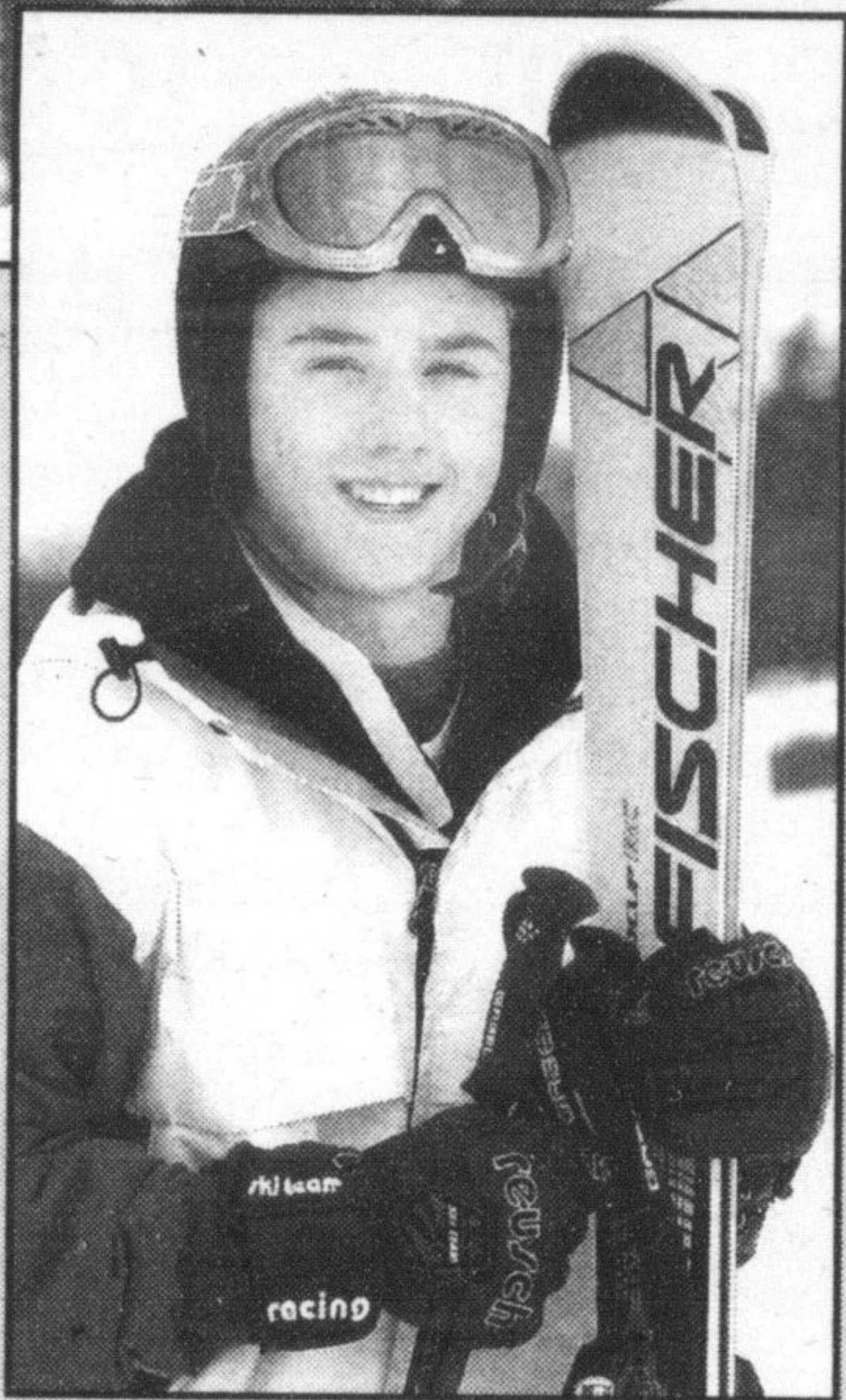




SPORTS

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

FRIDAY JANUARY 17, 2003



Local skier leaves 'em Moon-struck

Ryan Moon, 17 (at rest and at play), has been quite impressive in recent competition with the Milton Heights Ski Club's Hershey J Red team — with a first-place finish at Blue Mountain in Collingwood and a second-place effort at Kimberly at Talisman. Twin brother Brett was right behind him at both events, with second and third-place performances.

Photos by GRAHAM PAINE

'A' midgets ready for playoffs: coach

By **STEVE LeBLANC**
The Champion

Milton's A midgets have an awful lot to live up to in the playoffs.

