

Huge test awaits Reid and Ottawa

Milton's lone OHLer hopes 67s can upset powerhouse Peterborough once again

Elgin Reid is hoping history repeats itself when he and the Ottawa 67s step onto the ice at Peterborough Memorial Centre Thursday night.

Of course a sweep of the powerhouse Petes — like the one Ottawa engineered in last year's Eastern Conference championship — is by all probability far too much to expect from the eighth-place 67s.

However, Reid and company were heavy underdogs last spring as well and didn't let that stop them from claiming the conference title and an unexpected berth to the Memorial Cup.

And while the experts are probably giving Ottawa even less chance of getting by top-seeded Peterborough in opening-round play this year, the 19-year-old Milton defenceman knows from personal experience that anything's possible.

"Actually I'm glad we're playing Peterborough instead of Barrie," said Reid, whose 67s finished out a 29-31-5-3 regular season with a 5-4 shoot-out loss to Sudbury Sunday afternoon. "We played Peterborough harder this year and know we can at least compete with them."

Ottawa may be able to do more than that, having pulled off back-to-back convincing wins over the Petes — 5-1 and 5-0 — on home ice midway through the season.

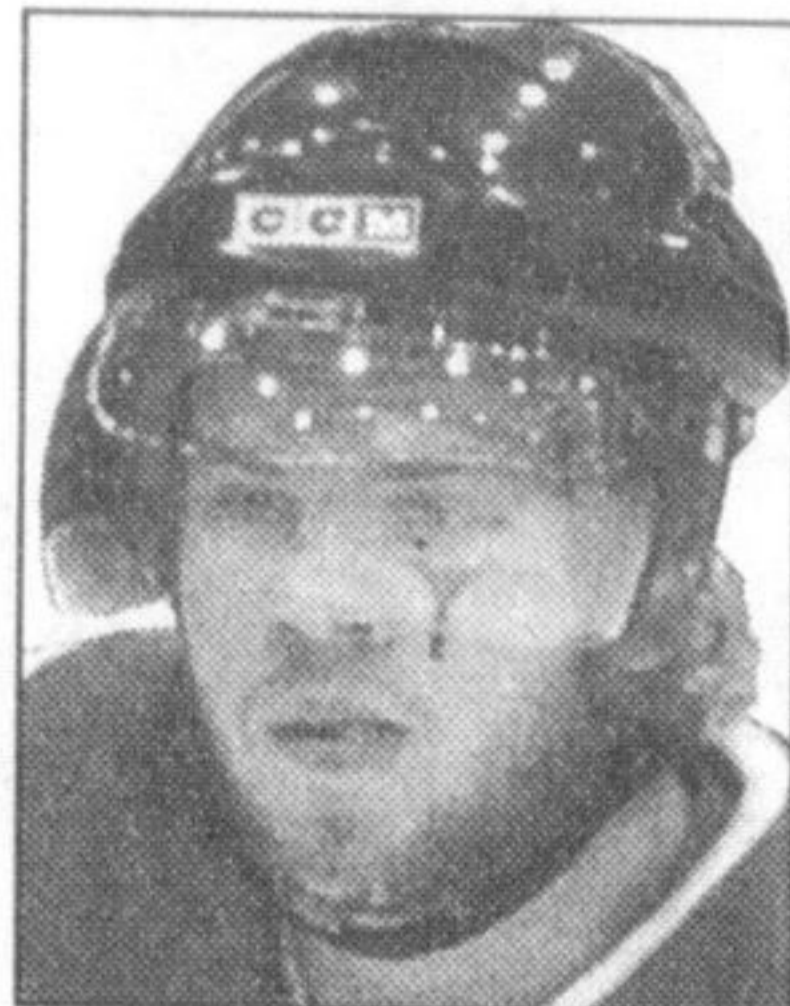
But for the 67s to have any hope of success, they'll need to steal at least one game in Peterborough — which they failed to do in three trips there this year — and bring a more consistent effort than they have for much of the season.

"We've got a younger team this year and it takes a while for the young guys to develop that mental maturity at this level," explained Reid, referring to his team's up and down season. "We've just got to skate hard and hopefully take one there (in Peterborough) early. That would certainly be a huge confidence builder."

Now an assistant captain, the rugged blueliner is currently enjoying the longest injury-free stretch of his major-junior career and finished the regular season with seven goals, 13 assists and 118 penalty minutes in 53 games.

Peterborough ended up 33 points ahead of the 67s and lost just six times at home.

Game two is slated for Saturday evening in Ottawa.



Elgin Reid

Minor atoms solid at tourney

One measly goal was all that separated Milton's AA minor atoms from an unbeaten round-robin campaign at this past weekend's Niagara Falls Tournament. And that's all that kept them out of the semifinals as well.

Finishing tied for fourth, the Winterhawks just missed advancing by virtue of a tiebreaker — putting a heartbreaking exclamation mark on their March Break performance.

A 1-0 loss to Clarington in round two denied Milton entry to the final four. Nicholas Hoffman stood tall between the pipes to keep things scoreless until the third period.

Sandwiching this narrow defeat was a 2-1 decision over Burlington and a 4-2 win over Uxbridge.

Connor Hallyburton backstopped the Winterhawks to victory in both games.

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