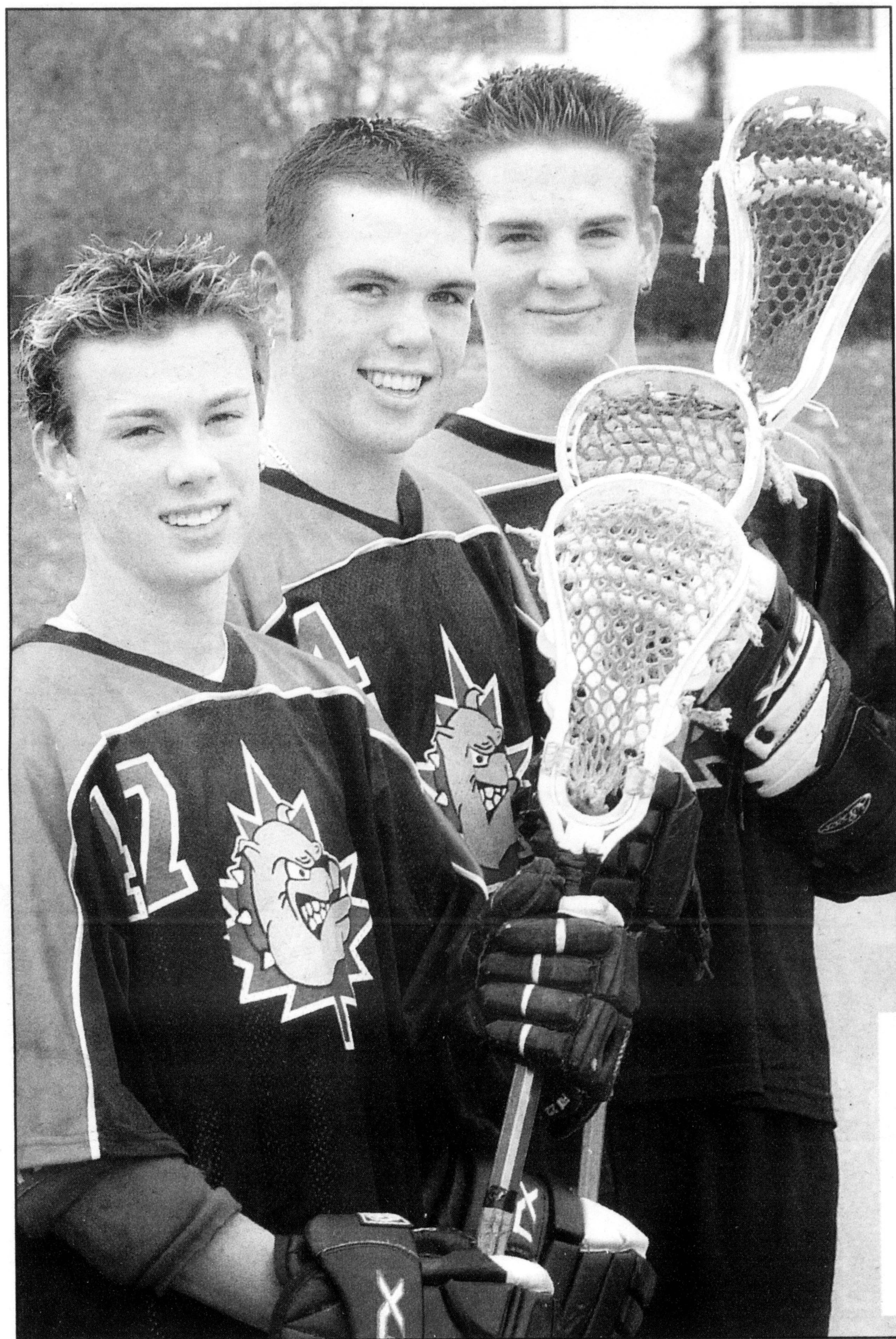




SPORTS

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 2002



Merchants humbled at hands of Raiders

Milton suffers first blowout loss in years to G'town

By **STEVE LeBLANC**

The Champion

Longtime Milton junior hockey fans have seen their share of lopsided affairs in the ongoing battle of north Halton.

Until Tuesday night, however, pretty much all of these blowouts had gone in favour of their hometown Merchants.

Eager to live up to its fan forum hype and maintain second place in the Western Conference, Georgetown soundly thrashed its neighbouring rivals for the first time in several years — dismantling Milton 7-2 in front of a less-than-spirited crowd at Gordon Alcott Memorial Arena.

Lukewarm spectator support was complimented by a thoroughly uninspired performance from the now 13-5-1 Merchants — who besides a short-lived span in period two displayed none of the spark expected for such a crucial encounter.

Milton's two goals both came in the last 11 minutes of play, by which time hopes for a comeback victory had been pretty

much abandoned.

Though an early goal could well have changed the complexion of the game, the visitors were outdone in virtually every aspect of play. That included physical presence, which has usually been their trump card in tilts with Georgetown.

"Not everyone gave their all, and it was pretty noticeable out there," said newly-appointed captain Craig Macdonald of the ego-bruising defeat. "We didn't show how we can play."



Adding to the series intrigue was the Raiders' recent addition of assistant coach Mike Curren, who was having trouble fitting in with Milton at the start of the season and left in October.

He joins players Vince Laise and Shane Remenda — who had a pair of goal and assisted on another — as former Merchants now toiling with Georgetown.

For Milton, Dean Strong struck from close-range on the powerplay to end a 105-minute scoring drought that went back to the first period against Oakville Saturday.

It was also the team's first goal in a dozen tries with the man-advantage.

Wes Clarke would add a rather meaningless goal nine minutes later on a nifty passing play. Macdonald, James Duhamel, Pat Lee and Jon Ornelas picked up the assists.

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A real triple threat

Miltonians (from left) Kyle Goertz, Adam Rutz and Matt Decaire were part of the Halton Hills Bulldogs field lacrosse team which recently struck gold in the Ontario 'B' championships in Oshawa. The Bulldogs clinched the provincial title with an overtime victory against Peterborough. Decaire scored four goals, including one in the extra session, while Goertz and Rutz offered strong defensive play.

Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

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