

# Sports

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*How sweet it is!*

## Local duo headed to Royal Bank Cup

*Rogers and Sgarbossa aid Raiders' Dudley win*

By **STEVE LeBLANC**  
*The Champion*

Weyburn, Saskatchewan is hardly what one would consider a popular destination.

But Miltonian Dan Rogers and Campbellville's Rob Sgarbossa are no doubt still reveling in the fact that they'll be heading there later this week — after having reached the innermost sanctum of Tier 2 Jr. A hockey.

Enjoying the ultimate opportunity for revenge at a jam-packed Gordon Alcott Memorial Arena Saturday evening, the local duo helped the Georgetown Raiders upstage St. Michaels 3-1 in the Dudley Hewitt Cup finals.

The victory — and accompanying advancement to the national Royal Bank Cup — served as pay-back for a six-game series loss in last month's Provincial Jr. A league championship. And to say it was a career highlight for both Milton-area players would be a staggering understatement.

"This is the best feeling of my whole life," said 18-year-old Sgarbossa, while being mobbed by well-wishers outside the Raiders' dressing room.

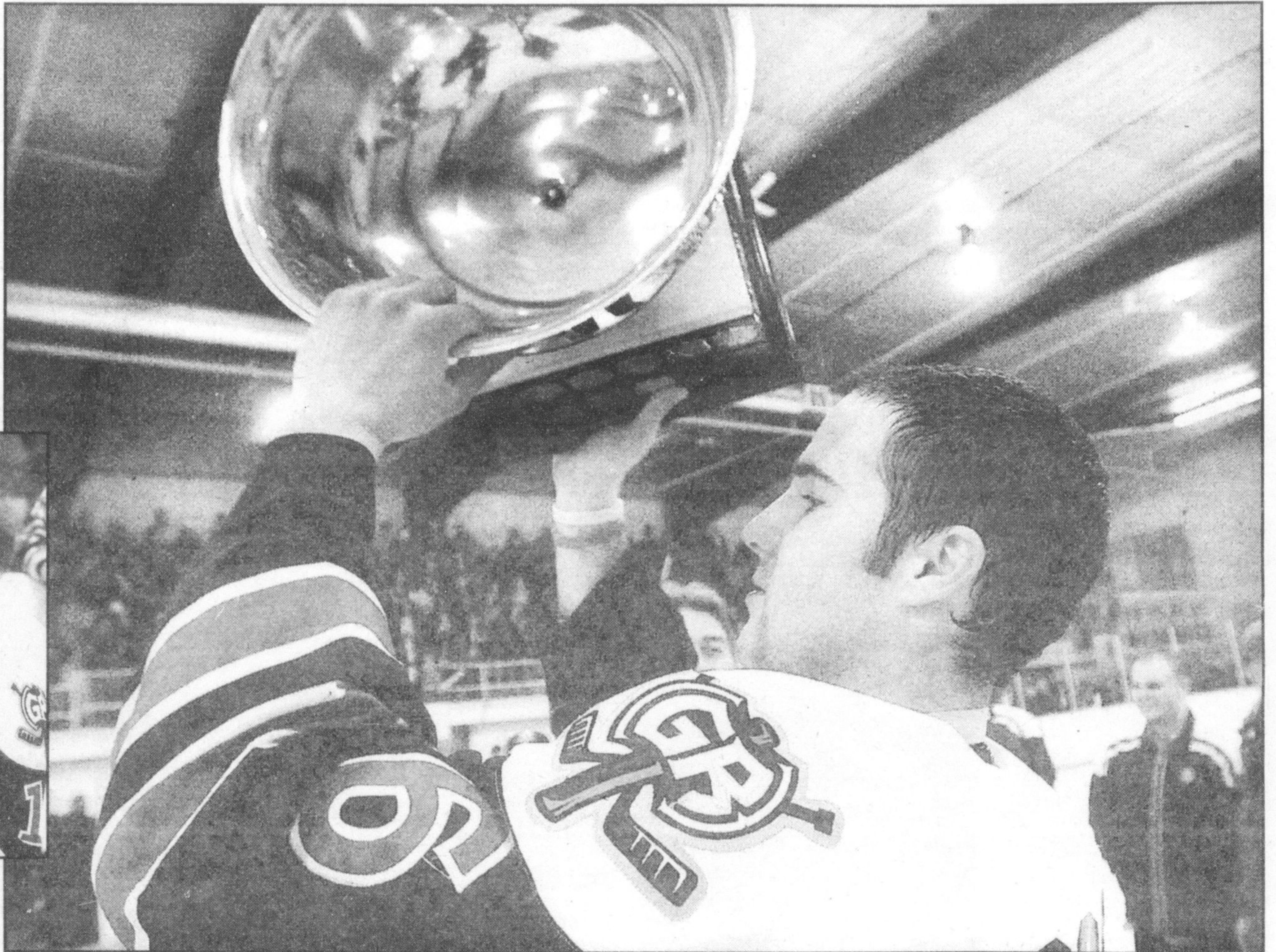
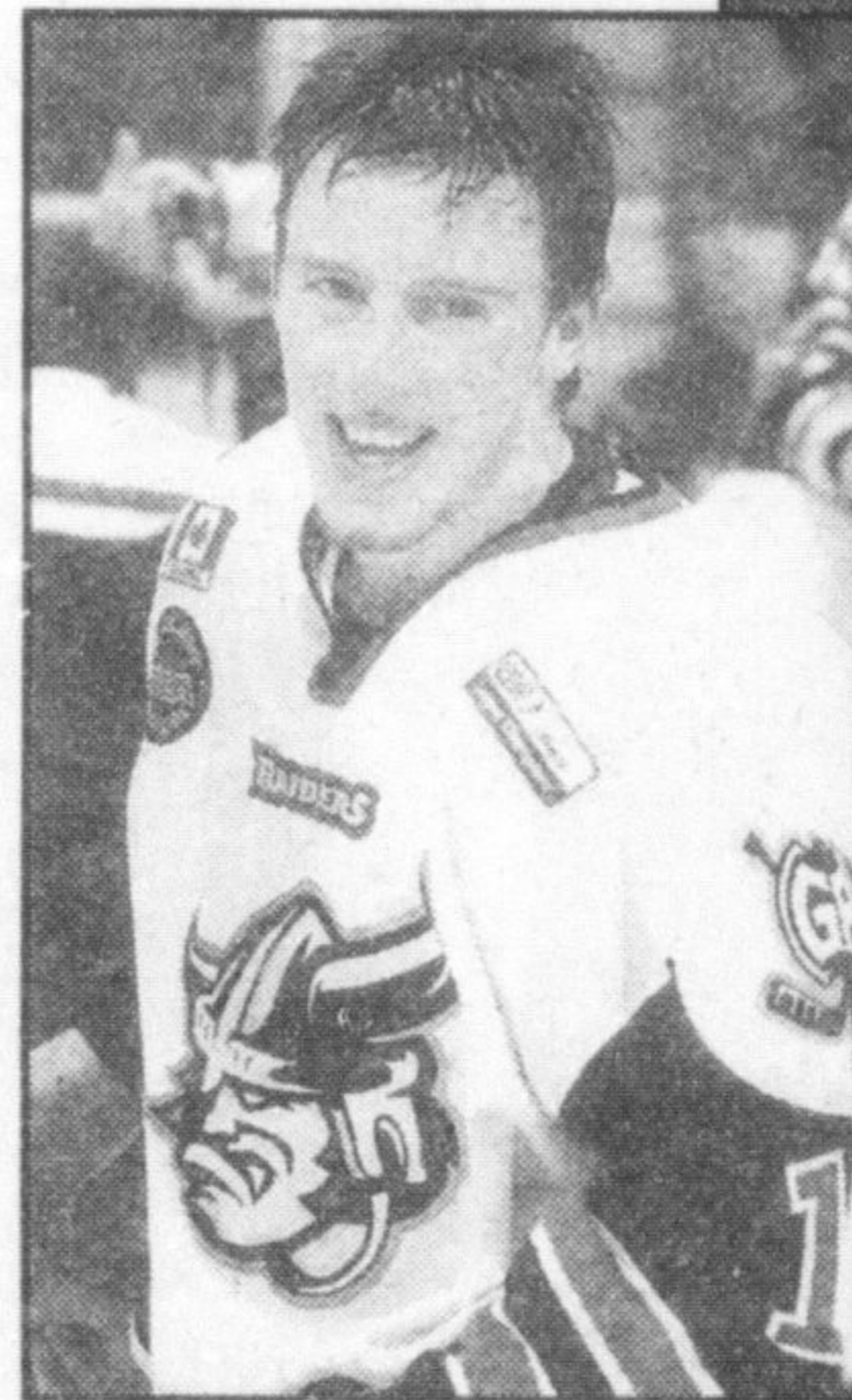
Added 20-year-old Rogers, "It's absolutely amazing. I don't know how to describe it."

