

IceHawks earn split with disjointed effort

By **STEVE LeBLANC**
The Champion

Can anyone say déjà vu? When the IceHawks last battled Brampton and Buffalo in succession they offered a rather disjointed effort — and in the process got humbled by the dead-last Capitals before rebounding to topple their only cross-border rivals.

Just over a month later the rebuilding juniors have revived that Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde split, further stifling hopes to upgrade their mid-pack status.

While the Capitals have been nowhere near the playoff picture this season, they continue to show Milton that there's no such thing as a gim'me win in the Western Conference.

At least not for those content to deliver a second-rate performance, which is exactly what the IceHawks did in Brampton Thursday night.

A lost face-off and subsequent goal against with half-a-minute to go cost them a 6-5 defeat, although huge defensive lapses and a sub-par outing by Kain Tisi were just as much to blame.

Losing to the basement dwellers was even more concerning this time around, since the IceHawks have beefed up their blueline unit in recent weeks and were just five days removed from an inspiring 4-3 comeback win in Oakville.

Wes Clark, Jonathan Ornelas, Ryan Silveira and Dean Strong had a goal and an assist each, while also denting the twine was Julian Sarraino.

Back at home against Buffalo Friday, Milton enjoyed near perfect special-teams play and was fundamentally-sound overall

to knock off the Lightning 4-1.

Silveira notched the team's ninth short-handed goal of the year, while he and Ryan Angelow potted powerplay markers. Meanwhile, Ornelas lifted his team leading goal total to 15 late in the opening frame and Jamie Flury beat his former club for the third consecutive time with a credible 27-save effort — which was highlighted by a penalty shot denial.

Now 12-8, the IceHawks begin another tough part of their schedule at home against Burlington Friday evening. Sunday afternoon they host Oakville and then head to Georgetown November 11 to face the undefeated Raiders.

Steve LeBlanc can be reached at sleblanc@haltonsearch.com.

