

# SPORTS

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## MAKING A BIG SPLASH:

John Steadman, 15, of the Milton Marlins churns through the water in the mixed 800m short course freestyle event during the club's four-team meet last weekend at the Leisure Centre. Steadman won this heat of the eight-heat event, while his Marlin teammates fared well against their counterparts from Halton Hills, Orangeville and Richmond Hill. Eleven-year-old Ioana-Maria Negru led the way with first-place finishes in all six of her events, while Will Wright, 16, enjoyed a clean sweep as well — going 5-for-5. Other standpoint performances among the hosts were delivered by Scott Davis, Colm Whitford and Emma Leeder.

GRAHAM PAINE / CANADIAN CHAMPION

## Jr. Royals advance to Division 1 semifinals

*Formidable overall effort too much for Blakelock*

By Steve LeBlanc  
CANADIAN CHAMPION STAFF

Bishop Reding's football juniors had already proven they belong in the region's top tier.

So the next logical step was making a place for themselves among Division 1's upper crust.

The Royals not only accomplished that, but did so in rather convincing fashion — knocking off T.A. Blakelock 26-13 Monday afternoon in quarterfinal play. A touchdown with four-and-a-half minutes remaining

made the final score a little more flattering for the visiting Tigers, who grabbed an early lead but were decisively outplayed for the bulk of the sun-drenched showdown.

A potent ground game, stifling defence and overall sense of purpose catapulted Reding into final four play in just its first year at Division 1.

Fresh off a tough regular season-ending victory over Holy Trinity — which secured them top spot in the Richardson Division — the Royals seemed well prepared for battle Monday.

And that certainly reflected in their play,

with both procedural penalties and lapses in attention to detail kept to a bare minimum.

"Yeah, that (Holy Trinity win) definitely gave us momentum for today," said second-year quarterback Ethan O'Connor, who set up Reding's second touchdown with a 25-yard completion to Tomas Santibanez just before half-time and ran for two majors himself in the third quarter to tighten the noose on Blakelock. "Our running game was big and our defence really stepped it up."

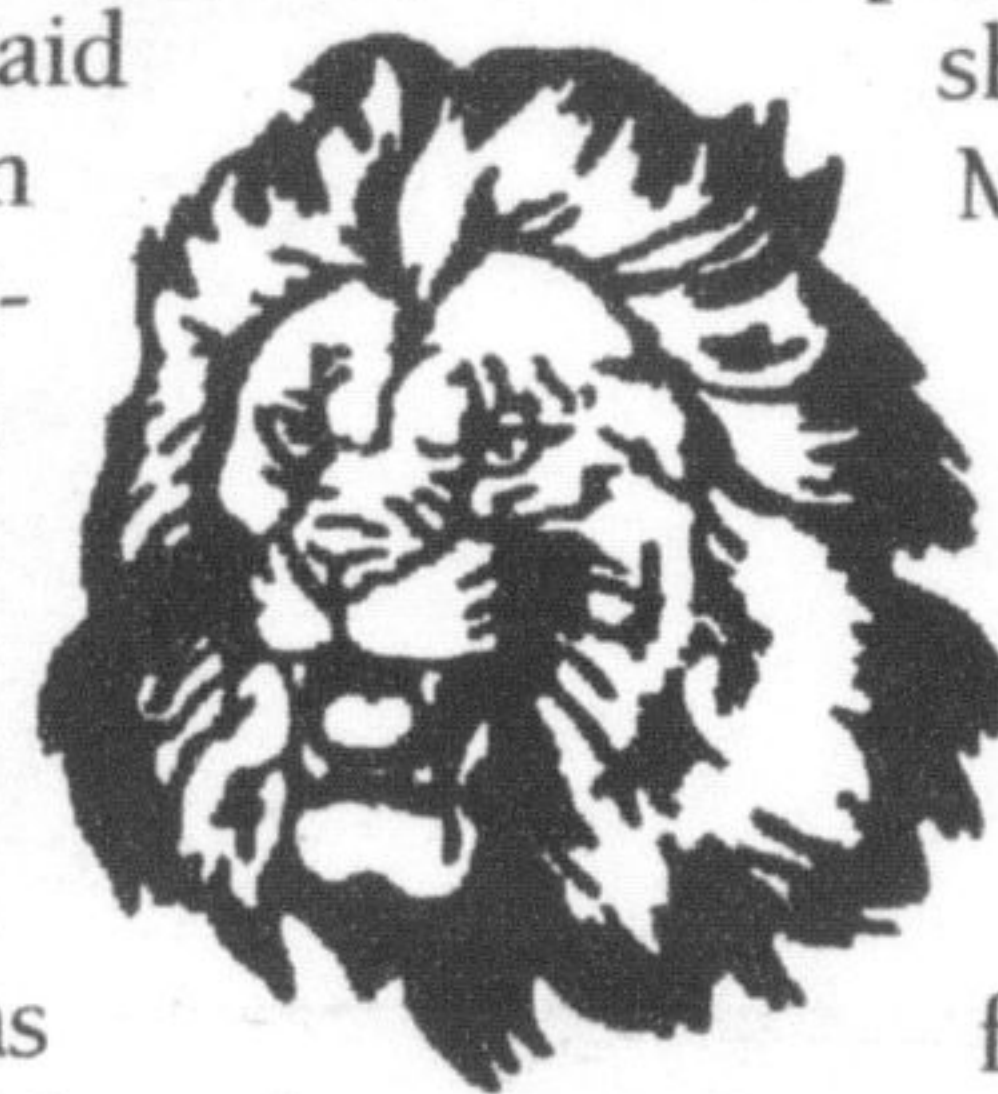
Added head coach Mark Freeman, "Finishing the regular season with a hard-fought win essentially provided us with a big boost mentally and set us up well for this

game. Our defence did a great job shutting them down."

In particular, the Royals got a standout showing from defensive end Tyler Moir, who continually stymied the Tigers' rushing efforts and finished the day with around two dozen tackles — several before opposing ball carriers had shifted out of first gear.

Reding enjoyed credible performances from a number of others within its defensive ranks, including O'Connor, who when he wasn't engineering scoring drives himself was neutralizing Blakelock's passing game.

• see REDING on page A20



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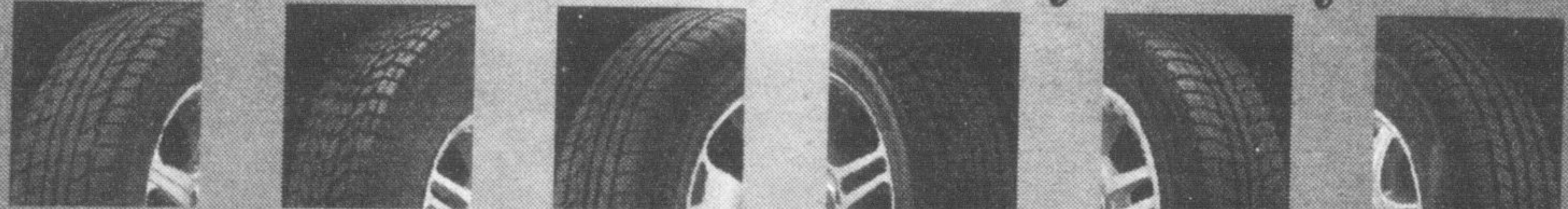
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