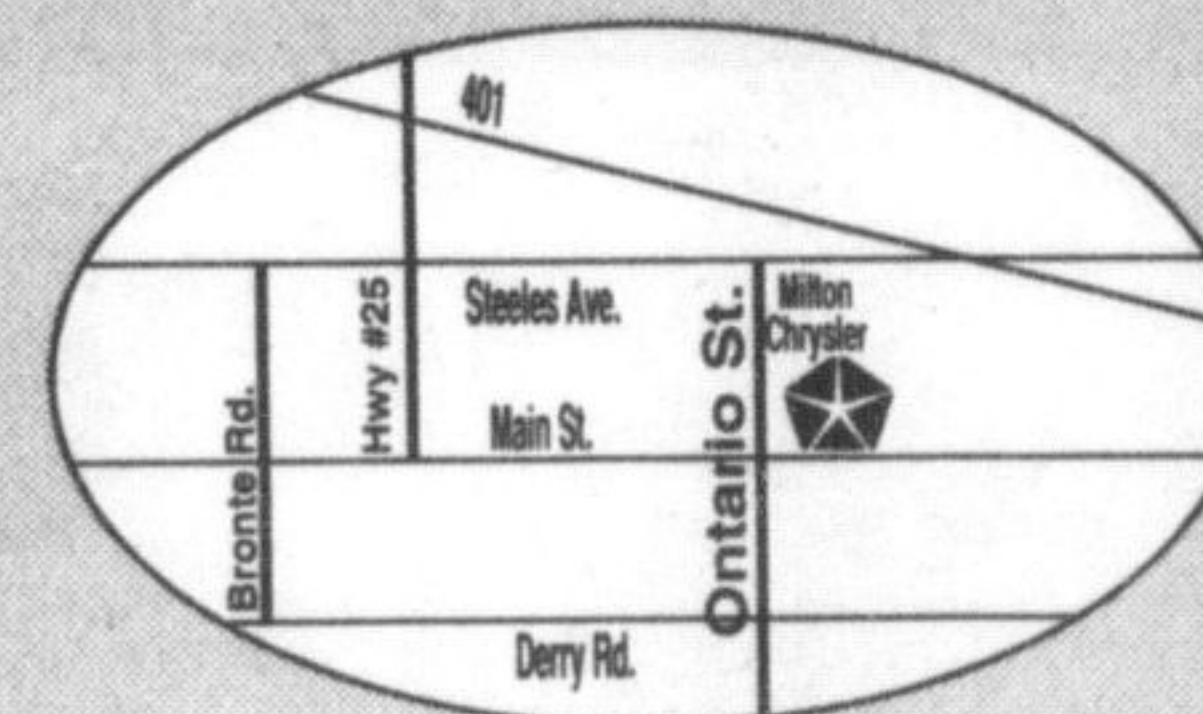


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