

Minor atoms take series opener

Milton's AA minor atoms have drawn first blood in best-of-five opening round playoff action.

The Winterhawks had taken their last two regular season games with the Ancaster Avalanche and extended that streak at Memorial Arena Saturday evening — prevailing 2-0.

Nicholas Hoffman's exceptional cage work and two-point nights from Matthew Gooding and Drew Jones — who each lit the lamp and assisted on the other's tally — highlighted the narrow victory.

The hosts' insurance marker came with about three minutes remaining after a first-period powerplay deposit put them ahead. Defencemen Austin Dezeuw and Robert James had a couple of big scoring opportunities on promising rushes, but were both denied by a red-hot Avalanche netminder.

Game two of the series was played last night in Ancaster. If victorious, the Winterhawks will have a chance to sweep tonight at Milton Sports Centre. Game time is 6:30 p.m.

Minor peewees split

The AA minor peewees stormed back from a humbling game one loss to square their first-round series Sunday evening — thumping the Brampton Battalion 6-2.

Ross Morgan tallied twice in the best-of-five tying tilt, while Liam Robinson contributed a goal and two helpers. Nathan

Rep Hockey

Desouza also stood out with a goal and an assist, with Eric Schroder and Cam Stockall also burying the biscuit.

Andrew Smith picked up two assists, while single helpers went to Ben Bianco, Nicholas Garcia, Connor Hakime, Matthew Hunter and Olivia Whitford.

Some solid goaltending by Cam Zuccato and big hitting by Robinson and Smith factored into the much-needed win.

In Brampton Saturday, Milton was brushed aside 7-1. Garcia sank the lone goal.

Game three is set for Thursday in Brampton, with the winner getting a chance to put things away at MSC Saturday at 3 p.m.

AE2 bantams prevail

The AE2 bantams picked an ideal time to break out of their funk.

Winning for the first time in a month, the Winterhawks outdistanced the host Flamborough Sabres 6-4 Friday night to kick off Tri County playoff action in style.

Richard Monk put the game away with the last three goals — the final one unassisted — and ended the night with five points. Michael McLelland shared the

spotlight with two goals and two assists, while Andrew Boivin notched the initial tally.

Ricardo Raduka picked up two assists, while single helpers were recorded by Steven Bennett, Mark Prusha, Ryan Ramiah and Brendan Whiting. The fact that Milton had been dumped 7-0 by Flamborough just six days earlier at Milton Sports Centre made the win that much sweeter.

The Winterhawks have a bit of a break now before their next Tri County action, which comes in St. Jacobs February 3 against Woolwich.

AE atoms rally to win

The AE atoms donned their proverbial rally caps to win their first Tri County playoff test at Milton Sports Centre Saturday evening.

Down by a pair, the Winterhawks stormed back to prevail 4-2 — on the strength of a balanced attack that saw four different host players dent the twine.

Doing so were Tanner Briggs, Hayden Brodigan, Greg Laporte and Corey Macdonald. Briggs and Macdonald scored unassisted, while Briggs' goal was also shorthanded. Setting up the other markers were Jake Leblond and Victoria Medeiros.

The AE atoms are back in action tomorrow at 6:30 p.m. at Milton Sports Centre against Flamborough

Field hockey and badminton clinics at E.C. Drury Fri.

Hey kids, want to learn to play field hockey or badminton? If so, swing by E.C. Drury High School Friday evening for a drop-in introduction to the two sports.

Held between 6:30 and 8:30 p.m., both clinics are open to boys and girls between the ages of seven and 13. A \$10 donation will go toward the E.C. Drury field hockey team's 2006 trip to Australia. Participants should also bring athletic wear and running shoes. Sticks and racquets will be provided, as will pizza and drinks afterwards.

The instructional sessions will be held in conjunction with the school's third annual 15-hour indoor field hockey-a-thon the Spartans will take part in between 5 p.m. Friday and 8 a.m. Saturday. Proceeds from the fundraiser will go to the field hockey team's upcoming trip to British Columbia. For more information, call Geoff Sheppard at (905) 878-0575.

