

IceHawks toppled by overly-aggressive Blades

Oakville's size, stick work just too much for Milton to handle

By **STEVE LeBLANC**
The Champion

Even under ideal circumstances the rebuilding IceHawks are going to have a tough time knocking off a top-three club like Oakville.

But when the Blades' extra-curricular stick work comes into play and faces minimal punishment from officials, delivering an upset victory goes from a difficult task to a near impossible one.

Such was the case at Memorial Arena Sunday afternoon.

Oakville established a 3-0 cushion in the first 24 minutes and spent the balance of the game, a good chunk of it anyway, literally sticking it to the hosts, en route to prevailing 4-2.

Much of the behind-the-play slashing and spearing — which has become an all too familiar calling card of the intimidation-minded Blades — eluded referee Mike Neill. A handful of minor skirmishes served to further hinder the IceHawks, who're far from a physical powerhouse.

"A guy (Milton's Ryan McInerney) who has two penalty minutes all year gets called for holding while all this dangerous stuff gets by. The message being sent is that this crap is acceptable. It's bologna," fumed IceHawks skipper George Dupont.

Fairly solid effort

Effort-wise, Milton offered a fairly credible performance — especially since captain Lee Swallow and rookie defenceman Ryan Bernardi were with minor injuries.

Jamie Flury kept things tight with a 26-save showing, while Matthew French and Ryan Angelow sank straight powerplay deposits to draw within a goal before Oakville captain Nick Dodge spoiled the comeback bid with a late doorstep rebound.

Wes Clark assisted on both IceHawk markers.

Two nights earlier at Memorial, Milton overcame a rather sluggish start to topple the Burlington Cougars 7-3.

An unusually potent second period — with five goals in 16 minutes — overshadowed some early special-teams woes, during which the hosts were beaten twice on the powerplay and squandered a two-man advantage of their own.

Angelow and Dean Strong each tallied twice, while other multi-point efforts were recorded by Clark, Jeff Caister, Chris Cloutier, Ryan Silveira and October's Player of the Month Jon Omelas.

Kain Tisi was steady over the final two periods to pick up the victory.

