

# Haydar back among the AHL's top five scorers

By **STEVE LeBLANC**  
*The Champion*

For Darren (Mini) Haydar, NHL competition this early in his professional career was more of a bonus than an expectation.

So Milton's electrifying sniper wasn't the least bit disappointed about a quick return to the American Hockey League's Milwaukee Admirals following a November 17 stint with the Nashville Predators.

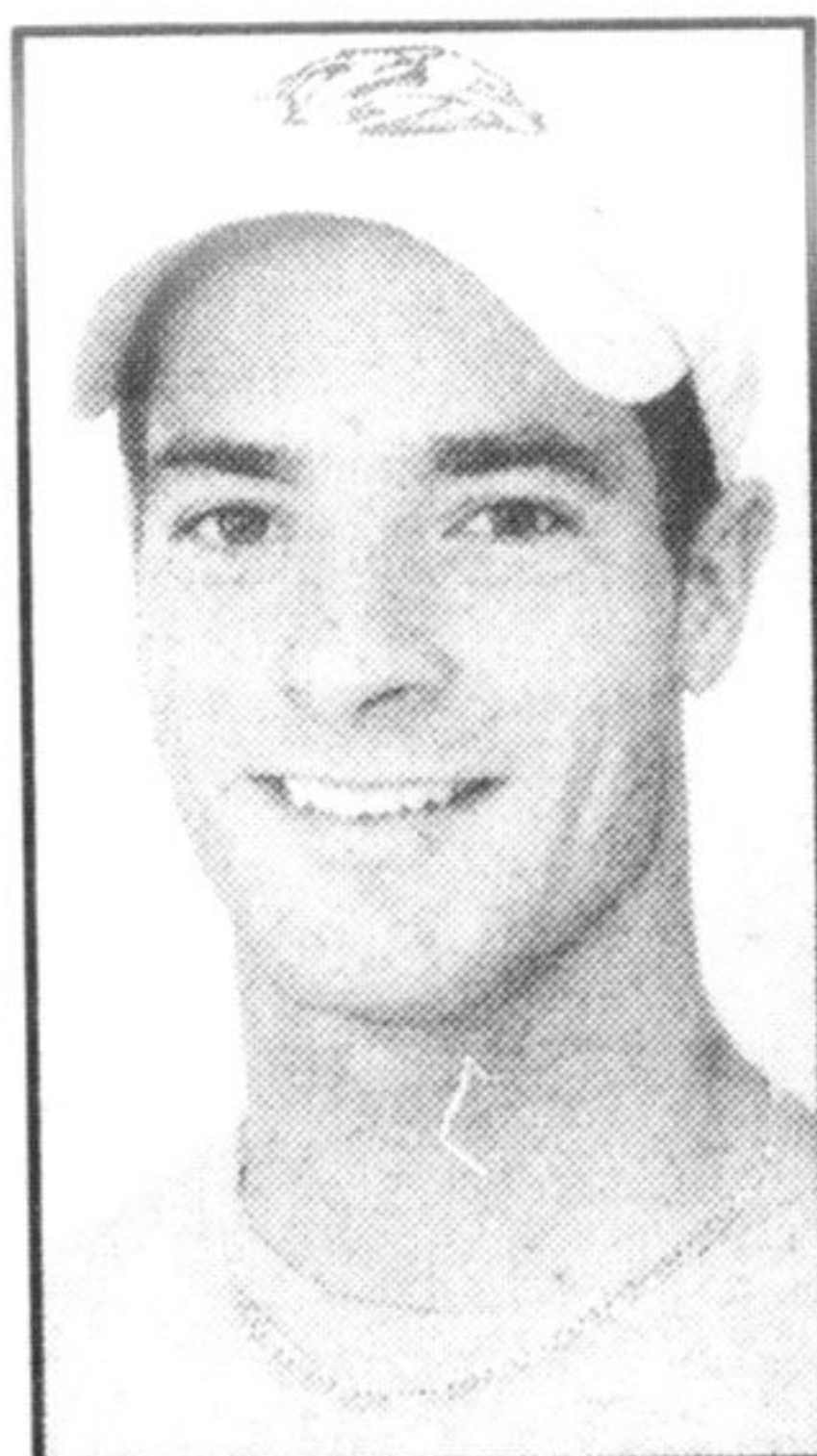
"I saw it (one-game promotion) as a reward, and that if I keep playing the way I have I might get rewarded again," said the 23-year-old winger, who's now back on track after missing three games for a concussion sustained from a thunderous NHL debut check by Chicago Blackhawks defenceman Steve Poapst. "It was never like, 'Oh I've got to go back to the AHL.'"

