

Sports

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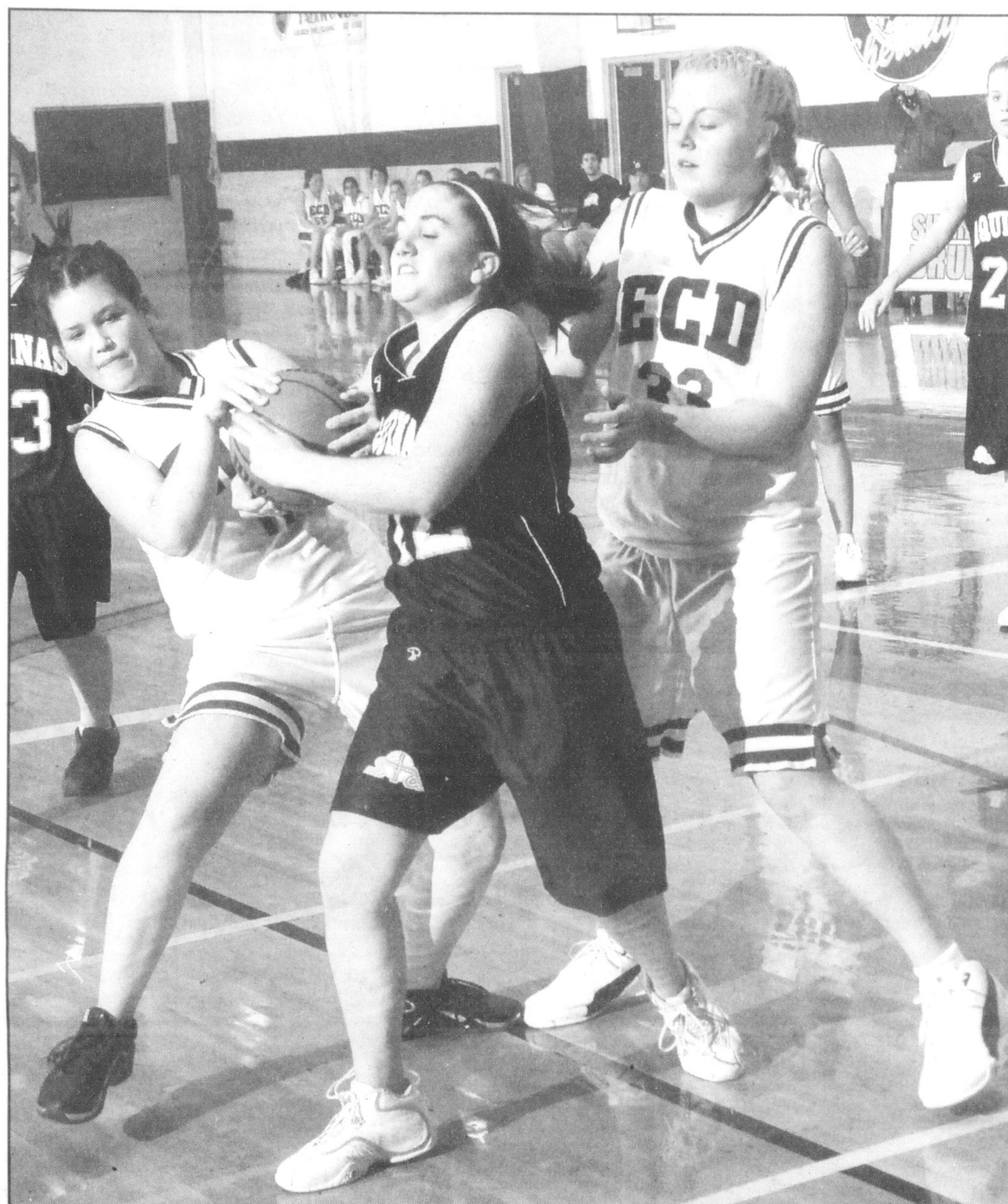


Photo by BARRIE ERSKINE

Spartans sunk in finals

E.C. Drury senior cagers Michelle Parcels (left) and Sarah Fredricks fight for the ball with St. Thomas Aquinas' Emily Quinn during Halton AA championship play at Sheridan College Tuesday afternoon. The Spartans were beaten 40-30, with some second-half foul trouble by Fredricks — this year's anchor — and a sprained ankle injury to Brooke Harper combining to nix their shot at the title. Fredricks led Drury with eight points while Parcels chipped in six.

Late surge powers 'Hawks to victory

But Milton sub-par overall versus Blues

By **STEVE LeBLANC**
The Champion

The IceHawks' 6-4 victory in Bramalea Tuesday night sparked a mixed reaction from head coach/general manager George Dupont.

And for good reason. His Western Conference front-runners certainly proved they can produce under pressure, tallying four goals in the final 7:13 of play — including a last-minute empty-netter by Matt Read. However, Milton's fierce finish didn't quite overshadow what was by and large a second-rate performance against the significantly improved yet still vastly inferior Blues.

"Championship teams find ways to win when they don't deserve to, which is encouraging. But on the down side we've got to learn that we can't show up for 10 minutes and expect to win," Dupont remarked, following what was arguably the ugliest victory this season.

Fresh after taking a 10-minute misconduct late in the middle stanza, emotional sparkplug Aaron Lewicki potted the game winner on a scramble with 1:21 remaining. He and linemate Read each scored twice and combined for seven points, with Read netting the most stylish goal of the night just before second intermission — using his speed to split the defence and bury one in low past Blues cager Michael Nigalis.

Adam DeJong and Kole Bryce wiped out Bramalea's 4-2 lead with an upstairs wire and deflection respectively.

Otherwise there wasn't much good to say about the IceHawks' latest road trip, which was marred by ill-timed line changes and downright pitiful execution on the power-play.

Some late penalty trouble allowed the

Blues to pull ahead by a pair with a two-man advantage goal seven minutes into the final frame, bolstering their hopes for an upset victory.

Milton's defencemen factored heavily into the evening's production with six assists, including three by Jason Fortino. Bryce's equalizer — the first goal for the recently-acquired Jr. B winger — was set up with a blueline blast by rookie blueliner Cody Goloubef.

Shots on goal favoured Milton 47-19.

Now 19-2-1-1 and ranked fifth nationally for a second straight week, the IceHawks close out their best first half of the season in franchise history this weekend. Tonight they host the Royal Bank Cup host Streetsville Derbys and tomorrow they head to Georgetown to take on the Raiders.

• for related story, see page A25



TONIGHT'S TICKET

Milton IceHawks (19-2-1-1) vs. Streetsville Derbys (12-11-1-1)

Game time: 7:30 p.m. at Memorial
Last meeting: Milton won 4-2 September 23 at Memorial
Who to watch: Aaron Lewicki has shown a lot of fire since returning from an ECHL tryout and continues to look like the emotional sparkplug needed for a successful playoff run.
The skinny: A big finish to Tuesday's road trip to Bramalea offered a strong indication that the IceHawks — still unbeaten at home this season — may be over their mid-season funk and ready to start dominating again.
Champion's pick: Milton by four



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