

Sports

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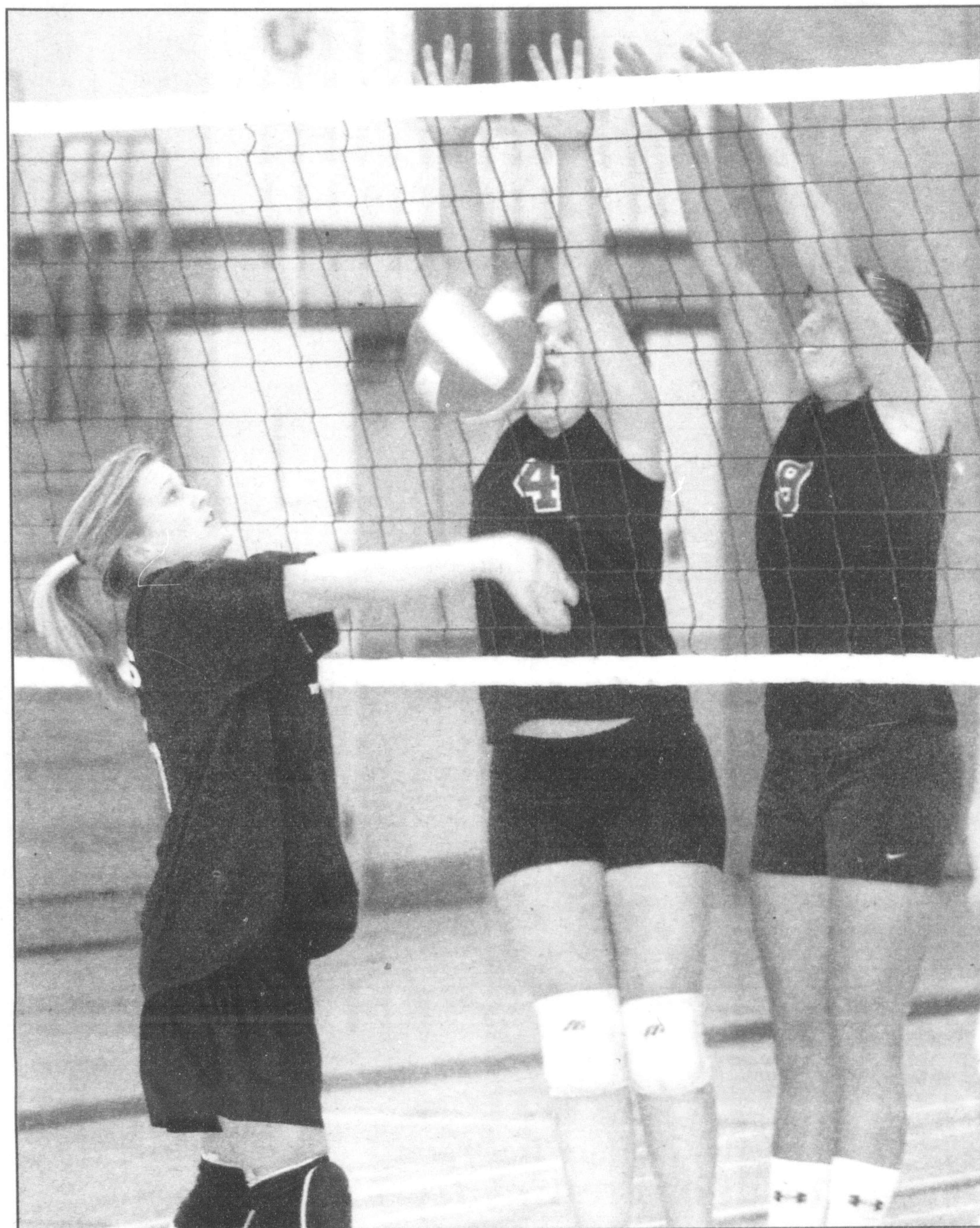


Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Hands up

Bishop Reding's Michelle Serafini (left) attempts to bump the ball over the net past the outstretched arms of E.C. Drury's Michelle Parcels (4) and Ashley Rutz (9) during senior girls volleyball play at Reding Tuesday afternoon. The host Royals won 25-19, 25-22.

Local duo making their mark in UHL

Macdonald and Konkle faring well with Elmira Jackals

By **STEVE LeBLANC**
The Champion

No matter what the level, there's one on-ice constant for Jarrett Konkle and Craig Macdonald.

Each other.

Joined at the hip when it comes to hockey, the longtime friends and teammates now find themselves together again back in Elmira, New York — where they're enjoying a solid transition to the professional ranks with the United Hockey League Jackals.

Although not experiencing much team success thus far — with Elmira second last overall at 6-16-3 — the 22-year-old Miltonians have certainly been faring well individually.

