

# Sports

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## Marauders clinch national title

*Milton goes from league doormats to Canadian champs in just two years*

By MURRAY TOWNSEND

Special to The Champion

It's been an incredible season for the Marauders — one that couldn't have been any better now after winning the Canadian Major Football League title in Edmonton Saturday afternoon.

Bringing a two-year rags to riches turn-around to completion, Milton toppled the defending champion Calgary Wolfpack 40-27.

The odds were stacked against the Marauders every step of the way. After winning the NFC championship, they had to change to three downs, had a potentially disastrous five-week lay-off and were short-staffed due to the hefty expense of the trip.

Milton went up 3-0 on a Len Watkins field goal on their opening drive and then added a touchdown early in the second quarter by Jon Nedljukovic.

The Wolfpack came back with some big plays,

including a 64-yard TD completion to take a 14-10 lead into intermission. Their quarterback, Darryl Leason, threw for 45 touchdowns this season, and had over 4,000 yards in passing. Fifteen of those passes went to brother Mike.

The Marauders have a passing attack of their own, however, although they didn't need to use it as much this year with four downs and an effective running game. Domenic Camastro hit Crispin Barnes with two touchdown strikes in the third quarter to return the lead to Milton.

Nedljukovic added another rushing major, Watkins another field goal and Steve Lubin capped the championship drive with a 17-yard carry into the end-zone.

Nedljukovic, who had 183 yards in the game, was named offensive MVP. Linebacker Wayne Sliwinski took top defensive honours, while Andy Taylor won the special teams MVP award for his big kick and punt returns. "I think preparation was the key," said head coach Barry Emo. "We neutralized the (Leason) brothers and kept the quarterback off track by putting constant pressure on him, making him hurry his throws and make bad decisions."

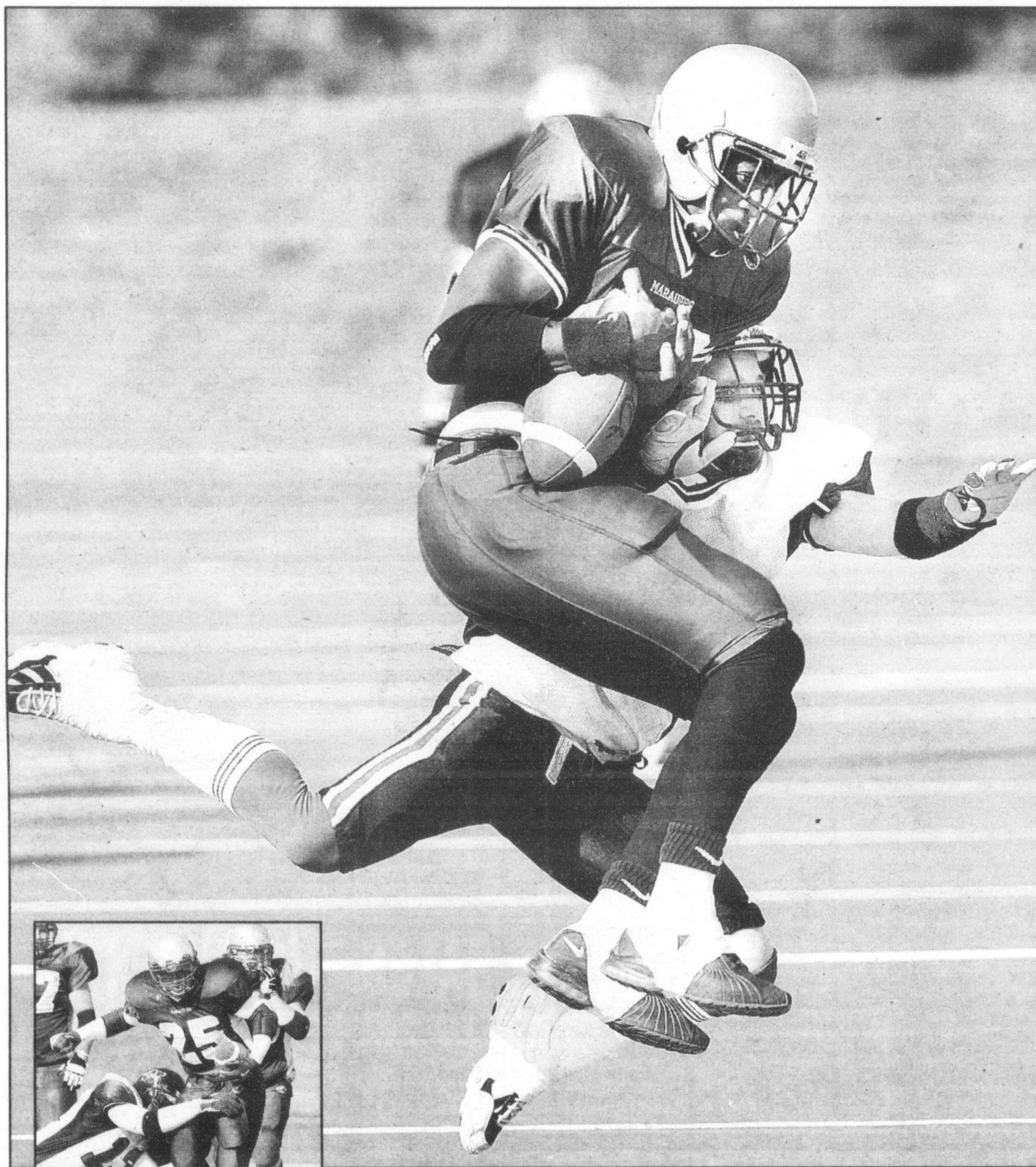
Much of the preparation came with the help of Milton resident and Toronto Argonaut linebacker Mike O'Shea, who broke down the game films of the Wolfpack for the Marauders, as well as the intricacies of three-down football. "Because of all that time invested by Mike O'Shea, we seemed to know what they were going to do before they did it."

