



SPORTS

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

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Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Against the odds

Milton District's Mark Murray tries to gain a few extra yards while being corraled by four Oakville Trafalgar Devils Thursday afternoon during junior football quarterfinal action at MD. The Mustangs were blanked 14-0. Two first-half touchdowns were the difference.

Senior Mustangs corral OT Devils

MD moves on to semifinals

By **STEVE LeBLANC**

The Champion

Big risk, big reward.

In football the two often go hand-in-hand, as Milton District's seniors found out at Oakville Trafalgar Friday afternoon.

Amid unseasonably mild conditions, the Mustangs gambled on third and short at a couple of crucial points in tier two quarterfinal action — each time with a touchdown as the end result. This refusal to play it safe offensively and a healthy dose of topnotch passing coverage combined to give MD a 28-7 triumph — along with passage to Halton's final four.

"You've got to gamble when it's like this (the playoffs)," stressed two-way stand-out Lee Frittenburg, one of many veterans vying for a return trip to the championship showdown at Hamilton's IvorWynne. "We just tried to stop their big chances and capitalize on our own."

For the most part the Mustangs did exactly that, although not without a painful price for Frittenburg — who was severely banged up by the Devils and had to be helped off the field on three separate occasions.

So was it all worth it? As if one really has to ask. "Of course," remarked the gutsy co-captain.

The Mustangs had enough scoring for

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LEE FRITTENBURG

the victory before the game was eight minutes old, thanks to a 40-yard scamper by Tim Anderson and a five-yard punch by James McIntosh.

OT would cut that lead in half midway through the second quarter, but was effectively neutralized the rest of the way by an MD team that continually stifled its passing game. "The pass coverage was great. We had ample guys back there to guard it (pass) and also put pressure on their quarterback," said defensive co-ordinator David Curk, who had to miss last week's practices due to personal commitments. "The guys did a great job."

Offensive coach Ian McIntosh and pivot Jay Price kept opposing defenders off balance for much of the afternoon with a well-rounded attack, while four touchdowns by four different players offered another reminder of just how deep MD's arsenal is — even without injured rusher Todd Arruda.

Daryl Meinen gained the lion's share of yardage on the day — thanks in part to some well-executed blocking — and provided a final nail-in-the-coffin touchdown with three minutes to go. He also picked off hometown QB Matt Self in the waning moments of play to quell any lingering comeback hopes.

Price drove in a backbreaking major from third and short that was essentially the end for the Devils. Ryan Mitchell made good on all four convert attempts and is now 12-for-12 in the post-season.

Frittenburg and Michael Irvine also offered spirited performances.

With Friday's string of upsets, the Mustangs are surprise hosts for the semifinals this Friday versus Burlington Central. The two teams squared off in the final four last year as well, with MD winning 12-8.

Game time is 2 p.m. If victorious, MD will face either cross-town rival Burlington Reding or Oakville's T.A. Blakelock at IvorWynne November 13.

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Sr. Royals advance with upset victory

By **STEVE LeBLANC**

The Champion

So Iroquois Ridge is beatable after all.

Oakville's tier two powerhouse went undefeated through the regular season — due in large part to a seemingly unstoppable passing game — and many believed that perfect record would hold up through the playoffs. Or at least until IvorWynne.

Enter the rebuilding Bishop Reding Royals, who refused to merely put up a good fight against their heavily-favoured Wolfpack hosts during quarterfinal action Friday afternoon.

Willing their season to continue, the Royals overcame some early offensive glitches and a pair of deficits to prevail 25-16.

Head coach Joe Jurus offered particular praise to his defensive charges, and added that the upset vic-

tory was simply a case of his big players making big plays.

Topping that list was Jon Ram, who was by far the most versatile contributor of the day and who recovered a Wolfpack fumble in the end-zone late in the first half to make it 8-7.

Ram diverted much of the credit to his fellow defenders, as well as dependable kicker David Wynne, stating, "When we didn't get first downs we could rely on him to punt it deep, allowing us to pin them deep and prevent touchdowns."

Wynne came through with three successful converts and an insurance field goal down the stretch to cement the win. His fancy footwork complemented a two-touchdown performance by offensive standout Marcas Gray, who covered 75 yards for his first major and scored again on a 16-yard

strike from Rory Johnston.

Defensively, Reding forced several turnovers on downs and managed to contain a passing game that had exploited every other secondary unit this fall. "Jim Harper coming in to run the defense this year has really helped. A lot of the credit goes to him," said Jurus. "A lot of guys really stepped it up (against the Ridge)."

The Royals — who won just once last year — now take a four-game winning streak into semifinal play at Oakville's T.A. Blakelock Friday afternoon at 2 p.m. If triumphant, they'll advance to the November 13 Halton tier two championship at Hamilton's IvorWynne Stadium to face either Milton District or Burlington Central.

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