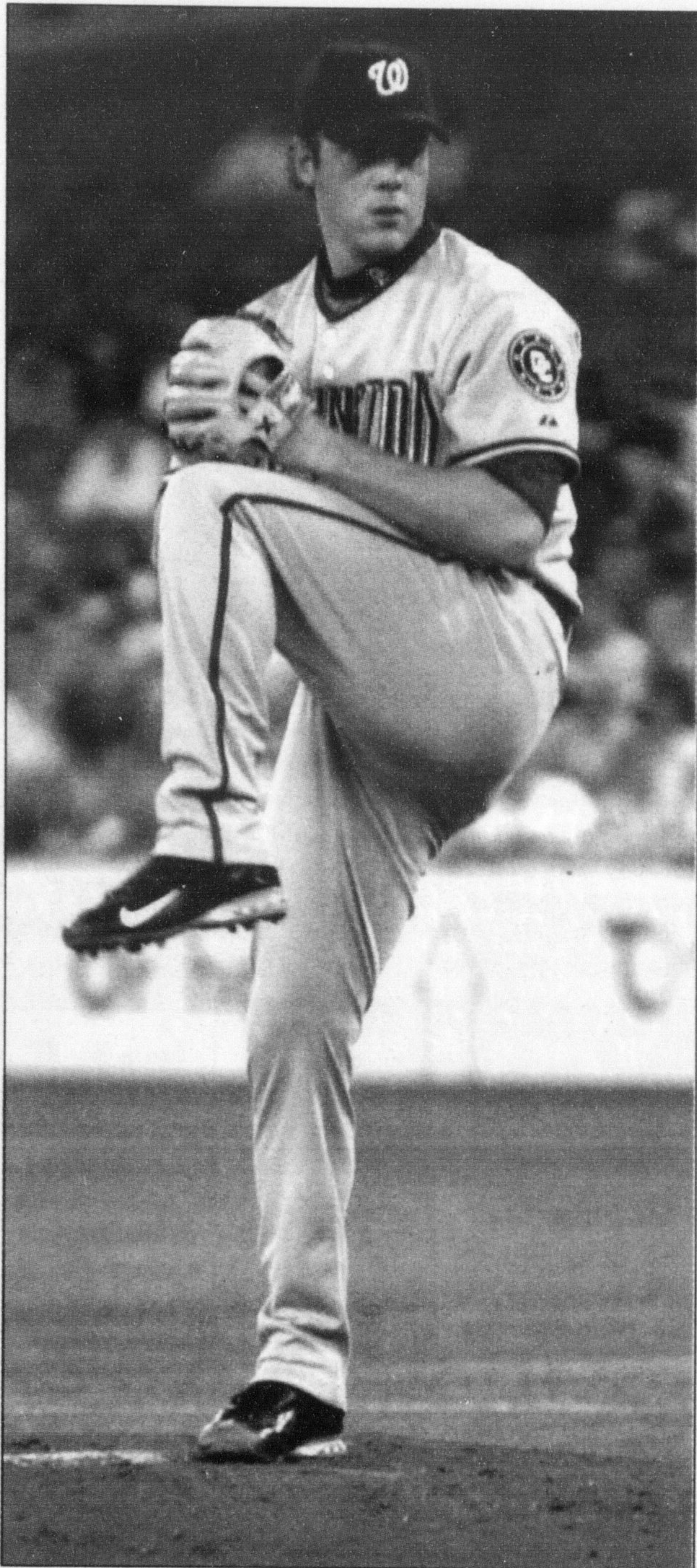


SPORTS

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Memorable night for Bishop Reding grad



EAMONN MAHER / SPECIAL TO THE CHAMPION

HERE'S THE PITCH: Shawn Hill delivers a pitch against the hometown Blue Jays Wednesday night at the Rogers Centre.

Despite loss, pitching at Rogers Centre thrilling for Hill

By Eamonn Maher
SPECIAL TO THE CHAMPION

There was no lack of moral support in the audience for Shawn Hill at the Rogers Centre on Wednesday night, as his Washington Nationals took on the Toronto Blue Jays.

But the 25-year-old right-handed pitcher — a Georgetown native and graduate of Bishop Reding Secondary School — could have used some offensive support from his Nationals' teammates, as they were soundly beaten 6-1 by the home side.

It was the first time that Hill started a game in Canada, and he had about 80 family members and friends in attendance.

"My grandparents have never gotten to see me pitch before at the big-league level," he said before the game. "They'd

always hoped they'd be around for this, so they'll be here (Wednesday) to see me throw. And in that respect, I think it'll be nice that my family gets to see me throw, more than anything."

After tossing four scoreless innings, things unraveled for Hill in the fifth on a two-run triple by Toronto's Reed Johnson, as the ball skipped underneath Washington centre fielder Marlon Byrd's glove and rolled to the fence.

