

SPORTS

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'Hawks soaring past undisciplined Chargers

Groundwork laid for convincing 1st-round sweep

By Herb Garbutt
CANADIAN CHAMPION STAFF

If the Milton IceHawks were ever going to lose a game to the Mississauga Chargers, Saturday was the one.

At first glance, the 52-point differential in the standings should make this series a monumental mismatch. However, the Chargers were one of only three teams to beat Milton in the regular season and kept things respectable with the conference front-runners all year — with their widest margin of defeat only three goals.

So when they were still in the game with the third period looming Saturday night, trailing only 1-0 in the final minute of the second, the host Chargers had to feel good about their chances of evening the best-of-seven series at a game apiece.

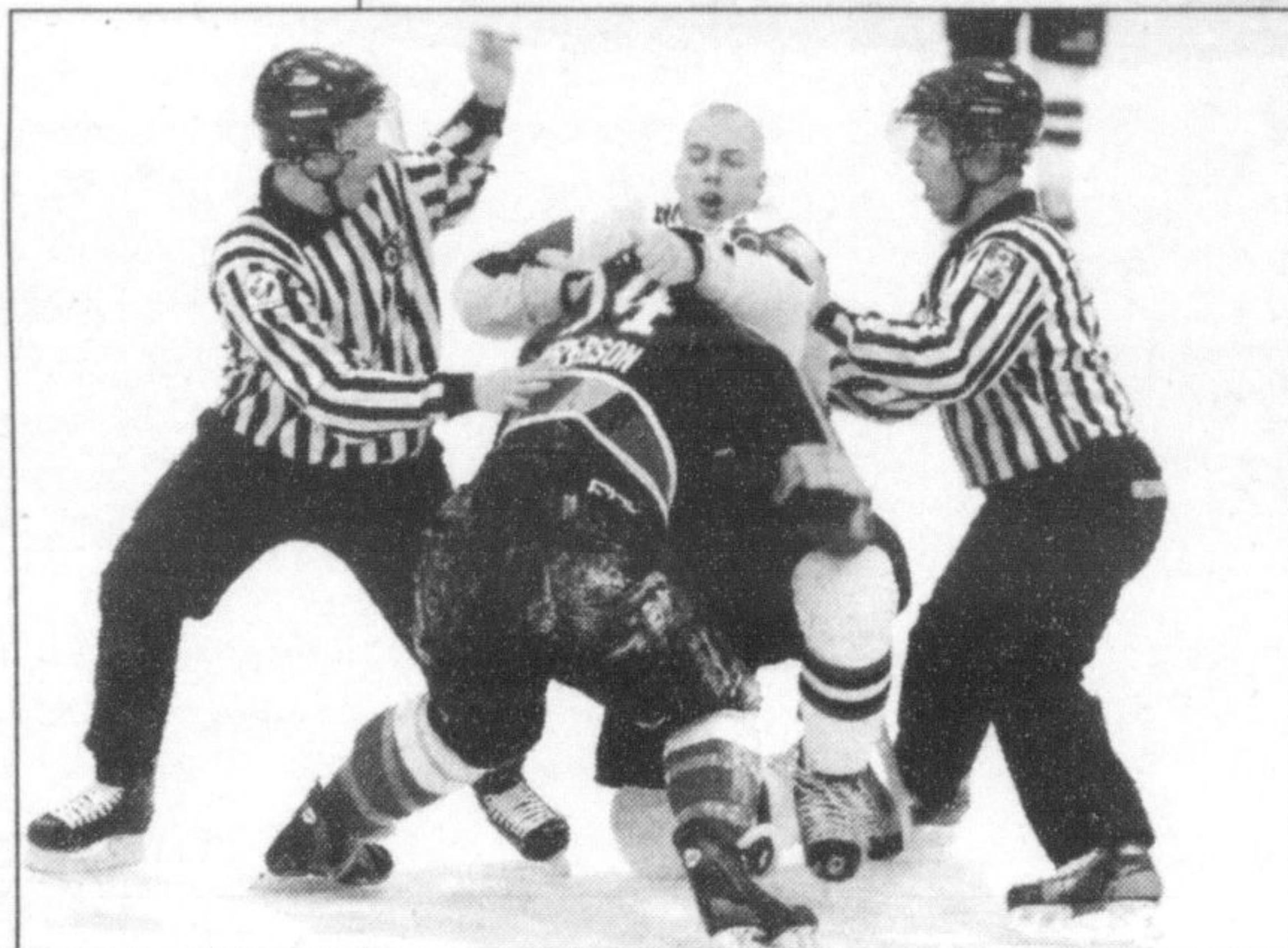
"(The Chargers) were wearing us down a little in the second and we couldn't catch a break," said IceHawks defenceman Paul Dawson. "But a team like this, eventually you know the goals are going to come."

Dawson would provide that break, scoring with just seven seconds left in the second period, giving Milton the spark it needed to secure a 6-0 victory and take a 2-0 series lead heading into last night's game three at Memorial Arena.

"That was a big turning point," said IceHawks interim head coach Joe Washkurak. "Dawson's goal was a killer for their chances."

Mississauga goalie Mike Iafrate, who had stopped 27 of 29 shots through two periods, didn't help his own cause. As if giving up the late goal wasn't enough of a momentum-turner, he tossed a water bottle at a Milton player as he left the ice and picked up an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty.

It was one of five powerplays the undisciplined Chargers would hand the IceHawks in the final period, including



GRAHAM PAINE / CANADIAN CHAMPION
OH SO CLOSE: IceHawk Jason Bergeron (above) rings one off the Mississauga post, while (inset left) teammate Paul Dawson slugs it out with Charger Tom Jefferson in game one play Thursday.

a five-minute major to Glen Hartwell for jumping a Milton player. And the IceHawks would take full advantage, outshooting Mississauga 32-5 in the third and adding four more goals to the tally.

