



SPORTS

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 24, 2002



Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

✓ Spartans' sister act

E.C. Drury's Jan Wollaston beats her Georgetown Raider opponent to the ball while sister Lori Wollaston (4) moves in to provide assistance during senior girls field hockey play Wednesday. The North Halton rivals battled to a scoreless stalemate in the season opener.

Merchants continue their winning ways

By STEVE LeBLANC

The Champion

Efficiency and third-period supremacy.

The Merchants enjoyed healthy doses of both this past weekend on the way to running their unblemished record to 5-0.

A 7-4 decision over Brampton Friday night and 4-0 shutout of Cobourg Saturday afternoon during College Weekend play kept the local club firmly stationed atop the Ontario Provincial Jr. A League's Western Conference.

Offense continues to be the team's trump card. While forechecking and overall grit have been sporadic at times, sheer production as been thoroughly dependable.

With an all new forward lineup comprised of players from a number of different levels — from high school to junior — many might have felt it would take a little longer for things to really click.

But Rich Meloche, Milton's only returning forward, isn't surprised by the quick chemistry.

"Basically we've got three first lines for most teams. We've got so much talent that there's really nobody you wouldn't want to play with," he said.

Meloche continued laying the groundwork for another 30-plus goal season with the team's first hat-trick Friday. His second deposit — an incredible lacrosse-like shot from behind the net — highlighted a five-goal uprising in the final frame to dispose

of the upset-minded Capitals.

The Merchants' late surge followed two lacklustre periods in which they couldn't pull the trigger on a number of golden opportunities in close.

Craig MacDonald stood out with a goal and three assists while other multi-point nights were recorded by Rick Janco, Rob Ricci and Lee Swallow.

Cody Spicer made a few key steps in the first and second to allow for the comeback.

The following afternoon at Erin Mills Twin Arenas, Milton delivered its most efficient performance to date en route to whitewashing Cobourg.

Just 20 shots were allowed against second-stringer Alex Evans — who was quite steady in recording the club's first shutout in nearly three seasons — in a game where gutsy play and overall fundamentals finally showed through.

James Duhamel and Vic Oreskovich buried their first Merchant goals — each with close-range wristers — while MacDonald salted things away late in the third with a shorthanded breakaway deposit. Also lighting the lamp on a nifty tic-tac-toe powerplay effort late in the third was Pat Lee.

The Merchants began an eight-day road trip last night in Hamilton. Results were not available at press time. Friday night they're in Oakville at 7:30 p.m. while Saturday they travel to Buffalo

✓ Over-25 Magic's title repeat bid falls one game short

Oh so close.

The Milton Magic Over-25 women's soccer squad came within a heartbeat of retaining their league championship title recently on home field — losing the tournament finals to undefeated Clarkson 1-0 September 15.

The Clarke's Golf sponsored club's runner-up playoff status matched a second-place finish in regular season play, which included just two losses all summer.

Clarkson's game winner was sunk near the end

of the first half at Lions Sports Park.

Netminder Marlene Wilson — between the pipes for last summer's title win against the Dixie Aces — made a few nifty saves through the balance of the contest to keep things tight, but top gunners Patti Cuning and Heather Munroe missed big opportunities to bridge the gap.

However, the Magic were quite productive at crunch time during a semifinal crosstown victory over the Milton Crouching Tigers.

Munroe tallied twice while Claire O'Sullivan and Annette Wold-Does chipped in singles to fuel an explosive second-half performance and eventual 4-1 triumph.

Like the Magic, Milton's Crouching Tigers finished both regular season and playoff action with identical placings — in their case, third.

Martha Clipperton scored the team's lone semifinal marker.

The Tigers held their local rivals to a scoreless stalemate through the opening half before being

vanquished.

The Magic reached final four play with a perfect 3-0 sweep during the first day of the nine-team weekend showcase.

Exceptional play on defense and at mid-field was provided all weekend long by Claire O'Sullivan and Jodi Hayama respectively.

Cuning was the Milton Magic's MVP for the tournament, while claiming the honour for the Tigers was Maria D'Nunzio.



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