Since rejoining the Admirals, Haydar has quickly put himself back among the AHL's top five scorers — with nine points in seven games, which has lifted his season total to 29.

Unfortunately, Milwaukee's overall success is coming with much less consistency these days.

The team did manage to snap a three-game losing skid by nipping division-leading Houston 2-1 Sunday night, but has won just two of its last 10 games.

This is certainly unfamiliar ground for Haydar, who between the Milton Merchants and New Hampshire Wildcats has experienced very few unproductive runs in the past several years.



Darren Haydar

"Yeah, it's tough when you're not winning a lot," said the 2002 Hobey Baker finalist, whose biggest point since his return to Milwaukee was a game-winning assist to beat Cleveland 5-4 November 30. "We're just trying to get back to the basics — working hard and limiting turn-arounds, things like that."

While some may have questioned his ability to face the physical challenges of the AHL, Haydar said his only doubts centered around adapting to the league's schedule.

The AHL plays roughly twice as many regular-season games as the NCAA — so the local star, understandably so, wondered if he'd have enough in the proverbial gas tank for

those particularly hectic stretches.

His concerns have — so far anyway — been groundless.

"I seem to be doing okay in those third and fourth games of the week," he said.

A legitimate contender for AHL all-star play in February, Haydar will compete in his own country for the first time in four-and-a-half years when his Admirals visit Hamilton's Copps Coliseum for a weekend stint against the Bulldogs January 10 and 11.

The weekend stint could give Haydar the opportunity to face former New Hampshire teammate Ty Conklin — who's currently among the top goalies in the league.

Before that, they'll look to gain ground on Houston, and continued that bid last night at home against Worcester.

## Tykes show vast improvement at Brampton tournament

Milton's tykes delivered a rags to riches turnaround at last week-end's Brampton Tournament.

The Arthur Electric/Fifth Wheel Winterhawks may not have secured another championship hardware — although the improvement they showcased after an ego-bruising first round loss was nothing short of golden.

Last Friday's 12-1 pasting at the hands of Clarington could have easily sent the local tykes into unrecoverable tailspin, but they quickly recovered the next day — first with a respectable 6-4 defeat to Whitby and then a convincing 6-1 victory of the tournament hosts.

Bryce Abraham, Milton's top gunner, fueled the round three triumph by denting the twine five times. Chipping in a first-period single was Gareth Browne, while splitting the cage work in top-notch fashion were tandem partners Tristan Kivac and Jason DaSilva.

Against Whitby, Browne tallied twice while adding a goal each were Abraham and Jack Goncz.

### Rep Hockey

Round one's only bright spot came when Abraham spoiled Clarington's shutout bid in the final frame. He drew player-of-the-game honours for Milton in this lopsided contest, while doing likewise against Whitby and Brampton respectively were Evan Rudd and Ryan Stark.

Monday's 8-1 humbling to Hespeler dropped the tykes' regular season record to 7-6-2. They'll look to get back in the win column tomorrow afternoon in Oakville.

#### Streak snapped

Milton's A major peewees had their five-game unbeaten streak come to an abrupt end at Memorial Arena Saturday.

Despite home-ice advantage and a fair amount of momentum on their side, the Liebert Canada Winterhawks were spanked by Georgetown 5-0.

A general lack of intensity and finish were to blame for the loss — arguably the most humbling this season for the local lads.

Three nights later in Arthur, Milton got back on track by trimming its hosts 3-2. Parker Mott's 27-save performance — including 16 in the middle stanza — highlighted the narrow victory.

Duffer Black provided the heroics with about five minutes remaining — redirecting a Kyle Johnson centering pass by the hometown cager.

