

IceHawks' mistakes costly in Georgetown

By **STEVE LeBLANC**
The Champion

The Georgetown Raiders finally assumed control in the battle of north Halton this past spring, and don't appear ready to hand it back anytime soon.

Despite a largely credible performance against the defending conference champs at Gordon Alcott Arena Tuesday night, the Milton IceHawks offered the occasional crack in terms of defense and discipline.

And as they were likely already aware, even a few miscues usually prove disastrous against a team as talent-rich and opportunistic as Georgetown.

"I think there were some positive things we can build on, but we also had some breakdowns that you've got to eliminate when playing a team like this," stressed assistant coach Rob Wilson of the 4-1 loss. "You've got to be mentally strong."

He was no doubt referring to a huge giveaway in the dying moments of first-period play and over-lapping minor penalties early in the second — both of which allowed the hosts to establish one-goal leads.

Kain Tisi would keep his visitors within striking distance for much of the night, until surrendering two more markers in the final 14-and-a-half minutes. The steady cager turned back 41 shots overall, nearly

twice as many as counterpart Matt Harpwood.

Although the IceHawks gave up just one goal while shorthanded, a rash of infractions minimized their offensive efforts. Said Wilson, "Penalties caught up with us."

A couple of horribly-executed powerplays of their own didn't help matters either.

Julian Sarraino's eighth goal of the season knotted things up a minute into period two, before the powerhouse hosts picked up steam on the way to staying unbeaten at home and strengthening their front-running status in the West.

Milton's lone tally was set up by former Raider Ryan Angelow and Wes Clark, while Matthew French and Andrew Bonello provided fundamentally-sound play through the first half to keep things tight. Ryan DeMonte tallied twice for the Raiders, who got singles from Frank DeAngelis and John Winstanley.

IceHawk notes: Captain Lee Swallow and Ryan Bernardi returned from minor injuries Tuesday. Casey Gilholm was also in the lineup, but is being worked back slowly ... Milton will compete at the holiday Newmarket Showcase, although their schedule hasn't been made available yet ... The IceHawks host Streetsville tonight and travel to Brampton tomorrow evening. Both games start at 7:30 p.m.

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Haydar's sophomore season in AHL off to lukewarm start

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Traditionally Darren Haydar's even-keeled demeanour has kept him from getting a swelled head during championship runs and sensational scoring stretches.

But at times it's also served to minimize discouragement, when production isn't quite measuring up to potential.

The Nashville Predators hopeful currently finds himself marred in one of those latter occasions, weathering a less-than-stellar start to his sophomore year with the AHL Milwaukee Admirals.

While not pushing the panic button quite yet, he knows a modest two goals and five assists in 10 games isn't turning too many heads these days.

"I'm not really disappointed with how things are going, but then I'm not exactly happy either," said the 24-year-old sniper, who at this point last season had more than twice as many points and was three days away from his NHL debut in Chicago.

Nevertheless, history has shown that offensive droughts never last long for Haydar.

And last Friday's 3-2 win in San Antonio offered hopes for a quick return to form. The 2002/03 AHL Rookie of the Year created a number of big scoring chances and set up goal

number two to help edge the Rampage and lift Milwaukee to 5-1-3-1.

"We have a new coach and a few new players, so some things haven't been in stone early on this year, but I think I'm just starting to find my zone again," explained Haydar, who's had to adjust to a new powerplay structure this fall.

Looking down the road, he says an improved Admirals squad could well make a bigger impact in next spring's playoffs — and consequently, give him more high-stakes exposure.