Hill gave up four runs on nine hits on the night, watching his record this year fall to 1-3 and his ERA jump to 4.66.

Washington supplied just three singles while Hill was on the mound, and manager Frank Robinson was furious afterward, calling a closed-door team meeting.

It's been a whirlwind tour for Hill over the past month, after he was called

up from triple-A New Orleans by the Nationals, who have been struggling as of late and are experiencing some injury problems with their pitching staff.

Hill — coming off major elbow surgery that kept him out for the entire 2005 campaign — didn't expect to stick around with Washington for long, but had impressed management with four quality starts heading into Wednesday's game.

He was slated to start again last night against the Florida Marlins.

Growing up a Jays' fan, the local pitcher said he wasn't nervous about pitching in front of so many of his supporters and was poised and confident through his first four innings.

Hill picked up his first Major League win against the Blue Jays exactly two years ago in Puerto Rico as a member of the Montreal Expos.

Habs' rookie camp awaits Gleed

By Steve LeBlanc
CANADIAN CHAMPION STAFF

Jon Gleed would like nothing more than to play at the Bell Centre someday, but would be more than content to compete at another well-known arena this coming fall.

His bid to do so begins Sunday, when the 22-year-old defenceman — a 2004 seventh-round selection of the Montreal Canadiens — hits the ice for a 10-day rookie camp.

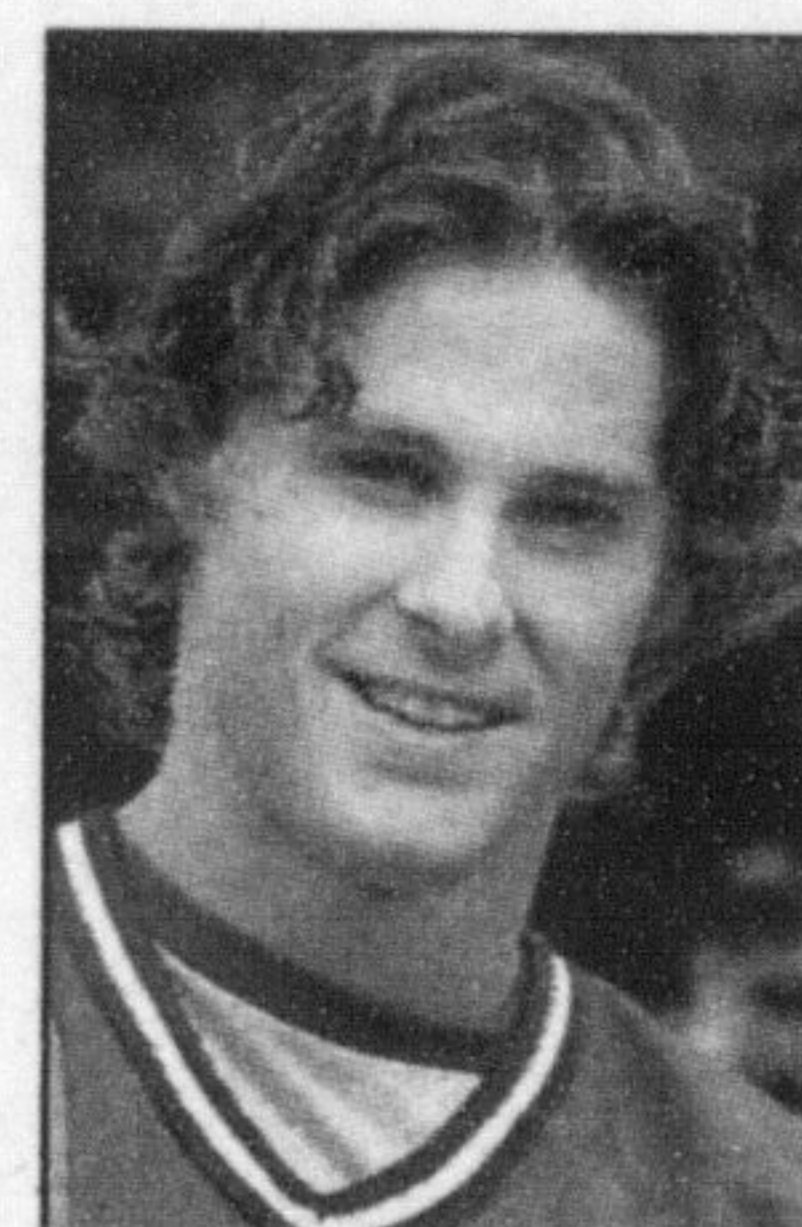
A strong showing there — as well as at the club's pre-season prospects tournament against Toronto and Florida hopefuls in early September — could go a long way toward him cracking the Canadiens' top farm team, the Coppins Coliseum-based Hamilton Bulldogs.

That'll be a tall task indeed, espe-

cially now that Montreal has just drafted four more defencemen — including number one pick David Fischer of Minnesota.