In fact that's something of an understatement, given the local lads' unparalleled prosperity this year.

A 24-0 league record, 36-1-1 overall run and two tournament titles combine to place post-season expectations — well, sky-high. But head coach Chris Brennan believes the Action Utility Trailers Winterhawks are up to the challenge.

"Our goal is an OMHA championship. It's what we've been striving for since day one," said Milton's bench boss, who leads the team alongside assistants Dan Lynch and David Patterson. "Our guys have the greatest desire to win."

That's been abundantly clear from the word go — with the midgets quickly buying into a new system and prevailing at every turn, usually with blowout results.

These frequent mismatches no doubt have skeptics questioning if the Winterhawks are ready to handle the tight contests they're bound to face during the latter stages of the playoffs.

But Brennan meets that concern with composed optimism — pointing to some clutch victories in both league and tournament play. He said, "We haven't had too many close games, but the ones we have had we've responded to very positively."

And when it comes to the team's season statistics, there's little room for anything but overwhelming encouragement.

Milton has given up less than a goal a game, allowed their opposition under 12 shots a night on average and has seven different players in double-digit scoring.

"Our defensive numbers are most encouraging," remarked Brennan. "We've been very aggressive in the neutral zone and very disciplined with positional play in our own end. Everybody's got a one-on-one assignment, and the guys have really bought into the system."

If regular-season results are any indica-

tion, the Winterhawks' first-round series with Orangeville could get quite ugly. In two meetings with the Flyers this year, Milton has won by a collective 27-0.

The series — most likely a best-of-five clash — will start sometime next week.

Beyond that, the only potential playoff opponent the Winterhawks have yet to face is league newcomer Stoney Creek — whom the local coaching staff is currently in the midst of evaluating.

Milton punctuated its perfect regular season with last Friday's 9-1 annihilation of Arthur. Aaron Clarke provided a near-flawless effort between the pipes, while leading offensively with a hat-trick was Phil Foley.

Merchants tied for first

Thanks very much, Georgetown.

The Merchants were no doubt feeling mighty appreciative of their neighbouring rivals earlier this week, after the Raiders capped a home-and-home sweep of season-long leading Hamilton.

Georgetown's back-to-back wins allowed Milton to move into a first-place tie with the Kilty Bees. Both the Merchants and Hamilton — who've each lost just once in their own barn this season — share the division penthouse with 70 points apiece.

With just seven games left for each team, the Western Conference regular-season championship — and the three rounds of home-ice advantage that go with it — could very well come down to a winner-takes-all final clash in Hamilton February 3.

The 34-6-1-1 Merchants currently hold a 2-1-1 series lead against the Bees, who just recently lost 70-point man Jon Jankus to the NCAA.

Weekly House League Schedule

Milton Minor Hockey Association



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| Tonelli Arena | | Memorial Arena | |
|------------------|---|------------------|---|
| TYKE | | PEEWEE | |
| Jan 18 7:00 a.m. | Berkshire Securities vs Hunt Chrysler | Jan 18 7:00 a.m. | Sears vs Shoppers Drug Mart |
| 8:00 a.m. | Chudleigh's vs Mitam Stone Construction | 8:20 a.m. | Brian's Auto Repair vs Austen and Noble |
| | | 9:40 a.m. | Nadalin Electric vs Towne Dental Group |
| NOVICE | | | |
| Jan 19 2:00 p.m. | Goodlife Fitness Green vs Goodlife Fitness Black | | |
| 3:00 p.m. | Goodlife Fitness Blue vs Goodlife Fitness Red | | |
| BANTAM | | | |
| Jan 19 4:00 p.m. | Millweld Enterprises vs Docs and Dents | | |
| 5:15 p.m. | Presse Law Office vs Canadian Tire | | |
| 6:30 p.m. | Home Cinema Video vs Brian's Auto Repair | | |
| 7:45 p.m. | Industrial Light and Electric vs Dream Car Garage | | |
| MIDGET | | | |
| Jan 17 7:30 p.m. | Gus Mowbray Ltd. vs Absolute Transportation | | |
| 8:45 p.m. | Brian's Auto Repair vs Chudleigh's | | |
| Jan 19 9:00 p.m. | Nu-Tech Recruiters vs Scooter's Snack Shack | | |
| SENIOR | | | |
| Jan 20 7:35 p.m. | Key Centre vs Total Team Image | | |
| 8:53 p.m. | Kwik Kopy vs Milton Chrysler Dodge | | |
| 10:11 p.m. | Johnson Controls vs High Five Photography | | |



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