Bono Bests wins Snowshoe final

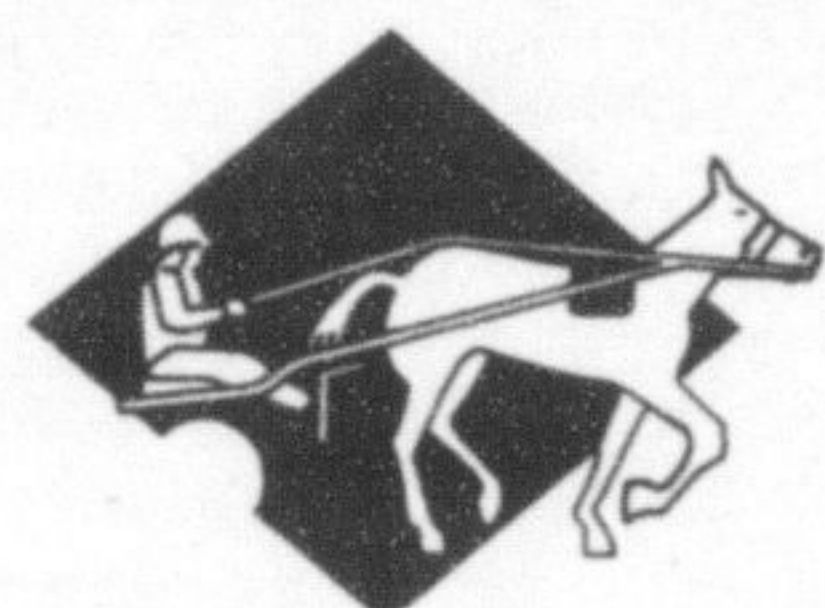
Ivan Sugg's Bono Bests was an impressive three-move winner at Woodbine Friday evening, as the son of Pro Bono Best delivered a gritty neck victory over Whitesand Invader in the \$46,600 Snowshoe Pacing Series final for three and four-year-olds.

Trained by Denfield, Ontario's Chad Milner, Bono Bests has had a sparkling start to his young career, having now compiled six wins, one second and a third-place finish from his nine lifetime starts.

One of two three-year-olds in the field, Bono Bests and driver Phil Hudon topped a \$33.60 exactor with Whitesand Invader, who with Milton's Chris Christoforou at his lines didn't go down without a fight. Finishing two-and-three-quarter lengths back in third after sitting first-over on the final turn, Mr Michael and pilot Mark MacDonald bottomed \$111.90 triactor.

Looking for a sweep of the series after recently being purchased by Clinton, Maryland's Thomas Jackson, Conjugal Visit — driven by Rick Zeron — finished four-and-three-quarter lengths in arrears after taking a third-over ride from the half-mile pole onward.

Handed post six in the 10-horse field, Bono Bests rushed off the gate for Hudon and was able to take the lead by the time the opening quarter-mile timer came to life in a brisk 26 seconds flat.



Hoof Beat

with JEFF RENTON

Instantly popping the pocket, Red Stingray and driver Luc Ouellette of Milton went to the lead and quickly settled back on the pylons. Not wasting any time, Hudon sent Bono Bests out for the re-take of the front-end and reclaimed the top spot in a flash.

Striking while the iron was hot, Christoforou then sent Whitesand Invader first-up from third and battled Bono Bests to the half-mile pole, which was reached in 55 seconds-flat. Clearing shortly thereafter with Bono Bests on his trail, Whitesand Invader passed the three-quarters of a mile call in 1:24.1.

It was a two-horse race in the stretch, with both Hudon and Christoforou getting at their mounts.

Racing in the two-wide path, Hudon got Bono Bests up just in time and took one-fifth of a second off the bay's mark in the process.

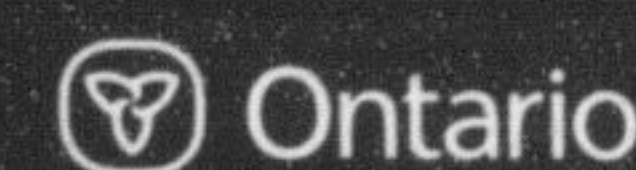
Having banked \$24,390 in his six races as a two-year-old, Bono Bests now has a seasonal record of 2-1-0 and \$35,300 in earnings this year.



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