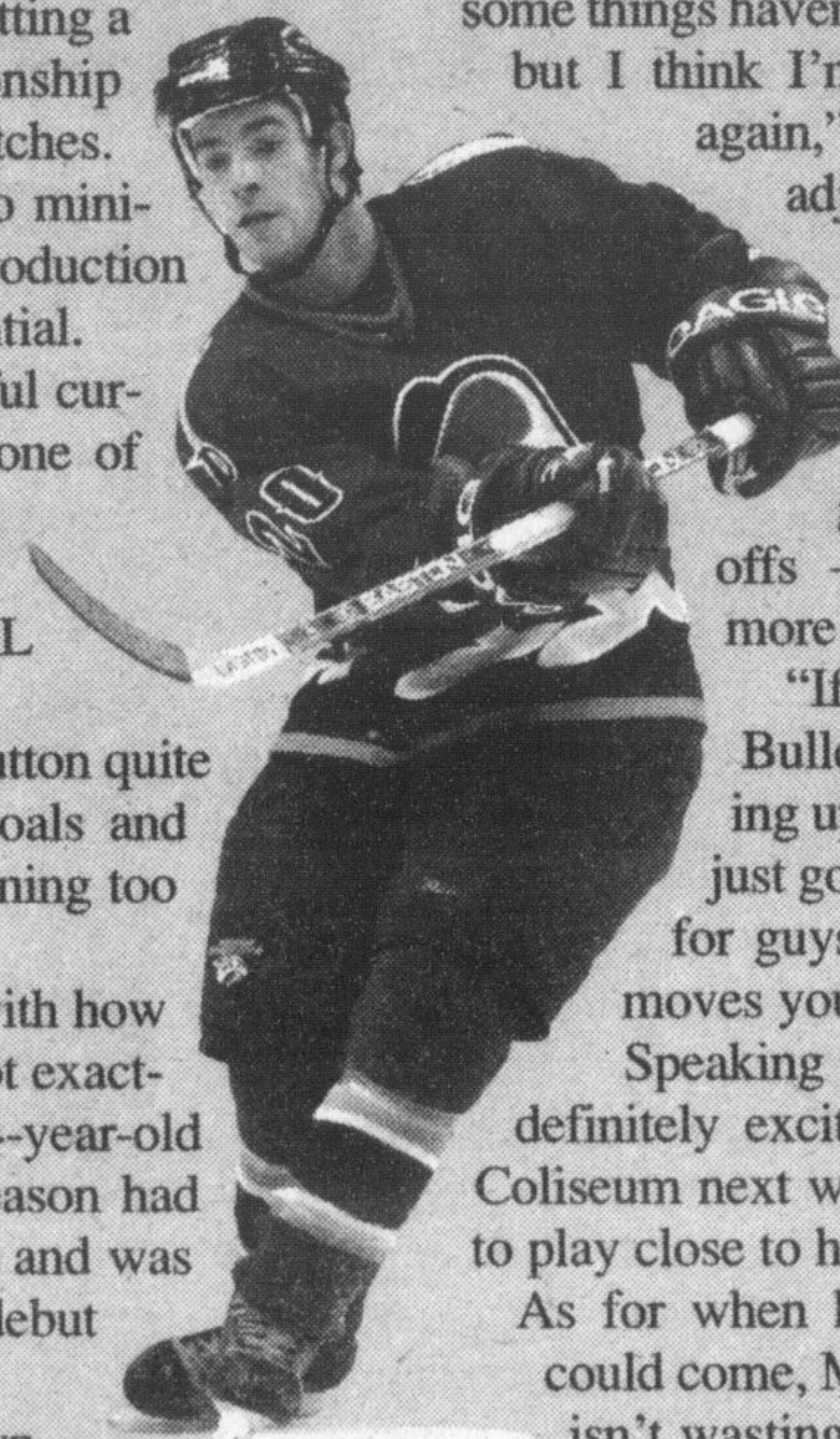
"If you look at last year's Hamilton Bulldogs team, 10 guys are now playing up with Edmonton and Montreal. It just goes to show that (NHL) teams look for guys with team success. That's what moves you up the ladder."

Speaking of Hamilton, Haydar says he's definitely excited about a return trip to Copps Coliseum next weekend, adding "It's always great to play close to home."


As for when his next call-up to the Predators could come, Milton's most prolific sharpshooter isn't wasting time on speculation — choosing instead to focus on the here and now.

"I can't worry about what's going on in Nashville, I've just got to concentrate on picking things up here," he stressed.

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Darren Haydar



TONIGHT'S TICKET


IceHawks (13-10) vs. Streetsville (4-16-2)

Game time: 7:30 p.m. at Memorial
Last meeting: Milton won 2-1 in Streetsville
Who to watch: Veteran defenceman Andrew Bonello missed most of the last Milton-Streetsville tilt with a banged up shoulder and will no doubt be hoping to make an impact this time around.
The skinny: Despite some recent help from seasoned hockey men like David Dermo and Gregg Carrigan, the Derbys remain a basement-dwelling club that's not likely to do much more than put up a respectable showing.
Champion's pick: Milton by three.

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