

Sports

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Royals engineer huge comeback

Score two late TDs to steal first round

By **STEVE LeBLANC**
The Champion

Bishop Reding's senior football team slipped past Iroquois Ridge just as their season was slipping away.

Trailing first-round playoff action by eight points with less than four minutes remaining, the Royals scored only their fourth and fifth touchdowns of the year to dispose of their guests 21-17 Friday afternoon.

Punctuating the school's most dramatic gridiron comeback ever, tail-back Ted Fair drove more than half the field with three huge bursts up the middle — reaching the end-zone on a 12-yard carry with just 25 seconds remaining.

It was his second major of the game and fourth this season, since moving to town from Markham.

"Pretty great," said the afternoon hero, when asked how he felt while being inundated by teammates' congratulatory compliments and embraces.

BR had appeared to tie things up moments earlier when a returning Mike Rubino muscled his way over the line for an extra two points after Marcas Gray — also back from injury — came up with a huge touchdown reception from first-time quarterback John Brady.

An off-side call negated the convert, but as it turned out Reding would have just enough time left to regain possession, complete the rally and eliminate the Ridge for the second straight season.

Noted head coach Joe Jurus, "It's amazing what four minutes can do to a football game."

Up until their do-or-die turnaround, the Royals had all sorts of trouble moving the ball against a particularly quick and aggressive Ridge defense — which ripped the offensive line wide open and all but completely wiped out the running game.

Three ill-timed holding calls, two fourth-quarter

interceptions and a generous sprinkling of procedural glitches proved equally crippling for BR.

"We've got to work on all those little things," stressed Jurus.

On a more positive note, the Royals did come out on top with a handful of players debuting at key positions — including Brady. Meanwhile, Gray snagged three big completions and delivered two huge punt returns to keep victory hopes alive.

Gavin Charles converted Fair's first touchdown, while a fourth-quarter safety accounted for the other two points. All of BR's scoring was done in the second half, after trailing 8-0 at intermission.

The Royals head to Burlington Friday to take on Robert Bateman, a first-year school comprising players from the old Lord Elgin and General Wolf.

Meanwhile, BR's juniors finished fifth in the regular season — improving to 2-4 with a 50-14 rout of White Oaks Thursday — and will travel to Oakville today to take on St. Thomas Aquinas in first-round play. Both playoff games start at 2 p.m.



Stretched to the limit

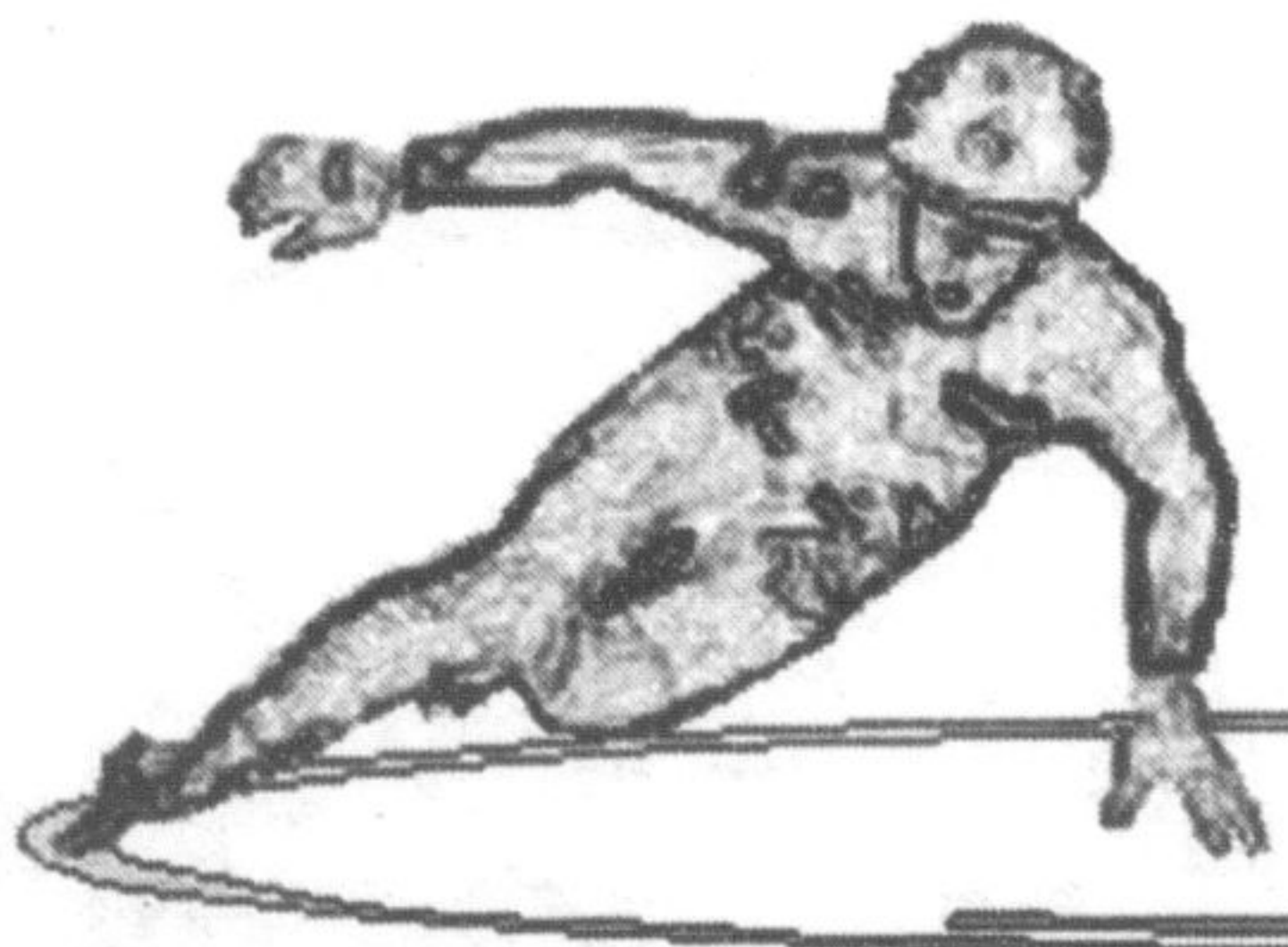
Milton Springer Leah Rubenstein, an Argo level competitor, showcases her flexibility on the beam during Saturday's one-year open house at Milton Sports Centre. The event served to acknowledge the various groups that helped the local gymnastics club get into its new facility, as well as introduce the 2004/05 competitive gymnasts, who'll travel to Halton Hills later this month for their first of three provincial qualifying meets.

