

Junior Red Sox shortstop Andrew Pepper tags out a runner at second before completing the double play against Stoney Creek Sunday morning at Brian Best Park.

Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Another lead surrendered by Marauders

By MURRAY TOWNSEND

Special to The Champion

For the second time in as many games the Milton Marauders let a fish get off the hook.

Last week it was a 107-yard touchdown return with eight seconds remaining that spelled disaster, and this past Saturday they lost 36-29 in Sudbury despite having a 22-10 lead in the second half. Unlike previous seasons when they were happy enough to say they could have won, these are contests they can say they should have won.

"We're not finishing games right now," said frustrated head coach Barry Emo. "We should be 3-0 instead of 1-2."

The Marauders took an early 1-0 lead on a rouge from a missed field goal. After a Sudbury touchdown, quarterback Domenic Camastro found Crispin Barnes in the end zone late in the second quarter and the visitors went to the locker room with an 8-7 lead.

The Marauders got off to a poor start in the second half when they fumbled on their first possession deep in their own zone. The defense held, however, and the host Spartans had to settle for a field goal.

Milton came back hard with three straight touchdowns — one on a Kirby Ginn interception, one on a Jamie Radway reception, and another on a Tony Okorodudu 25-yard dash.

Okorodudu had 90 yards on 10 carries and is averaging an incredible 10 yards a carry on the season. The Nigerian Nightmare had never played football prior to this season, but had watched it on television and wanted to give it a try. Emo had become an acquaintance at the gym, and offered to give him an opportunity.

The lightning fast 19-year-old still has a lot to learn about the game, but according to Emo he keeps getting better and has the potential to be the best running back in the league.

Meanwhile, Sudbury has their own secret weapon. Hall of Fame quarterback Paul Gauthier came out of retirement, and not coincidentally the Spartans are undefeated. He was the quarterback on the last league team to defeat the Oakville Longhorns.

The Spartans cashed in on a turnover off an interception, scored another touchdown and then kicked a field goal to give them a seven-point lead with 42 seconds remaining.

That left plenty of time for a Marauder comeback, but the Sudbury kickoff hit a Milton player in the helmet and the Spartans recovered. Then they just ran out the clock to end the game.

"Sudbury is a team that beat a group of talented individuals," said Emo, with emphasis on the team. "Talent alone doesn't win football games, teams do. We haven't proven that we're a team yet. We had them wounded, but we didn't put them down."

Emo says that ultimately that's the responsibility of the coaching staff. "We haven't lost hope. There's still an opportunity to pull off a credible season. We have the potential to be a great football team, but right now we're on different pages."

The Marauders will try to return to .500 when they face the Quinte Limestone Panthers (formerly known as Belleville) at Milton District Saturday at 3 p.m.

Victory eludes juniors — twice

By STEVE LeBLANC

The Champion

There was no joy at Brian Best Park Sunday afternoon.

At least there wasn't for the host Junior Red Sox, who were denied victory in both halves of their Father's Day double-header.

A 4-4 stalemate with the Mississauga Tigers in game two offered some solace — but not much, considering Milton took a 3-1 lead into the eighth inning but couldn't quite solidify their third win of the season.

A handful of errors — including catcher Evan Jeans' heartbreaking overthrow to third in the top of the 10th — were the biggest stumbling block to victory.

Liam Tennant worked the tail-end of the tie after a credible 131-pitch performance by Kevin Cooper, who gave up just

one run and scattered eight hits over seven-and-a-third innings.

Matt Lillie provided two nifty bunts, the second cashing in Mike Volpe in the fourth to make it 3-1. Milton's first two runs were driven in by Jeans and Ryan Harper.

Tennant erased Mississauga's extra-innings lead with an RBI single that scored Andrew Pepper. Chris Whiting had a chance to play hero with a 10th inning bases-loaded situation and appeared to be walked before popping out to end the game — which was called because of the three-hour limit.

There was little excitement down the stretch in game one, as the Red Sox were unable to get much going offensively and were mercied 11-1 by the Stoney Creek 1812s. Tim Sogan was a one-man wrecking crew for the day's initial visitors,

going 5-for-5 with three two-run homers.