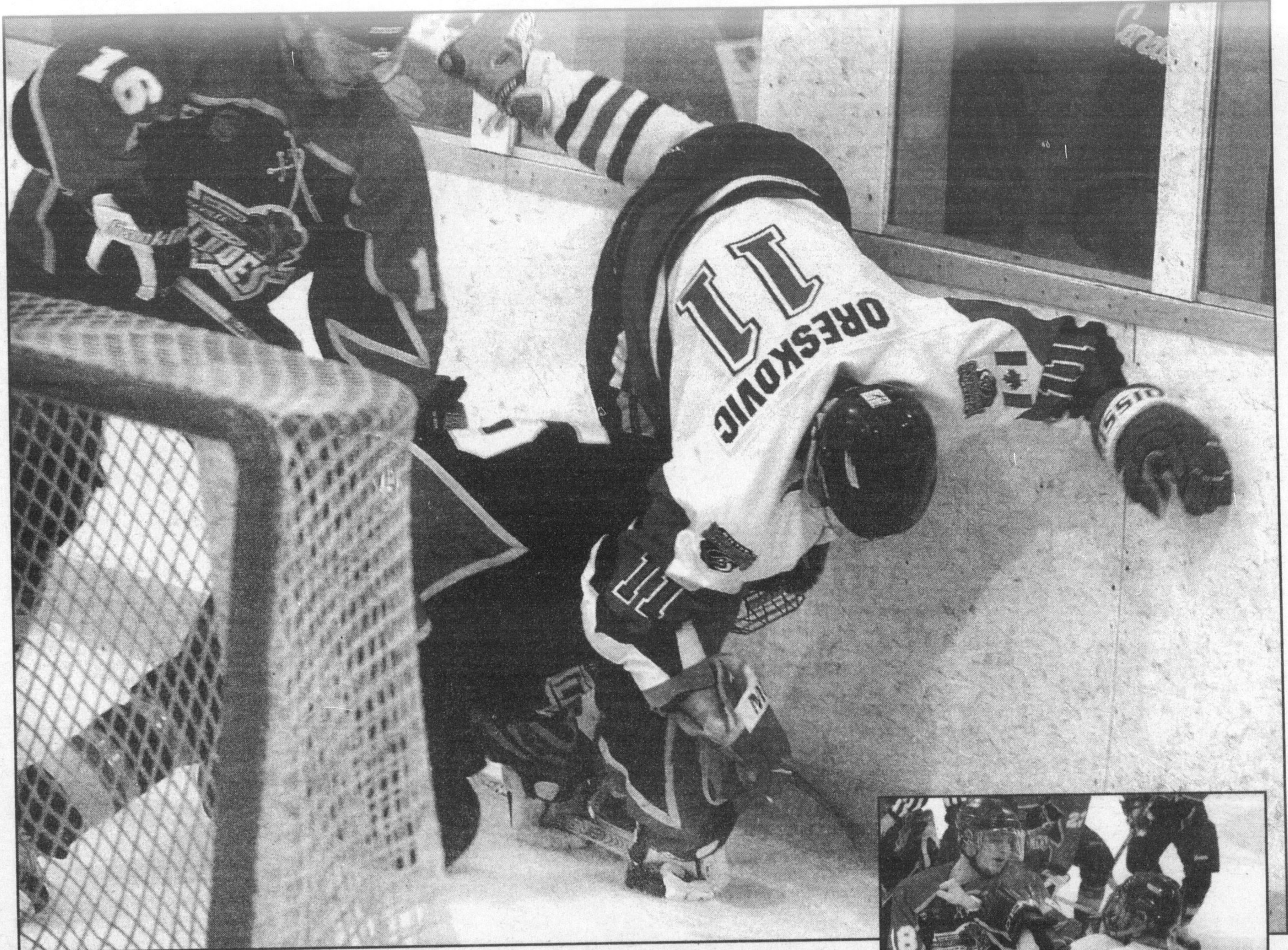
The weekend split pushed the IceHawks to 13-9 on the year and lifted them into a fourth-place tie with Mississauga.

Swallow, Bernardi and freshman forward Mike DeMarchi are all question marks for tonight's trip to Gordon Alcott Arena to face the top-seated Georgetown Raiders. Game time is 8 p.m.

Prior to Friday's game, Beachcombers Hot Tubs and Home presented the first IceHawk Player of the Month award to Omelas, who had 13 goals and 7 assists in October.

Milton is back at home Friday to take on the Streetsville Derbys, who're now being aided by former IceHawks director David Dermo.

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



Photos by GRAHAM PAINE

IceHawk Jason Oreskovic is upended by Oakville defenders Paul Metcalfe (left) and Charlie Giffin behind the Oakville net, while Milton teammate Ryan Silveira (at right) tangles with Oakville's Tyler Woodise during an emotionally-charged showdown at Memorial Arena Sunday afternoon. Milton lost 4-2.



Local drivers shine during Super Finals

Mohawk Racetrack fans got their money's worth Saturday evening, as the top Ontario-sired trotters and pacers delivered outstanding racing in eight \$300,000 Super Finals.

Two-year-old trotting filly Peaceful Way opened the talent show with an impressive Ontario Sires Stakes record performance to score her eighth straight victory and move within \$8,500 of a \$1-million season.

Leaving from post six, Milton driver Chris Christoforou and Peaceful Way sailed to the front just past the :28.4 opening quarter and maintained a comfortable lead before accelerating off to a fourth-length win in 1:57 over Ifhallsouldtalk and Miss Michelle H.

The time shaved four-fifths of a second off the former record for a two-year-old trotting filly on the seven-eighths mile oval, set by the great Eleganimage in 1996.

