

Erractic start for Haydar's AHL Admirals

By STEVE LeBLANC

The Champion

It was a feast or famine weekend for Darren Haydar and his Milwaukee Admirals.

With offensive efforts superb one night and non-existent the next, the AHL's regular season champs wound up on opposite ends of straight shutouts against the Cincinnati Mighty Ducks.

As a result, Milwaukee went into last night's game-four clash trailing its best-of-seven division semifinal series two-games-to-one.

The Admirals looked like anything but the league's most potent club in Cincinnati Saturday evening — with their top guns, including Haydar, all neutralized in a 1-0 whitewash.

A first-period deposit stood up as the winner, with the Mighty Ducks prevailing by the narrowest of margins for the second time in just four days.

Their initial series squeaker came in Milwaukee Wednesday night, when Stanislav Chistov — a former Georgetown Raider who was part of Anaheim's Cinderella championship run last spring — sank an overtime powerplay marker to cap a 5-4 decision.

Haydar recorded two third-period points in the series-opening defeat and notched the potential game winner with just 6:06 remaining. Two nights later he doubled that production, collecting two goals and a pair of assists to help fuel the Admirals' 6-0 rout. All four points came with the man-advantage, as Milwaukee amassed five powerplay goals to decisively square the series.

Scottie Upshall — who like Haydar and several others was held without a single shot in game three — delivered a hat-trick on Friday.

To say the least, knocking off the Admirals would be a huge feat for the Mighty Ducks, who finished 30 points back and barely made the playoffs. Cincinnati hosted game four last night, and will play host again tomorrow evening for game five. If necessary, game six will be played in Milwaukee Friday.

