

Marauders' record even after loss to Mississauga

Milton delivers stronger showing than final score would indicate

By **MURRAY TOWNSEND**
Special to The Champion

The Milton Marauders dropped to 1-1 with a 27-0 road loss to the as-yet unbeaten Mississauga Wolverines Saturday evening.

The Wolverines were league finalists last season and defeated Milton 40-0 in their only meeting. This game was considerably different than last year's match-up because this time it was a genuine battle — and Mississauga knew it.

Their touchdowns came from an interception deep in Milton territory, a 75-yard pass play, a 10-yard pass up the middle and a final major with no time remaining on the clock.

The Wolverines were smart on the 75-yard pass play. Defensive back Sheldon MacFarlane had to come off the field with an equipment problem, and Mississauga, figuring on some confusion with a last second replacement, attacked that area immediately for their only long gain of the night.

They may not have been so smart when they chose to go for the touchdown with time ticking down, when they could have taken a knee.

At half-time, Mississauga led 13-0, which prompted somebody on the Wolverines to yell loudly enough to be heard from the sidelines, "It's just (expletive) Milton, it should be 50-0."

Just Milton? On six of nine possessions, the Wolverines were either forced to punt or turned over the ball.

Just Milton? The Marauders defense held them to two or negative yards on 13 of their rushing attempts.

That's not to say that the Wolverines didn't deserve to win. They forced several turnovers, kept the pressure on quarterback Ryan McGill and got timely first downs when they needed them.

But Milton had a blocked field goal attempt, turned over the ball on downs twice on fourth and short yardage, had a ball go through

a receiver's hands in the end zone and suffered turnovers when deep in Mississauga territory.

In other words, it could have been a much closer game.

Will Gearin had a sensational effort on defense, with an interception, fumble recovery and a diving tip to bat away a ball headed into the arms of a Wolverine receiver. He was also second on the team in tackles behind David Joseph.

On offense, slippery Steve Lubin was at it again, shaking off tackles and bursting through for more big gains, including a 25-yarder. McGill had 120 yards passing on the day, and hooked up with Matt MacPhail for several long gains. He had three receptions for 54 yards. Marco Pereira and Nathan Smith also hauled in three passes.

Another positive for the Marauders was the dynamic duo of Flash and Dash. MacFarlane and Rayon Walker are a dance step away from going all the way on almost every kick or punt. They pulled off some big returns and were helped out by a 25-yard kick-off runback by quarterback Dustin Blair.

A negative note was centre Andrew Todd dislocating a knee. He'll be out for an undetermined amount of time.

Coach Barry Emo thought the Marauders should have fared better. "We could have beat them, no question," he said.

And he wasn't happy with the officials. "We were on the receiving end of some bad calls. That's not an excuse, but the missed calls turned into big plays for them."

Emo suggested that the offense didn't execute well and that they couldn't get into any kind of rhythm in the second half, meaning the defense, which he said had a phenomenal game, had to spend too much time on the field.

The Marauders have a bye week coming up and then face the same Mississauga team at home June 21 at 3 p.m. at Milton District High School. "We'll put in some new wrinkles," Emo said. "And we'll be a different football team when we see them again."

It's just (bleepin) Milton? Maybe the Marauders will show them what being 'just Milton' is all about in two weeks.

Emo is even more confident. "Although we lost the game in Mississauga, they have to come to our house on June 21. We will not lose that game. In fact, I'm so confident in our players and the ability that they possess, I guarantee a win."

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