

Minor bants clinch Tri title

Rags to riches stories are rarely as dramatic as this.

Effectively distancing themselves from a thoroughly unimpressive 2001/02 campaign — which included a winless regular season — Milton's AA minor bantams stood tall this year and engineered an unbeaten run to the Tri County championship.

Thirteen straight victories raised more than a few eyebrows around local hockey circles and made the Milton Machine Shop Winterhawks the most improved local rep team this season.

Martin Hannah's minor bantams swept Stoney Creek in three games to clinch the title, punctuating the championship series with a 3-1 decision at Memorial Arena Thursday evening.

Milton scored three times in the opening period — on goals by Mac Fillman, Daniel Kearns and Michael Brown — and hung tough the rest of the way.

Nick Nevins denied the visitors at just about every turn, while assists went to

Fillman, Kearns, Daryl Brinke, Michael Hannah, Michael Vipond and AP Wade McGinnis. Other call-ups in the clincher were Brian Hunter and Jeremy Price.

While happy to clinch at home, the local lads' series highlight came in Stoney Creek March 18 — when they overcame a third-period letdown to win 4-3 in overtime.

Brinke provided the heroics, scoring his second of the night with help from Vipond and Justin Bailey. Also lighting the lamp in regulation time were Vipond and Ryan Lecky. Brown, Hannah, Luc Hartwick and Craig Howse had assists.

One night later at home the Winterhawks put Stoney Creek on the proverbial chopping block by toppling them 5-2 at Memorial Arena.

Nevins was outstanding between the pipes and was supported with goals from Brinke, Hartwick, Kearns, Lecky and Vipond. Rounding out the squad were Lucas Reid, Brent Trull, Cole Madansky and Jeff Thomson.



Photo by STEVE LeBLANC

Milton's juveniles celebrate their league title win after blanking St. Catharines 5-0 Saturday.

'AA' juveniles clinch league crown with sweep of St. Kitts

By STEVE LeBLANC
The Champion

The AA juveniles brought out the proverbial brooms and swept their way to a league championship Saturday.

Within the friendly confines of Memorial Arena, Milton whitewashed St. Catharines 5-0 in a late-night showdown which punctuated a convincing run to the Niagara District title.

The Pinnacle Winterhawks took the series in three straight to give Milton Minor Hockey its second juvenile league title in three years — and the first since a short-lived hiatus last season.

For about a third of the team, it was also a fitting follow-up to last spring's OMHA victory with Arnie Parcels' AA midgets.

"The guys really wanted to salvage something after getting bounced from the OMHAs," said head coach Jim Kosmalski, who led the club alongside assistants Dave Burrell and Bill Wilson. "They played their game and the call-ups really helped fill the gap with our injuries and suspensions. I'm proud of these guys. For our first year back this isn't bad."

St. Catharines held the advantage over their local opponents during regular-season play, but was upstaged throughout the entire league finals — and particularly during the series clincher.

The Winterhawks mounted a 2-0 lead before Saturday's game was four minutes old — on short-range deposits by Kyle Burrell and AP Chris Coates — and cruised to victory the rest of the way.

Burrell and Coates would each strike again, while Wes McDougall rounded out the scoring midway through the final frame with a powerplay marker.

"The guys really wanted to salvage something after getting bounced from the OMHAs."

HEAD COACH JIM KOSMALSKI

Julian Ricci and Conor Sweeney contributed to the series-clinching win with two assists apiece.

Mark Rosselle offered sharp cage work, weathering a couple of mini storms early on and then turning back the occasional shot over the last two periods to earn the shutout.

Along with Coates, David Tielemans and Brett Turner were called up to plug the holes left by four missing regulars — who were out with either an injury, suspension or personal commitment.

In St. Catharines Thursday, Milton put its championship rivals on the verge of elimination with a 5-2 decision — thanks largely to a two-goal effort from Paul Szafer.

Jon Sweetland was steady in net, while chipping in with singles were Coates, Scott McLaughlin and AP Mark Galick.

Making up the rest of the championship squad were captain Rick Nadalin, Rob Day, Matt Funnell, Thomas Patrick, Matt Stockton, Chris Strank, Travis Van Loosen, Matt Ventura, Michael Winiarz and Chris Wulfers.

Steve LeBlanc can be reached at sleblanc@halton-search.com.

WANTED
A FEW GOOD MEN
BROOKVILLE MEN'S MASTERS
SLO-PITCH LEAGUE

No Experience Required!

Contacts: John Molody 519-833-0681
Tom Charron: 905-854-0558

Registration:
Mohawk Inn, 2-4 p.m.
Saturday, March 22 & Saturday March 29

Early Registration \$130.00

Fax all of your team reports and sports story ideas to Steve LeBlanc at (905) 878-4943.

MIG Welding Machine M130

with built-in spool gun connections and a secondary spindle for .45 kg (1 lb) wire spools.

Air Liquide
310A Steeles Ave., Milton
905-693-1211
While quantities last. Participating locations only.

\$699

AIR LIQUIDE Industrial gases Welding products www.airliquide.com

2003 LACROSSE REGISTRATION

Final Registration! Saturday, Mar 29th 8:30am-4:30pm @ Thompson Arena

*A copy of a birth certificate is required for all new registrants. All players must sign registration form

LACROSSE "THE FASTEST GAME ON TWO FEET"

For Registration Information Please call 905-876-0463

Coaches & Assistants Needed! Please stop by and complete an application if you can help out.

Hurricane peewees claim bronze at OMHA finals

Milton players factor into medal victory

Halton's AAA peewees sure know how to cap a season in style.

Willing themselves a medal-winning finish at the recent OMHA championships in Markham, the Hurricanes scored with a mere 13 seconds to go in regulation time and again at the seven-minute mark of sudden death to eclipse Peterborough 2-1 for the bronze.

A couple of Milton players factored heavily into the comeback win. Ryan Williams backstopped the team — doing so in exceptional fashion to take MVP honours — while Scott Stover assisted on the last-minute equalizer.

This was the second of two nail-biting

victories for the Hurricanes, who in round two battled back in the last two minutes to shade the powerhouse hosts 4-3.

Stover lit the lamp in that one, while fellow Miltonians Ryan Mitchell and Mathew Clark combined for three assists.

The rally put Halton at 2-0 and set hopes high for reaching the gold-medal tilt.

Unfortunately, the Hurricanes dropped their next two outings to Richmond Hill (4-2) and Burlington (5-2).

Halton's weekend-opening triumph came in a 3-2 decision over Peterborough. Williams was between the pipes for two of the three OMHA wins while his local teammates had a collective nine points at the championship showcase — figuring in more than half of the team's overall production.