Stater Pete Nicolaichuk took the loss for Milton, while Harper worked the last three frames.

The Red Sox weren't severely out-hit in the blowout, but just couldn't mount much in the way of rallies to keep pace with Stoney Creek. A bases loaded sacrifice fly by Tennant in the fourth scored Scott Connolly for the lone run.

A little more sound at second base on this particular day, Jeans helped turn two double plays. Overall however, his team committed four errors and made a few bad decisions on the bases that stymied momentum.

Now 2-7-1, the Red Sox will look for pay-back tonight when they travel to Mississauga to take on the Tigers. From there they'll compete at this weekend's Byron Tournament.

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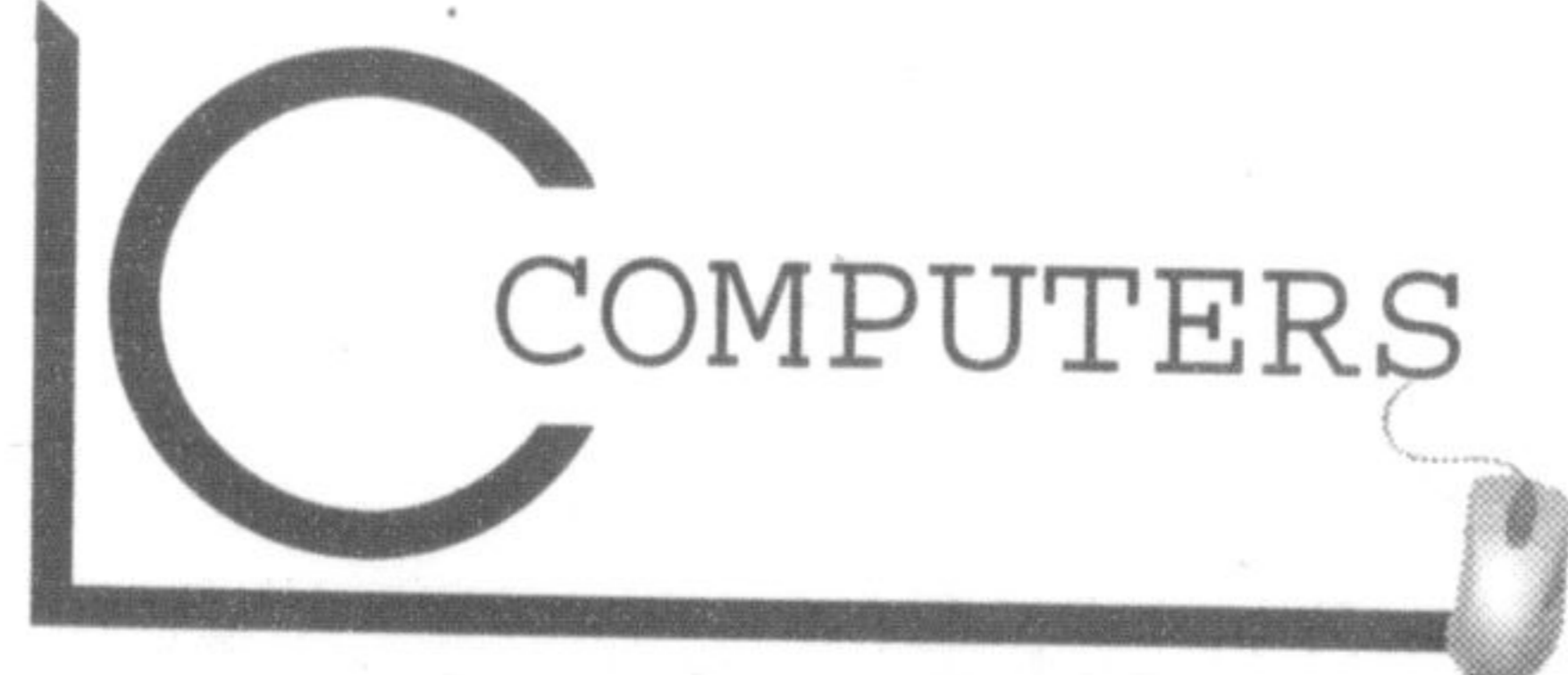
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