"We're not worried about that garbage," said Western Conference Defenceman of the Year Jeff Caister, who has five assists through the first two games of the series. "This is just the first step for us. When a team realizes it can't compete, our guys can stick up for themselves."

And Milton has shown it can stick it to their opponents on the scoreboard, too. The IceHawks had six different

goal scorers Saturday, with Jeff Aonso, Matt Price, Jason Bergeron, Kevin Morrison and Chase Langerap each scoring a goal.

The biggest threat to Zach Kleiman's 19-save shutout was a shorthanded two-on-one in the third that saw Andrew Willock rip a shot off the post.

Langerap and Matt Reid paced Thursday's 9-2 win with two goals and an assist each. Ryan Bernardi, Aaron Lewicki, Justin Teakle, Price and Morrison also scored, while Caister and Dan Falbo had three assists apiece.

The IceHawks scored four goals in each of the first two periods and led 9-0 before Mississauga finally scored. Milton outshot Mississauga 55-20, giving it a 117-39 edge in the series as of last night.

If victorious last night, Milton will have a chance to sweep tomorrow at Malton Arena. Game time is 8 p.m.

Midgets secure huge clutch win

Talk about rising to the occasion.

With advancement past OMHA preliminary play on the line at Memorial Arena Sunday, Milton's AA midgets rebounded from a 7-2 humbling just three nights earlier to nix the Stoney Creek Warriors 5-0.

The winner-takes-all clash was highlighted by flawless cage work by Lucas Reid and a two-goal performance from Daniel Kearns.



The Winterhawks also showed plenty of composure through the late going, refusing to get sucked into retaliation penalties and lose their momentum. Two goals in the final nine minutes of play sealed the deal for the hosts.

Jeff Lynch opened the scoring on an unassisted blueline blast midway through the first, while Jeremy Brown made it 3-0 on a nifty individual rush and deke and Luc Hartwick tightened the noose with a third-period power-play marker.

The AA midgets will now take on Tecumseh, who knocked off Chatham in four straight and outscored them 29-8. While the schedule had not been finalized at press time, the series is expected to start this weekend.

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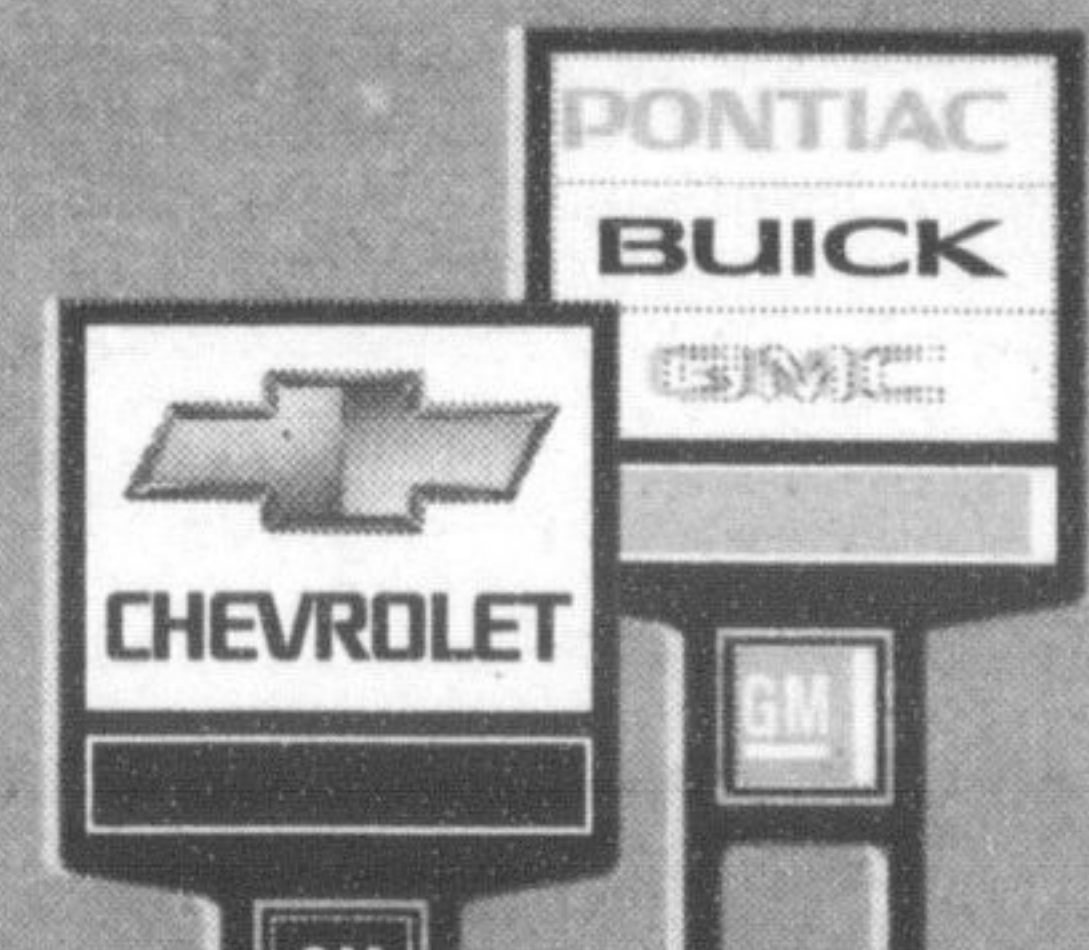
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