Georgetown had rallied to edge St. Michaels 5-4 Thursday night to finish the Central Canadian Jr. A championship round robin at a perfect 3-0 and earn a bye into the finals. But if the Raiders were experiencing any overconfidence from their unbeaten run to the title showdown, it sure didn't reflect in their play Saturday.

"St. Michaels had played us hard every game and we knew it wouldn't be easy (in the finals)," said Rogers, who had two points in Thursday's comeback win — including a first-period powerplay goal and an assist on the game winner — and set up goal number three in the championship rematch. "But I think that day off with the bye really helped because we all really showed up tonight."

In addition to those key points, the former OHL defenceman logged close to 30 minutes of play in the finals and helped neutralize St. Michaels top sniper Andrew Cogliano, who was limited to an assist after exploding for four goals the night before in semi-final play against Fort William.

Rogers' exuberance seemed unmatched for much of the post-



Raiders assistant captain Dan Rogers hoists the Dudley Hewitt Cup above his head while (inset left) Rob Sgarbossa celebrates Saturday's 3-1 championship win over St. Michaels.

Photos by HERB GARBUTT

game celebration. But that was probably expected from a long-time junior who before this season hadn't enjoyed anything even remotely resembling playoff prosperity.

"I've never won anything like this," noted the assistant captain.

For his part, Sgarbossa had an assist in each of the Raiders' three round-robin wins and was instrumental in two big penalty kills late in the second period Saturday that effectively crushed St. Michaels' hopes for a comeback.

Remarked the well-rounded centre, "I was just trying to do my job and help the team in any way I could. It was a total team effort

tonight. We worked our butts off for this one."

Sgarbossa added that the return of enigmatic forward Kevin Harvey, suspended since game five of the league championship, was a definite boost to his club.

"He picks us up and makes us a better team."

The Dudley Hewitt Cup final actually featured four players with Milton connections. Besides Rogers and Sgarbossa, St. Michaels goalie Kain Tisi and defenceman Mike Gershon played half a season each with the IceHawks in 2003/04 and this past year respectively. The five-team Royal Bank Cup runs from May 7 to 15.



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