

Marauders rally to topple T.O.

Comeback keeps Milton unbeaten on year

By MURRAY TOWNSEND
Special to The Champion

On an afternoon far too hot for football at Milton District High School, the Marauders warmed up after a cold start and iced the Toronto Maddogs 23-14 Saturday — running their record to 2-0.

Toronto's first play of the game resulted in a 65-yard pass reception and a 7-0 lead. A couple plays later, Milton quarterback Domenic Camastro stepped in a pot hole as he went back to pass and went down as if he'd been shot. The resulting fumble put the hosts in a hole in their own territory and at quarterback, punter and kicker with Camastro out of the game.

He's questionable for this week as well.

The Maddogs only managed a single point off the fumble, but the Marauders weren't moving the ball offensively, despite fumble recoveries by Kirby Ginn and Wayne Sliwinski. Backup quarterback Josh Spanik suffered a couple interceptions, and the Marauders sustained more injuries — partly from the heat and partly from the Maddogs' hard-hitting defense.

Milton finally got a break when linebacker Derrick Burke stripped a ball carrier deep in the Toronto zone, and Mike Bartello scooped it up and took it in for the major.

That seemed to spark the offense, and Spanik's improved confidence was noticeable. After the Maddogs conceded a two-point safety, Spanik started hitting the tal-

ented group of receivers and the Marauders were on the attack. Andy Taylor and Theon James hauled down big gains and with a fourth and two at the Toronto nine-yard line, the Maddogs went offside. Jon Nedeljoic carried it in from the three-yard line to give Milton a 16-8 half-time lead.

The Maddogs stormed back on their first possession of the second half with a long pass to make it 16-14 for Milton, but the Marauders returned the favour on their next drive after a long reception by James and a 13-yard scamper by Nedeljoic, which completed the scoring.

Toronto made some late attempts to get back in the game, but the Milton defense shut them down, and picked up a couple fumbles along the way. The Maddogs couldn't get much going on the ground, which isn't unusual against the Marauders, but they did manage some big gains through the air, which is unusual.

Part of the reason for that is that a ground attack is futile and opponents have little choice but to pass, and with more attempts opponents are bound to hit on some of them, especially with a team as talented as the Maddogs.

The Marauders' defensive backfield,

which had six interceptions last week, and could have had at least that many in this game, welcome the challenge. Defensive back Mike Bartello, who has a knack for making big plays, credits the backfield's experience and the ball pursuit mentality of the defense with some of their ability to be in position to make interceptions or pick up fumbles. And even though the defense is broken up into different units, they still all

feed off each other. "The linemen and linebackers make our job so much easier. The pressure and hurries they put on the quarterback can force him into making mis-



takes."

It's a rare game when the defense isn't contributing to the Marauders' scoring as well. "We're hungry out here," said Bartello. "There's nothing more rewarding for the defense than to put points on the board. Everybody feeds off that and it creates a positive snowball effect."

Coach Barry Emo also credited the composure of Spanik, "being thrust into a difficult situation," and the team as a whole overcoming the early injuries and early deficit. "They showed heart and determination, which is the foundation that the Milton Marauders are built on."

The Marauders take to the road for the first time this season with a tough game in Oakville Saturday at 6 p.m. at Bronte Field.

Senior Sox scorch visiting Oakville

By STEVE LeBLANC
The Champion

It's hard to say just what was hotter Saturday afternoon — the weather or the Senior Red Sox' comeback efforts.

Amid sweltering temperatures at Brian Best Park, Milton completely turned the tables on the neighbouring Oakville Athletics after falling behind 3-0 — thanks in equal parts to timely hitting and a credible recovery by starting pitcher Adam Finkbeiner.

The result was a convincing 8-4 decision and bump up to 7-3 in COBA play — continuing the Red Sox' best start in recent memory.

"We only left four guys on base, that was the big thing," said manager George Moore, referring to the high number of stranded runners heading into this past weekend.

Reese Davies highlighted Milton's rally with a three-run homer in the fifth, while moments later Kevin Comisky took one over the fence as well for the club's first back-to-back long balls of the season.

Nick Aalbers kept his sizzling spring campaign going with a 4-for-5 performance, and newcomers Mark Sgrignoli and Brent Teboekhorst aided the uprising with two hits apiece.

Defensively, Finkbeiner settled down after a somewhat shaky second inning and

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GEORGE MOORE

allowed just half-a-dozen hits overall through seven frames. Matt Dickson delivered a three-up, three-down eighth, while regular closer Nate Tami gave up a rather meaningless unearned run in the ninth.

Committing just two errors on such a hot day was no doubt an impressive feat, and

Moore said he was also quite pleased with the catching of rookie Liam Tennant, who can play just about any position needed.

"He's so versatile out there, and he's got the right attitude," remarked Milton's skipper.

Friday night's game in Dundas was postponed after just an inning due to lightning.

The Red Sox have picked up junior-age local Conan O'Brien and hope to work him into the lineup within the next couple of weeks.

Milton travels to Brampton Friday evening and is tentatively scheduled to face Dundas in either a single-game encounter or double-header Saturday afternoon at Brian Best.

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Mosquitoes win own tournament

Hosts capture championship with disqualification victory

Given the choice, the Mosquito Red Sox would have preferred to win by traditional means.

Then again, tournament championships probably aren't something to get too nit-picky about.

That was most likely the consensus following June 5's disqualification victory over the Brampton Braves in the finals of the local mosquitoes' nine-team showcase at Lions Sports Park.

Ironically enough, it was the Braves who would lodge an initial protest, arguing midway through the title match — which they were leading 6-4 — that Milton had one too many coaches on the bench.

However, Brampton's manager was in fact referring to t-ball rules, and his team wound up being the ones disqualified for using one of their pitchers beyond the maximum seven innings in a day.

"It was kind of a crappy way to win, but those are the rules," explained convenor Jeff Murdock.

Unbeaten on way to finals

The Red Sox strung together four wins en route to the championship, including decisions over the Mississauga Twins and Georgetown Eagles — two teams they'd never beaten before.

Last Friday's 17-5 pasting of the Twins was particularly impressive. T.J. Baker and Jonathan Piché shared the pitching duties, while a well-balanced attack exploited opposing Mississauga's defense from start to finish.

Baker, Piché and Walt Kirkness offered solid mound work against Georgetown, with Taylor McVey driving in half the runs in an 8-5 triumph Saturday.

Milton's other victims included the Pickering Red Sox and the Tier 1 Mississauga Tigers, who were upstaged 11-7 in the semifinals Sunday.

The Red Sox jumped all over Mississauga's mistakes to book passage to the championship. Kirkness, Piché and Matt Pilarczyk fared well on the hill to keep the usually-explosive Tigers to single digits — enjoying exceptional defence along the way.

Along with finishing first overall, Milton also stood out in skills competition.

Baker and McVey took first and third-place honours in the hitting derby, while Nicholas Murdock and Jeremy Dixon each finished second in the accuracy and distance throw and base running respectively.

Making up the rest of the tournament championship contingent were Josh DeMorais, Jack Goncz, Alex Kerr and Corey MacDonald.

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