

# Marauders squeak by Toronto Raiders

Clutch field goal gives Milton win

By Murray Townsend  
SPECIAL TO THE CHAMPION

There was no way the Marauders were settling for 10 points for a fourth consecutive game.

Tied 10-10 with time running out against the Toronto Raiders Saturday afternoon at Milton District High School, Milton had one last chance to break the spell. And that's exactly what they did, scoring on a Domenic Camastro 12-yard field goal with just eight seconds remaining to prevail — and improve to 3-1 in the process.

Things didn't start so well for the Marauders. On their first possession, after three incomplete passes, Ricky Clarke of the Raiders stunned Milton by returning a punt 85 yards for a touchdown. On the Marauders' next possession, they scrapped the pass and started pounding the ball. Jon Nedeljkovic initiated the drive by banging out six, seven and eight-yard gains, and was relieved by George Baiden, who did the same. Nedeljkovic topped it off just before the end of the first quarter by taking it in the remaining yard. The extra point was missed.

Camastro later got the single point back on a punt through the end-zone, but for the rest of the first half, the Milton defense ended each Raider possession early. Mike Bartello picked off a pass, Cyrus Sadeghian picked up a fumble, Listen Bates recovered another fumble forced by Kojo Millington's second sack of the half and Wayne Sliwinski recovered yet another loose ball. Camastro made good on the last

turnover by kicking a 17-yard field goal just before half-time.

Most of the second half both teams were forced to punt, except for a 27-yard field goal by Toronto to even things up in the fourth quarter, and until the Marauders' final drive.

Milton started on the midfield line and displayed determination every step of the way. Nate Smith caught two key passes while on the ground from quarterback Neil Barthaazar, Chad Kennedy banged out some tough yardage, and there was no stopping

Nedeljkovic. The Raiders made one last ditch attempt with seconds remaining on the clock — a long pass that went off Jason Nunez's hands, off the helmet of Jimmy Singh and into the waiting arms of Jim Harper.

The game featured the return of several ex-Marauders, including standout running back Steve Lubin, who rushed for 70 yards on 17 carries, despite injuring his ankle in the second quarter. Most of his runs were greeted with some extra hard welcome home messages by former teammates.

"I had the bull's-eye — they were coming after me, and I was coming after them," laughed Lubin, who admitted to mixed feelings playing his old team in his hometown. He fondly recalled his days as a Marauder from the time they went from a losing squad to the national championship.

Lubin, the MVP in the 2004 NFC championship game, left the Marauders this season for the Raiders, mostly because he wanted to play more. "I had to prove I was a good back in this league. It wasn't something I wanted to do, but something I had to do. I love football, I just want to play."

The 3-1 Marauders play a make-up game in Oshawa Monday against the undefeated Hawkeyes.



# Name could be changed: Heinz

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place later this month.

While Heinz wouldn't divulge names, he did say that two of the three leading prospects have Tier 2 Jr. A experience, and that one is a former NHLer.

His acquisition of the IceHawks essentially nullifies the recruiting work Anderson had done over the past several weeks, and nixes the team's recent affiliation with Forgiome's OHL Mississauga IceDogs — expected to be sold as well this summer to pharmaceutical giant Eugene Melnyk.

Milton's new owner also indicated that the local club could be undergoing a name change — perhaps as early as this coming season. While considering giving the community an opportunity to rename the team — by way of a contest — he's also not opposed to returning to the Merchants moniker, which was dropped midway through Forgiome's five-year reign.

That half-decade era included two Western

Conference regular season championships and a trip to the division finals in 2003.

"We're very proud of what we have done with this hockey franchise and are very appreciative of the warm and growing support we've received from the people of Milton over the past five seasons," Forgiome said in a press release confirming the sale. "We wish Rick much success in the years ahead."

As he did during what turned out to be an unsuccessful bid to buy the neighbouring Georgetown Raiders back in the spring, Heinz stressed that he's committed to giving local players more of an opportunity to play for their hometown team.

"Anyone who comes out and proves they can compete at this level we're going to give a shot. Of course we can't fill the whole team with Milton guys, but it would be great if we could get somewhere between five and 10 local players. Five, I think, is certainly attainable for this season."

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