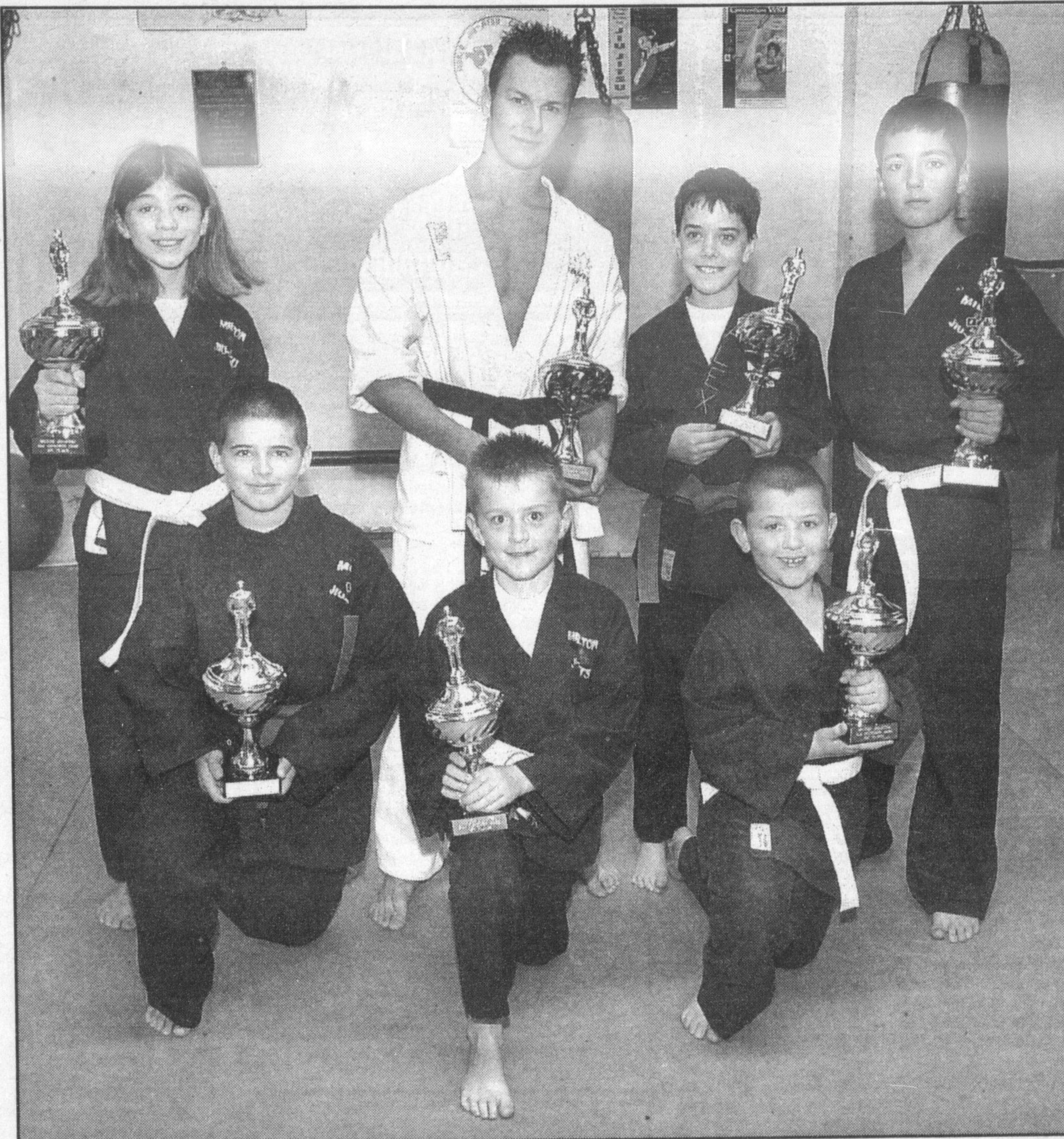
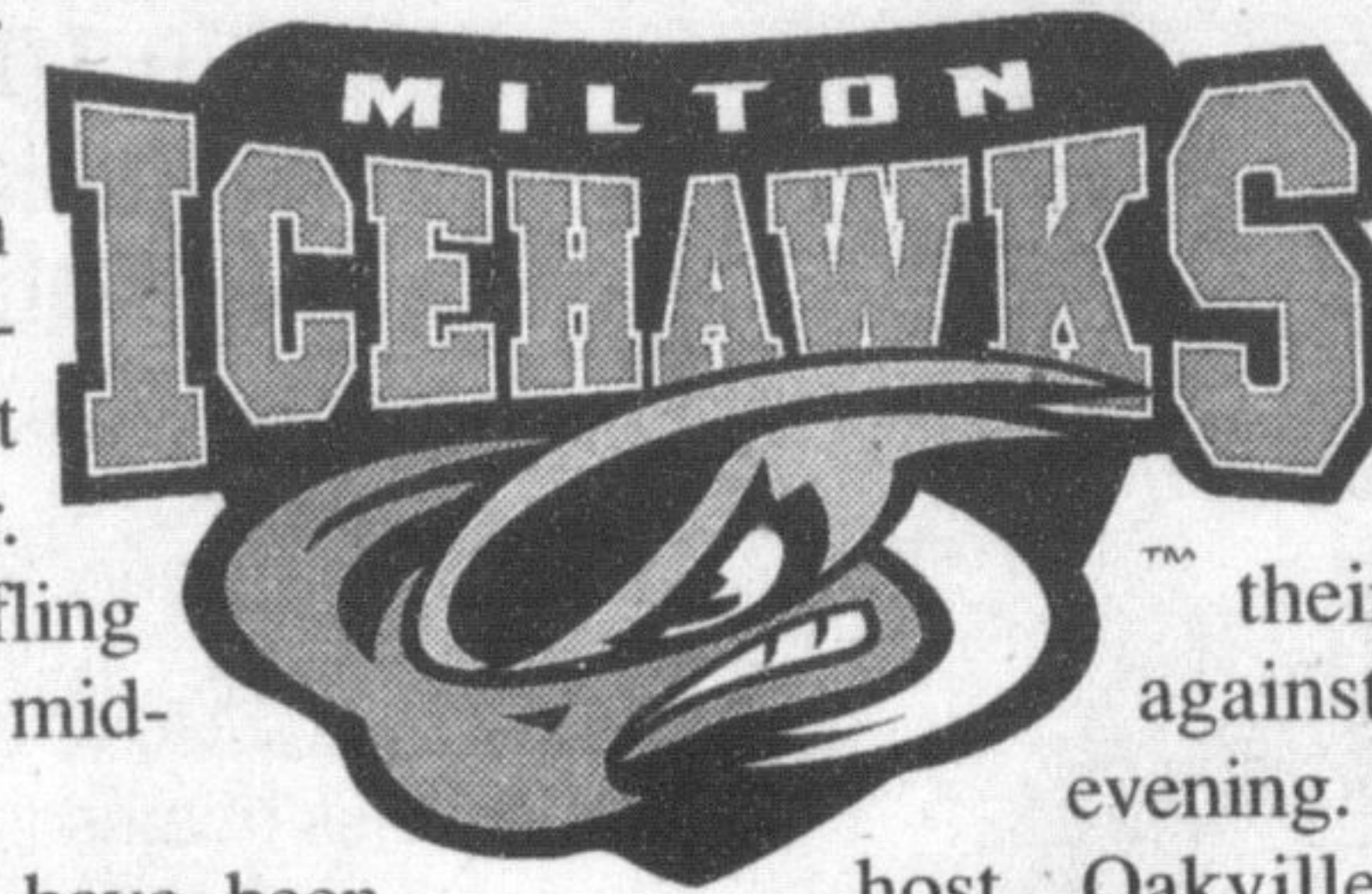


Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Hefty hardware haul

Milton Jiu-Jitsu students proudly display the first-place trophies they earned recently at the Southern Ontario Junior Sport Jiu-Jitsu Championships. Winners are (front row, from left) Scott Freer, Brandon Vandremel, Jordan Healey, and (back row, from left) Malena Harman, Dan Kelsh, Alexander McNeilly and Jake Hetherington. Milton Jiu-Jitsu also took eight second-place trophies and eight thirds to finish first overall.

Hometown rookie dealt to Wexford

Novak's departure leaves IceHawks with no local players

By **STEVE LeBLANC**
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And then there were none — again. For the second time in as many years, Milton's Jr. A hockey club finds itself without a hometown player — since last week's departure of Mike Novak.

Unhappy with his ice time in recent weeks, the 18-year-old defenceman requested a trade around mid-October and was officially dealt to the Southern Conference's Wexford Raiders Thursday.

"I don't think I really got a chance to prove myself here (Milton), but there's no hard feelings. It's just a better situation for me in Wexford," said 6'3", 190 lbs. Novak, who for one reason or another didn't live up to pre-season expectations and was a healthy scratch three times with this year's IceHawks, including during a pivotal road trip to Oakville October 25.

While the recent addition of sizable veteran blueliners Matthew French and Chris



"I'm going to miss the guys, but it was time to cut my losses and make a fresh start."
.....
MIKE NOVAK

Cloutier further minimized his value in Milton, Novak just didn't seem to be building on last year's role as a solid spot duty call-up. "Mike was having a rough time adapting to our system. I think he's going to be a good player, but he just wasn't fitting in here," said assistant general manager Kevin Lachance.

Added head coach/GM George Dupont, "He saw himself as a top-three defenceman, and maybe he will be on another team — just not here right now."

Recording four assists and 29 penalty minutes in 15 games with the IceHawks, Novak expressed some disappointment about parting ways with his hometown

club — especially since he's been a long-time teammate of a few of the other rookies at the AAA rep level.

But in the end, he said, the move is for the best. "I'm going to miss the guys, but it was time to cut my losses and make a fresh start," he admitted. "I'm ready for a new challenge."

Novak's departure means the IceHawks are likely to finish another season without a local performer — a notion that's not exactly relished by anyone associated with the team. But Lachance is quick to point out that in recent years, a number of aspiring area juniors have passed on the opportunity to try out with their hometown club.

Only three local players — including Novak — attended this year's main camp.

Meanwhile, the IceHawks are also looking to move forwards David Hammond, Shane Mohr and Tyler Sgro — none of whom are currently competing.

Seasoned defenceman Mike Jantzi still fits into their plans — even with the additions of French and Cloutier — although he isn't expected back from a broken ankle injury until sometime next month.

Steve LeBlanc can be reached at sleblanc@haltonsearch.com.

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