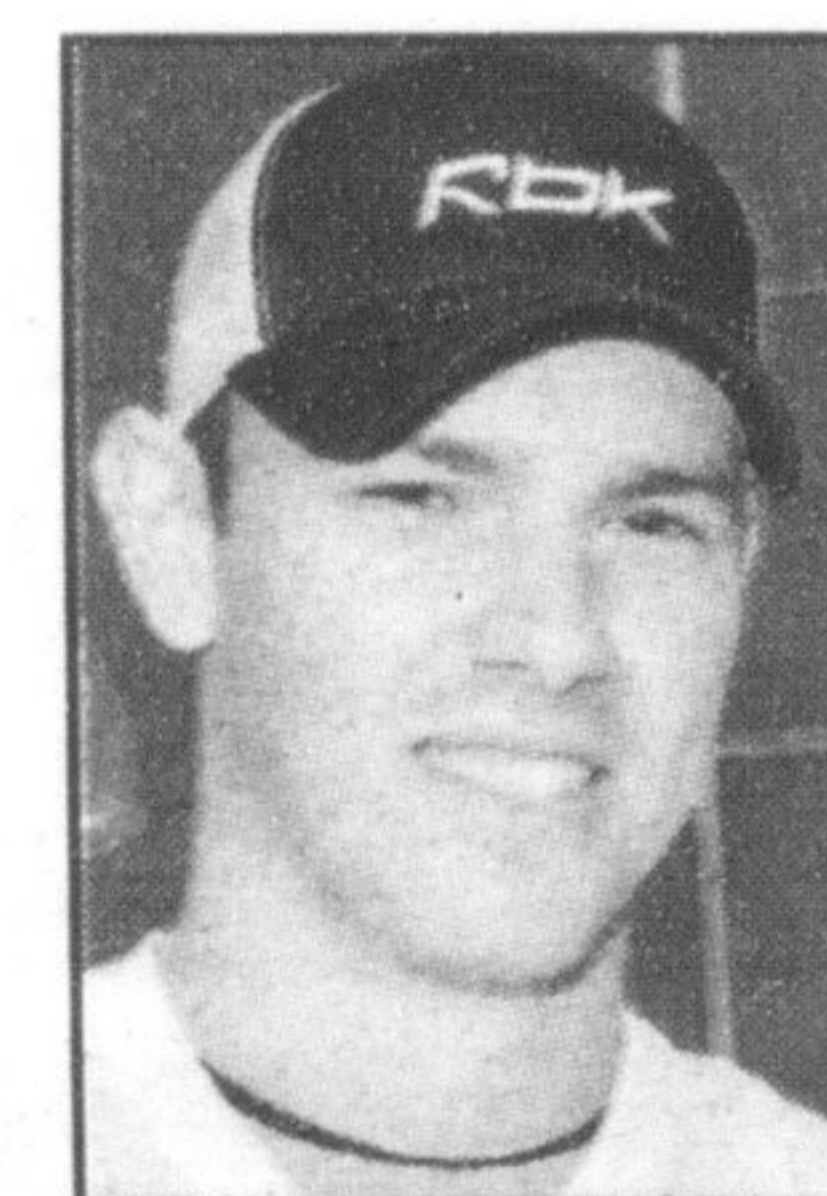
Konkle sits second in club scoring with 16 goals and seven assists in 25 games, while Macdonald has quickly developed into a fairly effective enforcer, having dropped the gloves nine times already to go along with his seven points.

"Personally things have been going good," said Konkle, who along with Macdonald put together a successful NCAA Division 3 career at Elmira College and hooked up with the Jackals in late October when the prospect for legitimate playing time with the ECHL-expansion Phoenix Roadrunners looked bleak. "Coming back to Elmira was definitely comforting and gave me some confidence."

Toiling on the third line for much of the season, the local duo have assumed more of a hard-hitting, defensive role than they did in the NCAA. That's cut significantly into Macdonald's production, although the former Milton Merchants captain is still



Jarrett Konkle



Craig Macdonald

making an offensive contribution — most recently doing so with a backhand deposit that clinched a 4-3 shootout victory over Roanoke Saturday.

"Basically their goalie tried to poke check too early and I slipped one in low," he recalled of his biggest marker to date at a pro.

The shootout win was the first of two weekend victories for the Jackals, whose fortunes may be about to get a little brighter with the recent acquisition of two natural scorers.

Explained Konkle,

"We have a pretty young team but we just got a bit older with the new players. And with nine of our losses by just a single goal, there's definitely potential for us to turn things around this season. Hopefully we can start winning more of those close games."

Meanwhile, fellow Miltonian Josh Vanderbreggen has also been toiling in the UHL this season — although he's spent nearly as much time packing his bags as he has competing.

The 21-year-old defenceman and left winger Mike Wiggins were traded from the Fort Wayne Komets to the Roanoke Vipers Tuesday, in exchange for blueliner Matt Kenny. This marks the third UHL team Vanderbreggen has played for in less than two months, having started the year with the Richmond River Dogs.

His pro hockey tenure follows a two-year stint with Nova Scotia's Yarmouth Mariners of the Maritime Jr. A Hockey League.

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