

# Bertoli's Titans tops in ECHL Northeast

Miltonian number one scorer on Trenton

By STEVE LeBLANC  
The Champion

Scott Bertoli's Trenton Titans had a lot to live up to this season.

And so far, they've risen to the challenge — sitting on the verge of an overall second-place finish in the East Coast Hockey League.

With three games remaining, the team has clinched top spot in the ECHL Northeastern Conference with a record of 44-16-9.

The Titans' latest victory came against their as of now first-round opponent, Roanoke Saturday. Bertoli — like most games this season — helped fuel the victory with a goal and an assist, to celebrate his 25th birthday.

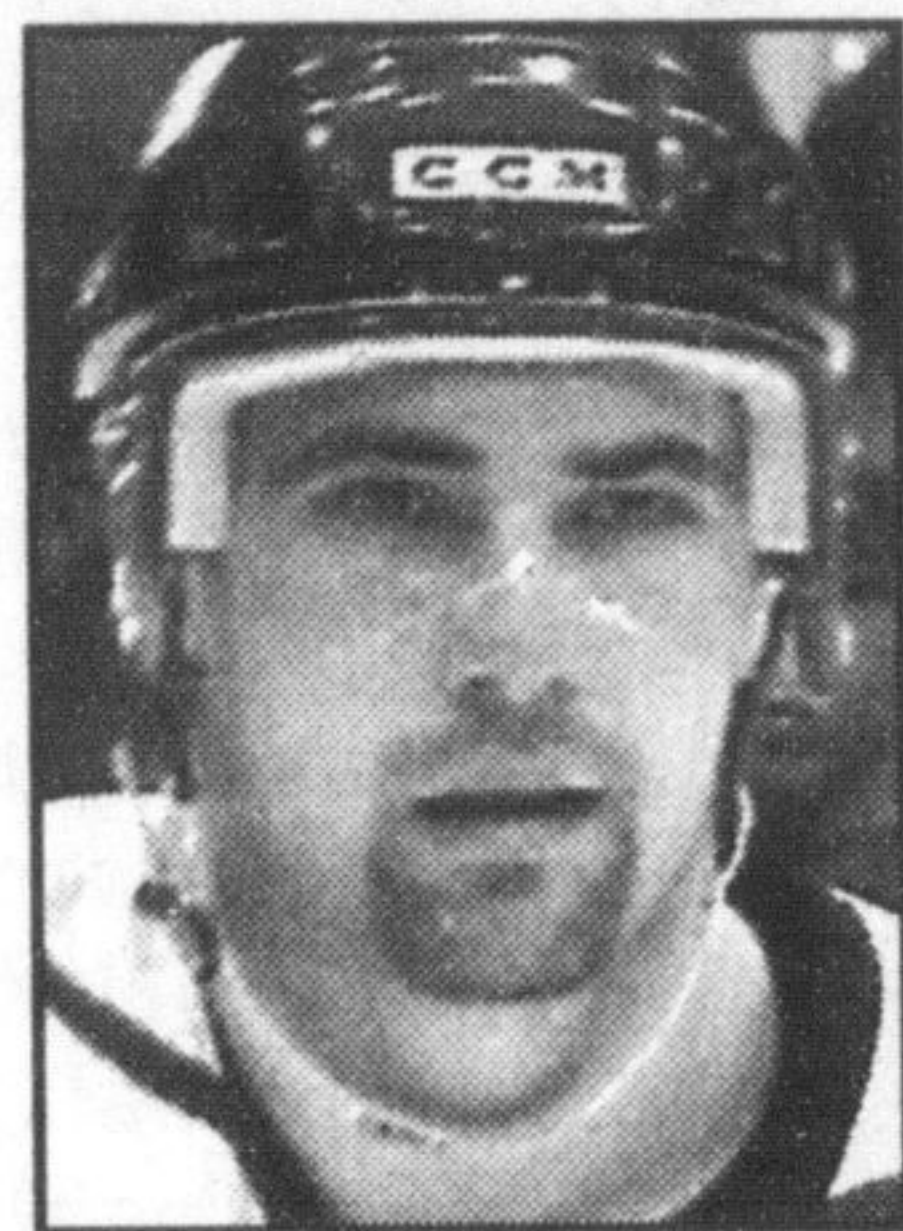
## Tops in team scoring

Milton's former junior and university star currently sits atop team scoring and top-20 overall in the league with 23 goals and 68 total points. His plus/minus mark of 27 also ranks among the league's best.

"I started slow again this year, but about 20 games in I got two new young linemates with a lot of energy and we began creating a lot of chances," explained the point-a-game left winger, now a third-year veteran of the ECHL.

While both of those linemates later moved up to the AHL, Bertoli continued to flourish and earlier this month earned his own promotion — albeit a short-lived one — to Calgary Flames' AHL affiliate in St. John, New Brunswick.

