

# Controversy lingers over whether players quit Milton football team

The Milton Marauders' season is over, but controversy surrounding the expansion football franchise continues.

At issue is a recent Champion sports column by Murray Townsend that centered around five players quitting the team at the tail-end of the year.

Townsend's claim that the players quit falls short of telling the whole story, or even an accurate one, say two of the players involved.

Fullback Alex Pyle — who missed the entire season with a recurring knee problem — took particular exception to the column, stating that three of the five players had legitimate injuries and didn't walk out on the team.

Meanwhile, co-owner and player Andrew Todd feels differently and claimed that Pyle, brother Martin Pyle and quarterback Gary Baetsen "quit on the field."

About the only thing for certain — seemingly at least — is that the rift was sparked during the game in Sault Ste. Marie, during which coach Alan Collver went with third-string quarterback Matt McPhail after a comeback was pretty much out of the question.

Baetsen, who had an injured hand but

had played one week earlier, was clearly upset by the move and left the game. He described the coach's decision as the straw that broke the camel's back — referring to what he called "12 weeks of nonsense."

He added, "It (running of team) was a complete and utter disgrace."

But Collver said Baetsen got plenty of time at pivot earlier in the year and that "you can't keep everyone happy."

As for criticism about his coaching, the Marauders skipper said he expected a tough first season — and the 0-9 record that went with it — but that things might have been better with more players and coaching assistance.

Baetsen's departure in the Soo — according to Todd — prompted the Pyle brothers to cut their season short as well.

Said Todd, "These guys were hurt this year, but I find it strange that his (Alex's) buddy leaves and all of a sudden he's nowhere to be found. If that's not quitting, I don't know what is."

However, Alex said a second knee surgery just a few days after the Sault Ste. Marie game was what kept him away for the remainder of the season. He said brother Martin aggravated a similar knee injury

against Sault Ste. Marie and was unable to finish the year.

Alex also explained that his injury occurred when he stepped in a cow hole during an early-season practice at the Milton Fair Grounds. The site should never have been used as a practice facility, he said in frustration. "Because of a lack of Town support, we kept getting bumped off every field," he explained.

As for the other two players who 'quit', Todd said Adam McPhail had a back injury while Damien Hannaford had been playing for two teams and opted to concentrate solely on his playoff chances with the Halton Invictas for the last two weeks of the year.

Todd said he bears no ill will toward Baetsen or the Pyle brothers, but stated that they had been causing problems "all season long" and that "if that was going to be their attitude, it's better that they left."

He did however say he hasn't ruled out the possibility of the trio returning for next season — an opinion echoed by Alex.

"I definitely could be back, but some things would have to change," said Alex. "I did have some problems with the way the team was run, let's just leave it at that."

## Under-15 Magic score straight victories

Milton's Under-15 girls soccer squad squared its regular-season record at 4-4-2 with recent victories over Salt Fleet (3-1) and Oakville (3-2).

Tammy Merritt tallied twice against Salt Fleet - bringing her season scoring account


up to seven - while also denting the twine was Lindsey Furik.

Versus Oakville, the Magic dominated second-half play and cemented the win with a late goal by Tanya Maduri. Her game-winning deposit was one of about a


dozen shots fired at the opposing cage.

Netminder Cassandra Berghammer made a nifty diving save just before half-time to keep the score deadlocked at 2-2. Milton's first-half goals came from Alayna Bynes-Frizzell and Elaine Robinson.

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2	MILTON BIBLE	18	14	3	1	29
3	SOUTH SIDE "2"	17	11	5	1	23
4	NEW LIFE "A"	20	11	8	1	23
5	SOUTH SIDE "1"	18	11	7	0	22
6	ST. GEORGES	19	10	9	0	20
7	BOSTON	17	9	8	0	18
8	ST. PAULS	19	8	10	1	17
9	NEW LIFE "B"	18	6	10	2	14
10	KNOX	19	6	11	2	14
11	NEW LIFE DEAF	18	3	15	0	6
12	GRACE	17	1	16	0	2

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