"Until somebody beats her, I'd have to say she's the best. She proved it in the Goldsmith Maid (Oct. 18). I'd never seen any horse, let alone a two-year-old trotting filly, do the kind of trip she did in the mud," said trainer Dave Tingley.

Tingley shares ownership on Peaceful Way with breeder Angie Stiller of Arva and Joseph and Barbara Myers of Jamesville, VA. The Guelph resident now turns his attention to preparing the gifted young trotter for the November 21 and 29 Breeders Crown at The Meadowlands in New Jersey, where she'll tackle the best freshman trotting fillies in North America.

Also headed to the Breeders Crown off an impressive Super Final victory is Amigo Hall, who cruised to an effortless 1:56 triumph in the three-year-old trotting colt division.

Like Christoforou, fellow Miltonian Mike Lachance sent the Balanced Image son to the front just after the first turn and pulled away from the



Hoof Beat

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field with every powerful stride — hitting the wire two-and-three-quarter lengths up on Meadowview Sunny and JM Vangogh.

Lachance drove the 2003 Hambletonian champion to the victory for trainer Blair Burgess and owners Robert Burgess of Campbellville, Karin Olsson-Burgess of Milton and Walnut Hall Limited of Lexington, KY.

Following the Breeders Crown, the partners have decided to give the colt a well-deserved rest and then resume his training in preparation for a four-year-old campaign.

Amigo Hall's feminine counterpart — Queen Of Jewels — began her winter vacation after adding a glittering Super Final trophy to her collection. The win was Miltonian Steve Condren's second trip to the winner's circle on the \$2.4-million program, and cemented Queen Of Jewels' status as the top Ontario-sired three-year-old trotting filly of 2003.

"I was worried before the race. She didn't seem as good tonight as she had been. We had some coughing going on and I just wasn't happy with the way things were going," said trainer Carman Hie. "I'm very relieved. Before she won the last Gold Final I thought that she'd had a good year, and then she won the Gold Final, and now this. It's a great year."

Hie shares ownership on the winner of \$444,706 with Stewart Cockshutt of Rockwood, Burlington's Gary Smith and Peter Kloeffer of

Harley. The King Cough daughter halted the Mohawk teletimer at 1:57.1, two lengths ahead of Chelemark Ginger and Wescott.

Condren's other Super Final victory came in the two-year-old trotting colt division with In Conchnito, who hit the wire in 1:58.1 to score his sixth win for trainer Robert McIntosh Stables Inc. of La Salle, Dave Boyle of Bowmanville and CSX Stables of Liberty Center, OH.

Freedom Hanover delivered a 1:54.1 upset in the novice pacing colt event, one of three divisions settled by a narrow margin, for Sampson Street Stables of Old Forge, PA., Deena Rachel Frost of Delray Beach, FL., Jerry Silva of Bellmore, NY and Mathias Meinzingler of Central Islip, NY.

Freshman pacing filly Serious Comfort also eked out a head victory over rival Invitro, claiming the 1:53.3 win for trainer Roy Jeffries and owner-breeders Millar Farms of Newmarket, and three-year-old pacing filly Please Me Please captured her fifth win of the season with a 1:52.4 squeaker over Burning Point on behalf of Robert McIntosh Stables Inc., Al McIntosh Holdings Inc. of Leamington and Dwight Stacey of Mitchell.

The final \$300,000 division went to Ambro Acquire, who battled to a 1:52.3 front-end victory over Border Patrol and Make It Brief.

"He's been a tough horse all year. He really deserved that," said Bruce MacDonald, who conditions the Rustler Hanover colt for Mardon Stables of Loretto and Daniel MacIsaac of Charlottetown, PEI.

The win boosted the colt's record to five wins, 10 seconds and three thirds in 27 starts.

While many of the three-year-olds enjoy a well-deserved rest, Mohawk fans will have one last opportunity to catch the two-year-old trotters and pacers in action in the Canadian Breeders Championship November 22.