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Bertoli, Titans picking things up

ECHL veteran rolling after slow start

By JON KUIPERIJ

The Champion

After a slow start, Scott Bertoli and his Trenton Titans are now on a roll.

Milton's 26-year-old former Ivy Leaguer was held pointless in his first several games. But following this past weekend's home-and-home split with Atlantic City, the ECHL mainstay now has a dozen points in his last 13 contests.

The Titans have compiled a 9-3-1 record over that span and sit tied for third in the ECHL's Northern Division — despite beginning the season with three straight losses.

"Other than that opening weekend, things have been good. Starting 0-3 and being where we're at is pretty satisfying," remarked Bertoli. "We have about 10 or 11 rookies in our lineup so it takes time for them to adjust from the college game, and we just didn't play well that first weekend."

Although the 5-foot-10, 205-pound sniper has racked up the assists this season, leading Trenton with 11, he didn't manage his first goal until the Titans' 13th game of the year — a 2-0 win over Toledo November 15.

Bertoli tallied 21 times and added 38 assists in just 47 games with Trenton last year. An elbow injury kept him out through the early part of the season.

"It was getting frustrating. Pucks that should have gone in weren't going in," he said, noting he was still getting plenty of scoring chances. "You start gripping your stick a bit and you pass up some opportunities that, if the puck was going in, you

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SCOTT BERTOLI

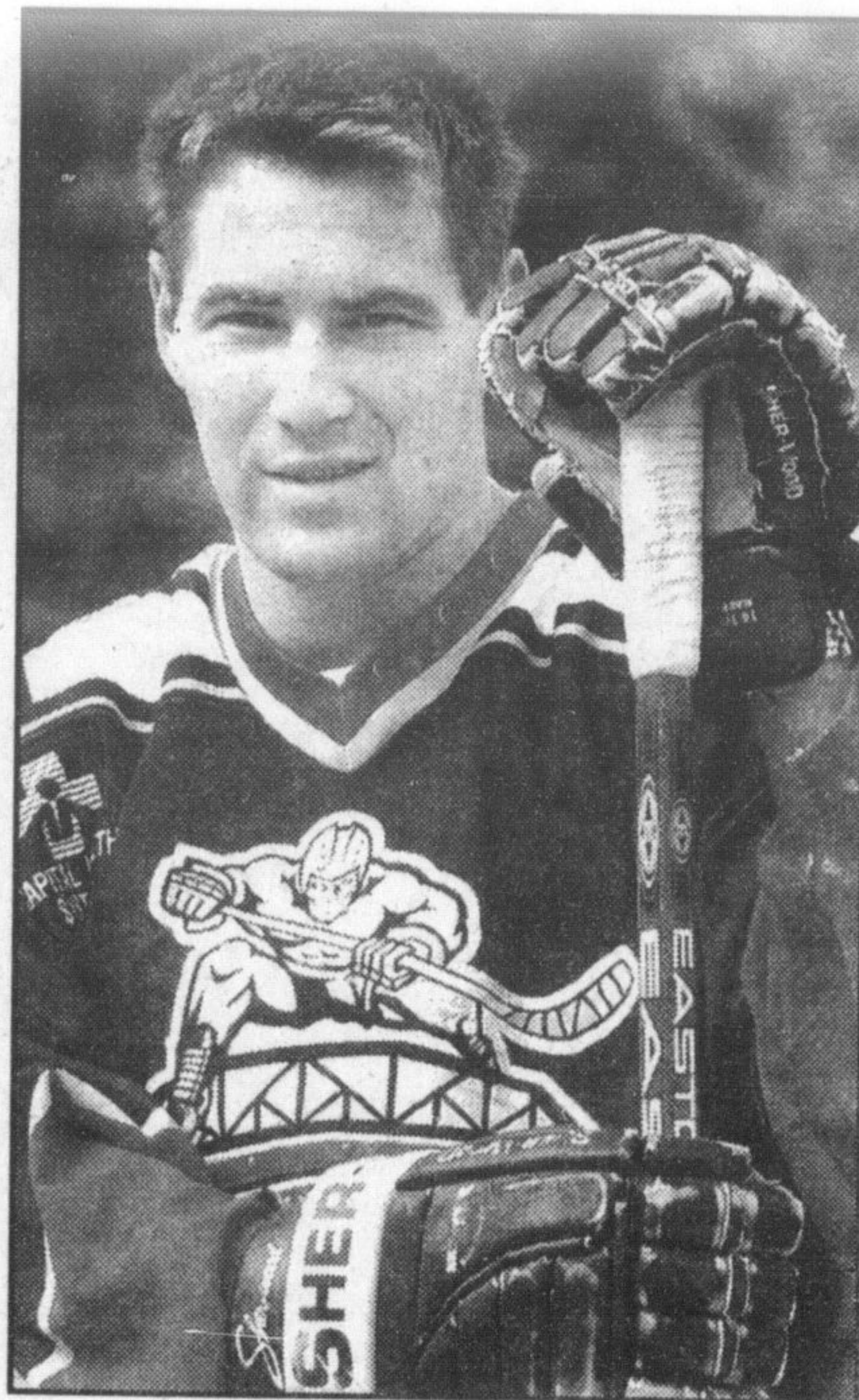
wouldn't have."

Now that the season's first goal is out of the way, Bertoli hopes the floodgates will open as he seeks another crack with an AHL squad.

The former Princeton University star — who's had brief stints with the Lowell Lock Monsters and St. John Flames during his professional hockey career — was going to be called up by the Milwaukee Admirals last season before the club learned he was sidelined with a hyper-extended elbow.

"Hockey has so many injuries and call-ups. If I'm playing well at the right time and teams need left wingers or forwards, I don't see why I wouldn't get the opportunity," said Bertoli. "Last year was bad timing, so hopefully that won't happen again this year."

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Scott Bertoli

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