"I knew it was only going to be for one



Scott Bertoli

game, but I thought I played pretty well. I got quite a bit of play," said Bertoli of his third one-game stint in the AHL.

"I thought I should have gotten a lengthier stay (in AHL) this season, obviously

that's what I'm hoping for. Maybe next season."

In the meantime, another productive play run will certainly put the former Milton Merchant and Princeton Tiger in good stead with AHL scouts.

Last season he was among the standouts in the Titans' drive to the league championship — where they were finally ousted by South Carolina.

Bertoli figures another berth to the ECHL Kelly Cup — despite Trenton's rash of personnel changes, due to call-ups and injuries — is not out of the question.

"We're definitely capable of another lengthy playoff run," he said.

"We should be there at the end. Another strong playoff performance will certainly help me. I think (last year's showing) is what helped me get the tryout with Washington (Capitals)."

Trenton takes on Richmond tomorrow night and closes out regular-season play this weekend with a home-and-home series against Atlantic City.

Please fax all of your team reports and sports story ideas to Steve LeBlanc at (905) 878-4943, or drop them off anytime at The Champion office, 191 Main St. E.

## A Fair and Reasonable Offer

The Government of Ontario has offered OPSEU members a fair and reasonable wage offer over three years. This offer is similar to those already accepted by other Ontario public service unions. OPSEU has rejected this offer and is now on strike. The Government remains available to return to the table at any time.

### The Government's offer includes:

An up to 10 per cent raise for all staff over a three-year contract made up of:

- a 5.96 per cent raise for all staff over a three-year contract;
- a one per cent raise in the first year in exchange for productivity and efficiency gains; and
- an overall raise of three per cent over three years for staff who are at the maximum of their salary ranges, based on performance. Some 70 per cent of OPSEU staff are currently at the maximum of their salary grid and would be eligible for this increase.

### In addition:

- an immediate 10 per cent raise for nurses;
- an immediate eight per cent raise for ambulance dispatchers;
- an immediate eight per cent raise for scientists;
- additional compensation to Waste and Water Treatment Operators and mechanics employed by the Ontario Clean Water Agency to recognize credentials upgrading;
- an increase in shift premiums for non-correctional employees to 78 cents per hour for hours worked between 5 p.m. and 7 a.m. to better reflect market rates; and
- a one per cent pay-for-performance pool for employees who are at the maximum of their salary ranges.

In addition, the Government also offers a competitive benefit and pension package.

Our offer puts real money in our employees' pockets. Visit the web calculator to see what it means at [www.ontarioservicesupdate.com](http://www.ontarioservicesupdate.com) and follow the links under "Employer's Offer to OPSEU".

## 'AA' minor novices deliver overtime win

Cragg's sudden death deposit knots up series

By STEVE LeBLANC  
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Milton's AA minor novices began the season by getting dismantled 17-0 by the Orangeville Flyers.

Any lingering embarrassment from that humbling start, however, was laid to rest two weeks ago — when during the last game of Tri County round robin play, the Optimist Club Winterhawks toppled Orangeville 8-2.

With Tri County championship play now pitting these same two teams against each other, dominance has quickly been replaced by drama — with overtime needed to settle the first two games of their best-of-five series.

### Milton prevails in OT

The latest of these extra-session show-downs went in favour of Milton Saturday afternoon at Memorial Arena.

Nicholas Cragg provided the heroics, driving home a Bryden Curran rebound with just four seconds left in sudden death. Initiating the play was Brayden Riml.

The 3-2 victory squared the finals at one win apiece.

"Nicholas made a smart play to go straight to the net," said coach Tom Ferguson, whose team is one of two local squads competing for Tri County gold. "The guys worked hard and to see them go from being blown away by Orangeville to

now being able to compete with them is great."

Milton held the lead twice in regulation, thanks to a multi-goal performance by afternoon standout Matthew Dupont. Helping set him up each time was Sean McGovern.

Single assists went to Kendall Atkinson and Oran Ferguson.

Daniel Plater was rock solid between the pipes and enjoyed a lot of support from his blueline unit.

### Great birthday present

The OT win came in timely fashion for team member Luke Kimmerer — who turned nine Saturday.

Three other players will be celebrating birthdays in late March.

Three nights earlier in Orangeville, Milton surrendered a third-period lead and was vanquished in overtime 4-3.

Atkinson buried a blistering shot from the point early on while also finding the back of the net were Dupont and Derek Dercatch. Drawing helpers were Curran, Ferguson and Kevin Thomson.

Said Ferguson, "They may just be eight and nine years old, but it's been really exciting hockey."

Game three of the series is set for tomorrow in Orangeville. Milton hosts game four Thursday at 6:45 p.m. at Memorial Arena.