The one downside was that almost 30 players were unable to make the trip. "It's too bad because they deserved that moment, and we were missing some key players. I'm disappointed in the Town. They didn't even bother to get back to us (about financial support) and give us a definitive answer before we left."

Emo added that the lack of support from the Town will be a factor in his decision to return or not next season, although he did note that there was good support from the people of Milton.

It's been a long season for the Marauders who began workouts last December. "This is an incredible group of guys," said Emo. "I can't say enough about the players and the other coaches on the staff. We were focused. Every single guy on that football team wanted to win this game, and every single guy did his job."

"This was a team of heart and a team of destiny."



Photos by IAN JACKSON/EPIC PHOTOGRAPHY

Marauder Crispin Barnes barely holds onto the ball as he breaks this flying tackle by Calgary's Rob Sakires, while (inset left) Jon Nedljukovic tries to get past a couple of Wolfpack defenders in Saturday's national championship victory in Edmonton.

## Drury cagers win another tourney

E.C. Drury's senior girls basketball team has certainly given itself a lot to live up to this fall.

Heading into yesterday afternoon's regular-season opener at Georgetown's Christ the King, the Spartans had amassed seven straight wins and a couple of tournament titles — the most recent coming at Oakville Trafalgar Friday.

Much like during their championship run a week earlier in Georgetown, Drury prevailed in dominant fashion — putting the finishing touches on another unbeaten

campaign by dumping cross-town rival Bishop Reding 39-14 in the finals.

On the strength of a suffocating defensive effort, the Spartans built up a commanding 20-0 hammerlock and never looked back.

Katherine Greaves led with a dozen points, while rounding out the hit parade with big two-way showings were Laura Wellstead, Brooke Harper, Michelle Parcels and Jenny Hsu.

Just as encouraging as the gold-medal win itself was the ever-improving play of

ninth graders Sarah Broeze, Caitlin Pinder and Amanda Niedzielski.

Drury's stiffest challenge of the day came against Hamilton's Delta High. An effective full-court press was the key to a 46-28 victory — with Parcels' 20-turnover assault and a 16-point performance from Wellstead highlighting the round-two clash.

Greaves also stood out with 14 points.

Before that the Spartans knocked off the hosts 38-12 — thanks to sharp play at either end of the court.