"I'll just play hard and hope for the best," said Gleed. "It would be great to play so close to home again, but if I don't make the Bulldogs there's always the club's East Coast affiliate."

While Gleed and his Division 1 Cornell Big Red didn't exactly fare well the one night Canadiens' Director of Player Personnel André Savard came out to see him play, the NCAA graduate blueliner figures another lengthy play-

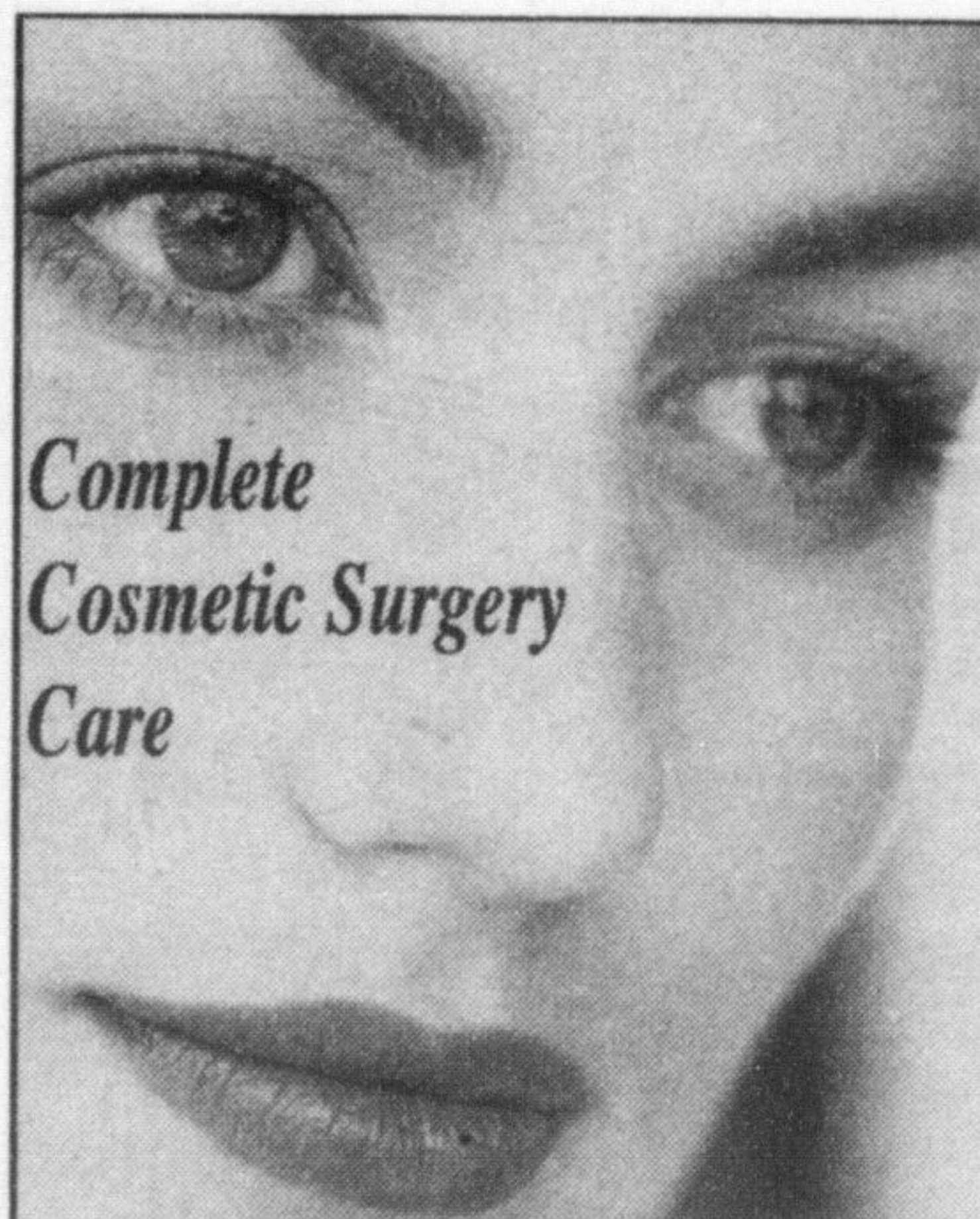


Jon Gleed

off run this past season should be another feather in his cap with regard to his hockey future.

"Having some more team success this year will likely help me," said Gleed, whose Big Red fell just one game short of reaching the NCAA's Frozen Four for a second straight year — losing in triple overtime to eventual national champion Wisconsin. "And from what I've heard they're (Canadiens) happy with my development."

An assistant captain with Cornell this past season, Gleed is the only Milton defenceman in recent memory to be picked up in the NHL draft, and the first local player overall since AHL standout Darren Haydar went in the ninth round to Nashville Predators in 1999.



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