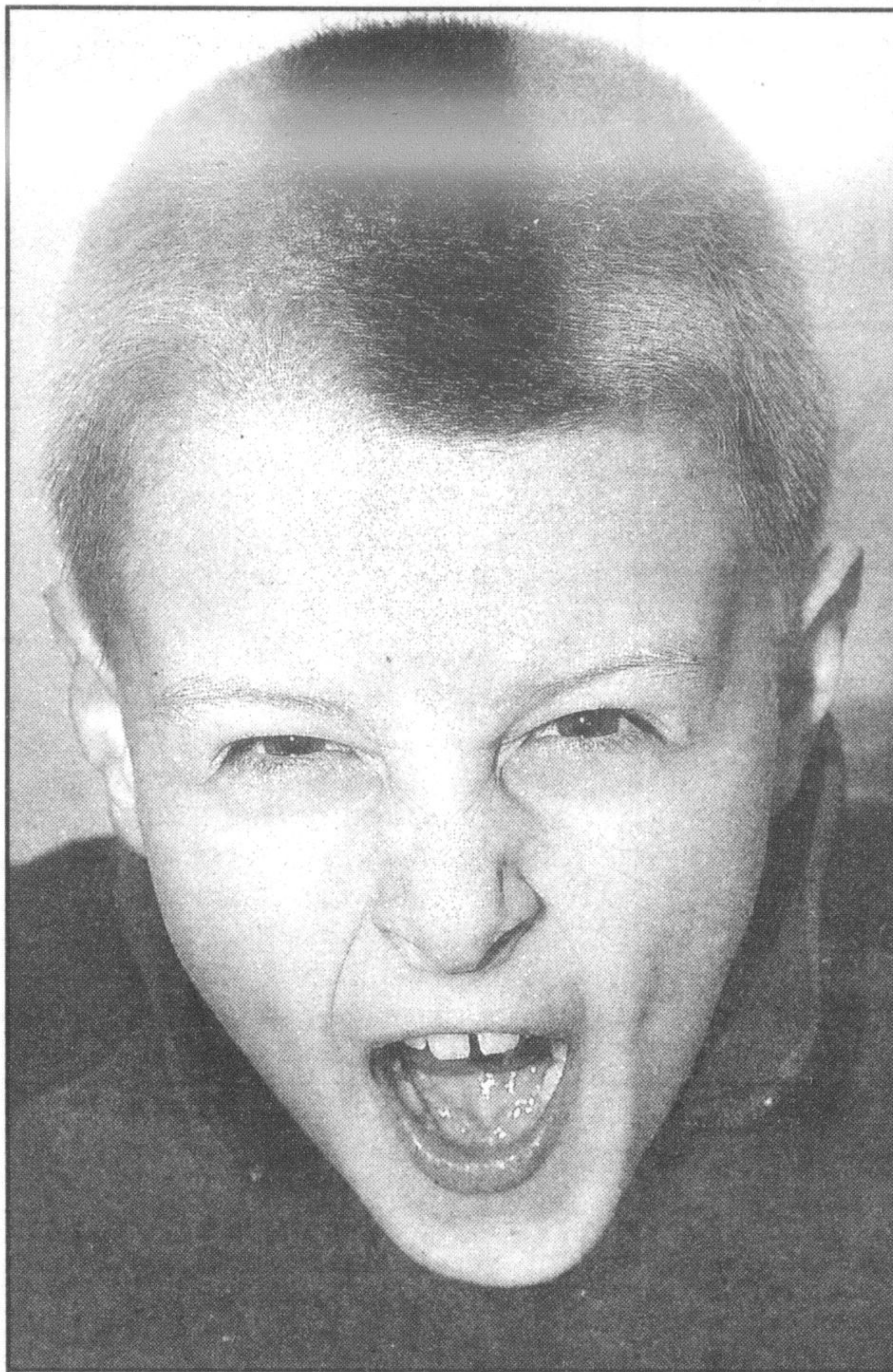


Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Shark attack

Swimmer Evan Ries looked more like a shark than a marlin after he and 40 Milton Marlin members dyed their hair in the team's green and purple colours Thursday night in preparation for last weekend's Ontario Divisional meet in Brantford. See results in an upcoming issue.

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Baby steps the goal for Mavs as rocky regular season begins

By STEVE LeBLANC

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Progress over prosperity.

That seems to be the benchmark these days for the Jr. B Mavericks.

With some key veterans still out of the lineup and production alarmingly low — especially on the right side — victories could be in rather short supply this spring. But as long as there's regular improvement, head coach Trevor Reid won't go pushing the panic button.

"There's a lot of work to do, don't get me wrong. But we're heading in the right direction," he said.

Those comments followed Sunday's 7-4 loss at Oakville's Maplegrove Arena.

Offensively, Milton continued to exhibit a one-dimensional set-up and lack of physical presence in high traffic areas.

On the plus side, slightly fortified man-to-man coverage and a reduction in unsportsmanlike conduct penalties combined to keep things tight all afternoon.

Coach cautiously optimistic

"I told the guys I didn't want a five or six goal margin today. Two or three goals was at least acceptable," noted Reid, referring to the tightened gap between Friday's 11-4 home-opening defeat to Halton Hills and his team's first road loss.

Now running with the host Buzz, former Maverick Brenden Thenhaus cemented the win with a power-play marker with just over a minute remaining.

This capped a five-point effort, as he and brother Morgan — along with former Milton head coach Glen Little and Craig Hedley, a member of the 1999

Founders Cup host Mavericks who's now a defensive coach with Oakville — outdistanced their old club.

Kyle Goertz led the Mavericks with three assists, while rookie Chris Pedulla tallied twice. Also denting the twine were Troy Hazzard and Adam Rutz.

At John Tonelli Sports Centre Friday, Milton seemed poised to make things interesting down the stretch — netting back-to-back goals to draw within two.

But Halton Hills — once again far more seasoned and skilled than their neighbours this season — would crush any hope for a suspenseful finish with a shorthanded tally and four more unanswered goals in the third period.

