

Comment

The Canadian Champion

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Is it safe to call this end of regionalism?

In the years that \$100 million went missing in an ostensible fight against Quebec separatism, the Conservative voice was being hopelessly splintered by a fierce regionalism.

That officially ended with the birth of the Conservative Party of Canada. With Saturday's leadership vote, it may have effectively ended, too.

Newly-crowned Conservative Party of Canada leader Stephen Harper was said to have walked into the race with western baggage. He walked out with a majority of votes in virtually every corner of Canada.

Even those who don't hold Conservative values dear must be relieved that the newly-forged party can now stop turning its guns on each other and point them toward government accountability instead.

The sponsorship scandal, the ever-ballooning gun registry and the patronage Prime Minister Paul Martin boldly promises to end are all symptoms of a party allowed to run without a watchdog in the shape of an effective opposition.

With a leader now in place, the opposition can begin doing its job — shining a very bright light on the current government, resurrecting a national Conservative voice and offering voters a long-awaited choice.

We can't see anything wrong with that.

Our Readers Write

Patrick Kelly's letter regarding Milton's development right on the money: reader

Dear Editor:

Kudos to Patrick Kelly for articulating so well what many of us old Miltonians feel about the rush of development that has occurred over the last few years in his recent letter entitled 'Reader wonders how growth has benefited town'.

When the proposed development of Milton was first approved by council — against the wishes of many residents — we were told that the end result would be beneficial to all involved, and that the quaint, small-town charm that characterized the town would remain intact.

Well, it's been a few years now since the houses began popping up, so maybe it's time to take a good

look and see exactly what Milton has become. In my opinion, what we have is a town that is small in geographical size, but has all the trappings of a larger urban area.

We have a town where you can't even grocery shop on the weekends because the three stores we have are so crammed full of people that it takes twice as long as it used to.

We have a town where trying to get down Main Street at 5 p.m. is like being in rush-hour traffic, and often comes close to gridlock.

We have a town where urban sprawl is dominating the landscape, and houses are being erected faster than you can blink.

We have a town that's seeing an

increase in taxes with a corresponding decrease in services, such as snow and garbage removal.

We have a town that seems intent on selling off every single piece of available land as quickly as possible, with little regard for the impact such development has for the people who live here.

In short, we have all the problems of a large urban area, with none of the benefits.

It's for these reasons that so many of us scoffed at town council when they extolled the virtues of the new developments and the perks they would bring — because we knew what the trade-off would be.

• see READER on page 7

You just can't beat a good David vs. Goliath clash

I've never made a secret of the fact that I love my job.

While I've done this gig full-time for almost seven years now, covering Milton sports continues to be enjoyable, and in many cases downright exciting. Then there's the rare occasion when it's even inspiring.

Lengthy winning streaks and championships drives certainly hold sports enthusiasts' interest, but for me there's nothing quite like a good old-fashion David vs. Goliath showdown.

David doesn't necessarily have to come out on top — just as long as he stands tall and refuses to merely play out his underdog role.

That happened in 1999 when the Founder's Cup host Milton Mavericks pulled off back-to-back upsets to reach the national finals.

It happened last spring when Bishop Reding's boys baseball team stunned Ontario's top-seeded

Lester B. Pearson Patriots in the Halton semifinals. Two weeks later BR's softball girls followed suit with a monumental 9-8 semifinal comeback win over defending regional champion Georgetown.

Most recently, it was Milton volleyball ace Kirsty Goodearle who delivered a measure of inspiration — doing so exactly two weeks ago at the national college championships in Toronto.

Facing Canada's number one ranked Sherbrooke of Quebec in the semifinals, Goodearle and the host Humber Hawks could have easily rolled over — and seemed poised to do so with straight 25-12 defeats to start the best-of-five match.

But that's when Goodearle said enough.

Almost single-handedly preventing what most in attendance figured was an inevitable cakewalk, she led Humber to back-to-back 25-23 wins —



Up
front
with STEVE LeBLANC

giving it absolutely everything she had in an epic comeback bid — before finally losing the tie-breaker 15-7.

The Milton all-star was an easy pick for game MVP, and judging by spectator reaction was the overwhelming choice for most popular performer that night as well. Her efforts — which included 18 kills over the last three games — were worthy

of any over-the-top form of flattery imaginable.

She also reaffirmed my theory that when played with enough skill and intensity, just about any sport can be exciting. Hockey may be my game of choice, but on this night I wouldn't have wanted to be anywhere else.

Goodearle's Hawks would go on to play a rather lacklustre bronze-medal game against Calgary's Mount Royal Cougars the next night and finish fourth, but that couldn't take the sheen off an absolutely brilliant semifinal showing against the top college volleyball team in the country.

Okay, so this time David didn't slay Goliath — but he did give the big man a serious beating, and earned his respect in the process.

And at the risk of sounding corny, sometimes that's just as impressive as actually winning.

Way to go, Kirsty!