Matt Jessup scored goal number two in picturesque fashion — beating two defenders before undressing the opposing goalie — while also lighting the lamp was Daniel Lewandowski.

Arthur evened the count twice before being vanquished at crunch time.

The 12-6-1 Winterhawks have five games left in regular season play, including a home-ice battle with Ancaster Tuesday at 8 p.m.

#### Starting to roll

Milton's AA minor bantams continue to distance themselves from a rather lacklustre first half — and heading into this week had now won four of their last six games.

The Milton Machine Shop Winterhawks' most recent victory was last Friday's 2-0 whitewash of Georgetown. This shutout win — number two on the year — boosted the team's regular season record to 8-10-3. Duke Reid was flawless between the pipes, while Jeff Thomson was the game-winning marksmen — with assists going to Michael Brown and Michael Vipond.

Ryan Lecky added a little insurance with a unassisted, short-handed tally.

Results from Wednesday's game against Ancaster were not available at press time. The minor bantams resume league play in Stoney Creek Tuesday and are back at home to face Caledon Wednesday at 7 p.m.

#### Hot streak continues

Milton's A major atoms continued their hot streak with a convincing win and hard-fought tie in their last two outings.

The Gorud's Auto Winterhawks — who've lost just twice in their past 15 games — battled to a 1-1 stalemate with Flamborough Tuesday, thanks to a goal by Andrew Boivin.

Assisting on the play was Jordan Dias.

Two days earlier in Acton, Milton toppled the Tanners 5-2.

Brendan Ervin and Braeden Lawther each tallied twice, with the other goal coming from Brendan Farrell. Drawing helpers were Boivin, Dias, Jacob Love, Jeff Einter and Mackenzie Zuest.

The 11-8-2 Winterhawks are back in action tomorrow afternoon at Memorial Arena against Acton. Game time is 3:30 p.m.

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Tonelli Arena		BANTAM	
<b>BEGINNER</b>		<b>BANTAM</b>	
Dec. 13 6:30 p.m.	Timbits Red vs Timbits Black	Dec. 15 4:00 p.m.	Brian's Auto Repair vs Industrial Light & Electric
Dec. 14 9:00 a.m.	Timbits Green vs Timbits Orange	5:15 p.m.	Canadian Tire vs Millweld Enterprises
10:00 a.m.	Timbits White vs Timbits Yellow	6:30 p.m.	Docs and Dents vs Presse Law Office
<b>TYKE</b>		7:45 p.m.	Home cinema Video vs Dream Car Garage
Dec. 14 7:00 a.m.	Berkshire Securities-Doug Eley vs Chudleigh's	<b>MIDGET</b>	
8:00 a.m.	Mitam Stone Construction vs Hunt Chrysler	Dec. 13 7:30 p.m.	Brian's Auto Repair vs Gus Mowbray Ltd.
<b>NOVICE</b>		8:45 p.m.	Chudleigh's vs Scooter's Snack Shack
Dec. 15 2:00 p.m.	Goodlife Fitness Green vs Goodlife Fitness Red	Dec. 15 9:00 p.m.	Nu-Tech Recruiters vs Absolute Transportation
3:00 p.m.	Goodlife Fitness Blue vs Goodlife Fitness Green	<b>SENIOR</b>	
<b>ATOM</b>		Dec. 16 7:35 p.m.	Total Team Image vs Johnson Controls
Dec. 14 4:00 p.m.	Gallinger Ford vs Travel Choice	8:53 p.m.	Milton Chrysler Dodge vs Key Centre
5:00 p.m.	Nu-Tech Recruiters vs McCuaig Insurance	10:11 p.m.	High Five Photography vs Kwik Kopy
6:00 p.m.	Elsley Optical vs Investor's Group	<b>Memorial Arena</b>	
7:00 p.m.	Brian's Auto Repairs vs Milton Firefighters Club	<b>PEEWEE</b>	
		Dec. 14 7:00 a.m.	Sears vs Brian's Auto Repair
		8:20 a.m.	Nadalin Electric vs Shoppers Drug Mart
		9:40 a.m.	Towne Dental Group vs Austen and Noble

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