Penalties costly

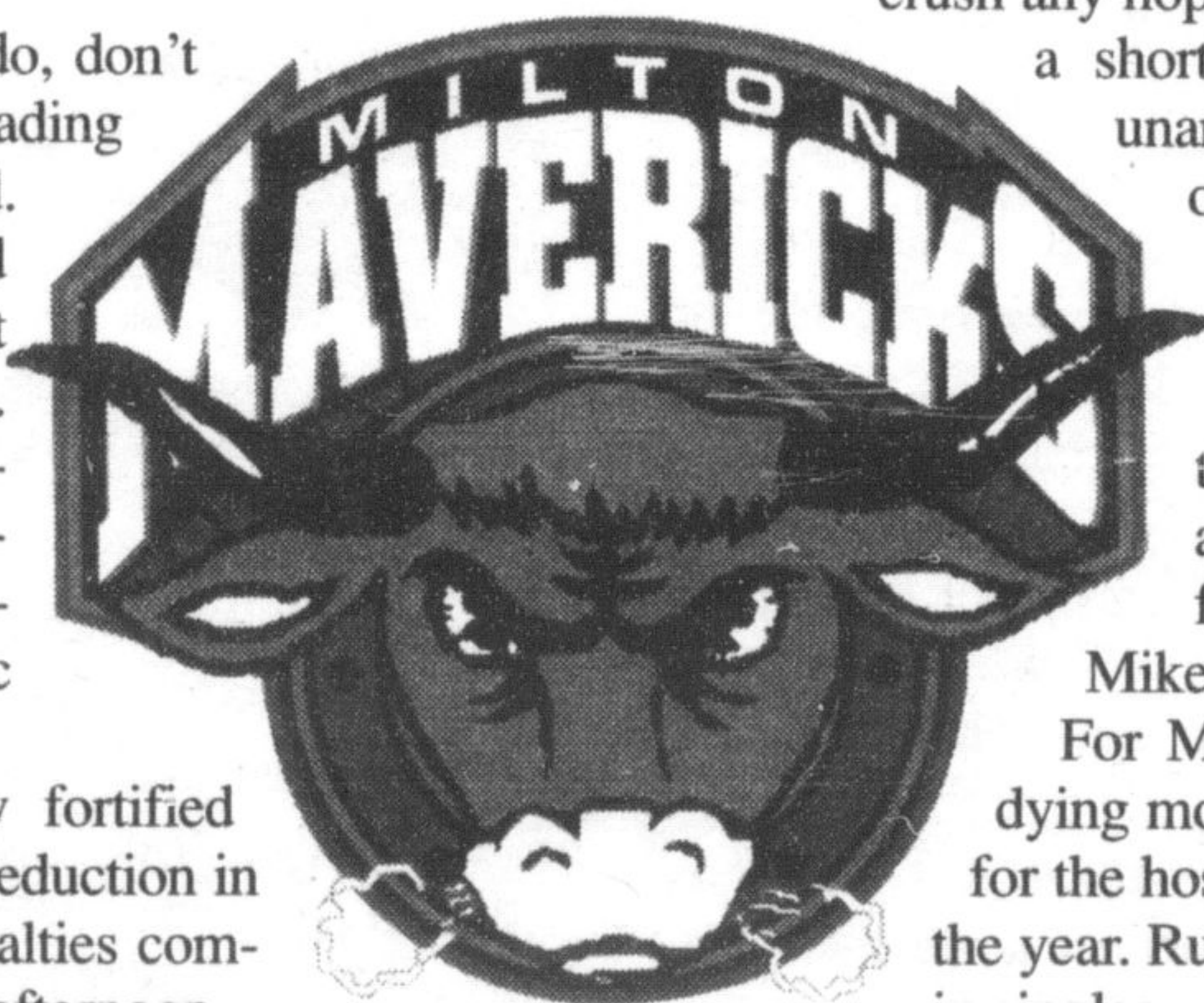
The Bulldogs struck four times with the man-advantage as well, and overall enjoyed five-point performances from Mike Dube and Matt Lyons.

For Milton, Jon Ram scored in the dying moments of periods one and two for the hosts' first multi-goal showing of the year. Rutz and Rick Gallinger chipped in singles.

Rusty shooting and a handful of rash penalties were the Mavericks' biggest obstacles to keeping things close. A rather rough third period saw hosts Mike Novak, Chris Pedulla and Chris Seminerio slug it out with respective counterparts Ryan Oldham, Nick McLaughlin and Aaron Chaisson.

Tandem partners Adam Elias and Chris Ingraham each enjoyed steady starts over the weekend, but both got the hook in the second half.

The Mavericks could have injured veterans Kyle Hagel and Paul Pedulla back for Friday's game against Huntsville. Game time is 8:30 p.m. They close out the week in Barrie Sunday evening.



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