Photo by **GRAHAM PAINE**

Milton Speed Skating OPEN HOUSE

Thursday November 4, 2004
7 - 8 pm

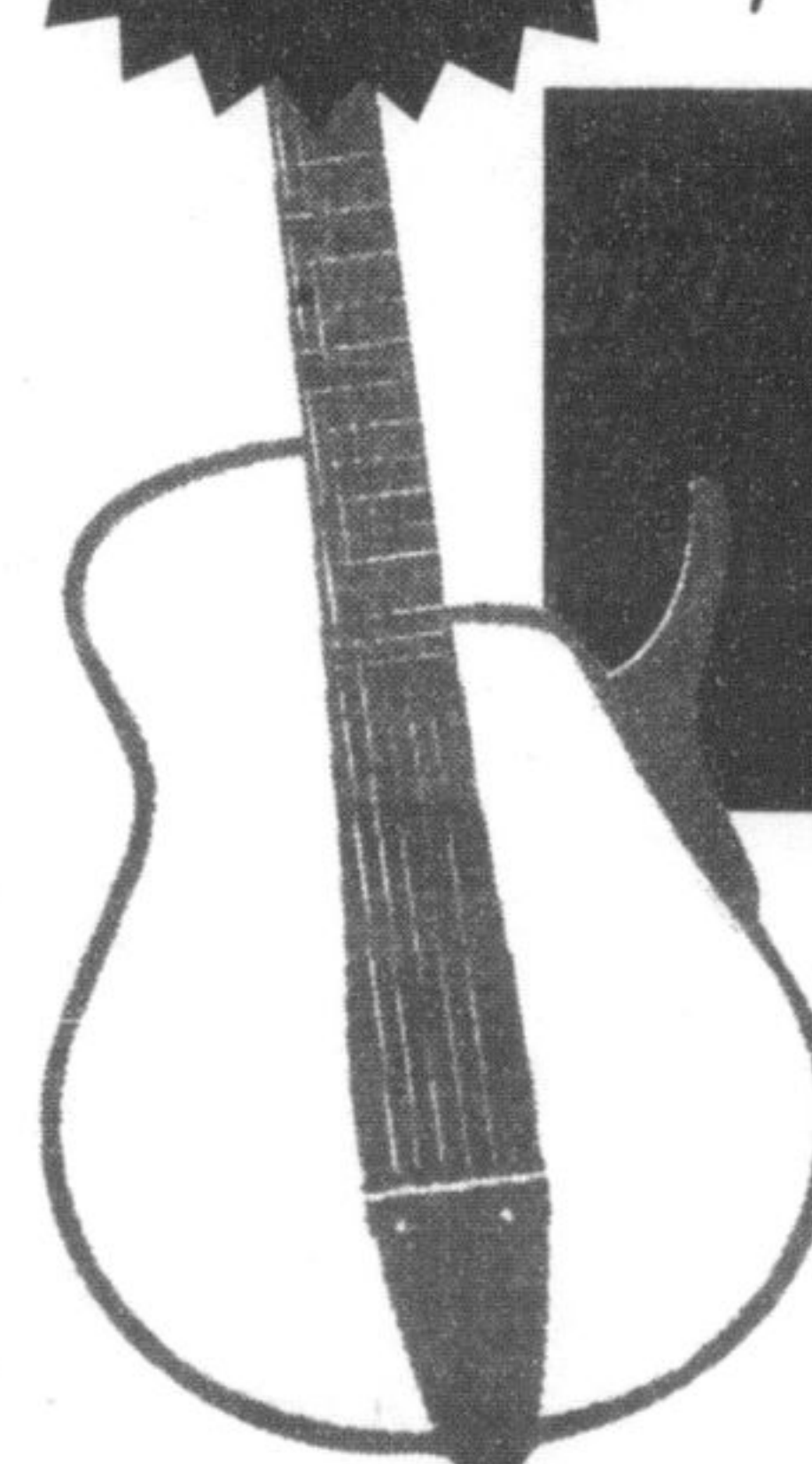
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