

# OHL rookie making progress

*Frontenacs' coach pleased with Brittain's performance*

By Steve LeBlanc  
CANADIAN CHAMPION STAFF

Josh Brittain wasn't exactly in a jovial mood upon departing Kitchener Memorial Auditorium Sunday night.

After all, his Kingston Frontenacs had just lost 5-4 to the host Rangers after taking a one-goal lead into the third period.

While certainly not pleased with the evening's outcome, the 16-year-old Miltonian's disappointment was tempered with at least some degree of personal satisfaction — having delivered another building-block performance in his OHL rookie campaign.

Making his two-assist effort all the more encouraging was the fact that it came at the end of another grueling three-game weekend — and against the league's hottest and most defensively-sound team to boot.

"We were gelling pretty good," said the six-foot-four-inch, 205-pound left winger, referring to his line that included former Milton IceHawk Kyle Bocek, who tallied twice off Brittain set ups. "I was just trying to work hard in the corners, get the puck out and make stuff happen."

The towering forward certainly did that on Kingston's fourth goal of the night just before second intermission, managing a hard-fought take-away and short dish off that led to a one-time blast tally by Bocek.

The play clinched the second multi-point game of the season for the former Toronto Jr. Canadians standout, who now sits with two goals and eight assists, and has yet to find himself as a healthy scratch this year after missing the first two games with a nagging shoulder injury.

Noted the Frontenacs' first-round draft pick, "My confidence is definitely up from the start of the year and I feel I'm making real progress."

First-year Kingston head coach Bruce Cassidy agrees. "Josh's come along pretty well for us.

The physical part is no problem, he's handled himself well there. It's just the pace of the game, the constant stops and starts on the wing, that he's still got to get used to. But he's done a good job so far."

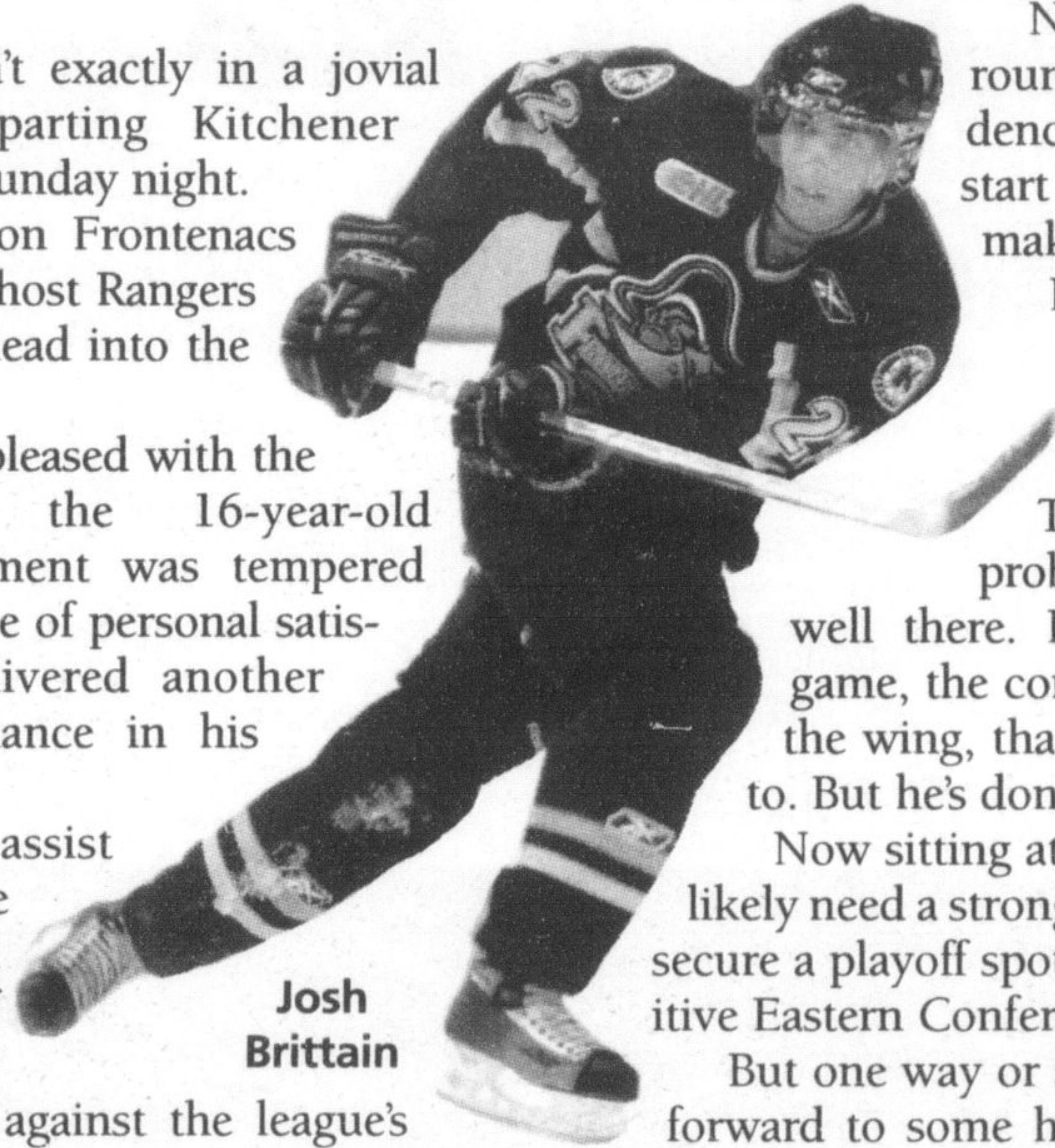
Now sitting at 13-16-3-1, Kingston will likely need a stronger second half in order to secure a playoff spot in an especially-competitive Eastern Conference.

But one way or another, Brittain can look forward to some high-stakes hockey in the not-too-distant future — with the Frontenacs hosting the 2008 Memorial Cup.

"That'll be pretty exciting," he said.

Meanwhile, Elgin Reid — Milton's other OHLer — has recorded a point in five of seven games since being dealt from the Ottawa 67s to the Owen Sound Attack.

The 19-year-old veteran defenceman already has three goals with his new team — matching his scoring total from this year's 22 games with Ottawa — with the most recent coming in Saturday's 3-2 win over Guelph.



Josh Brittain

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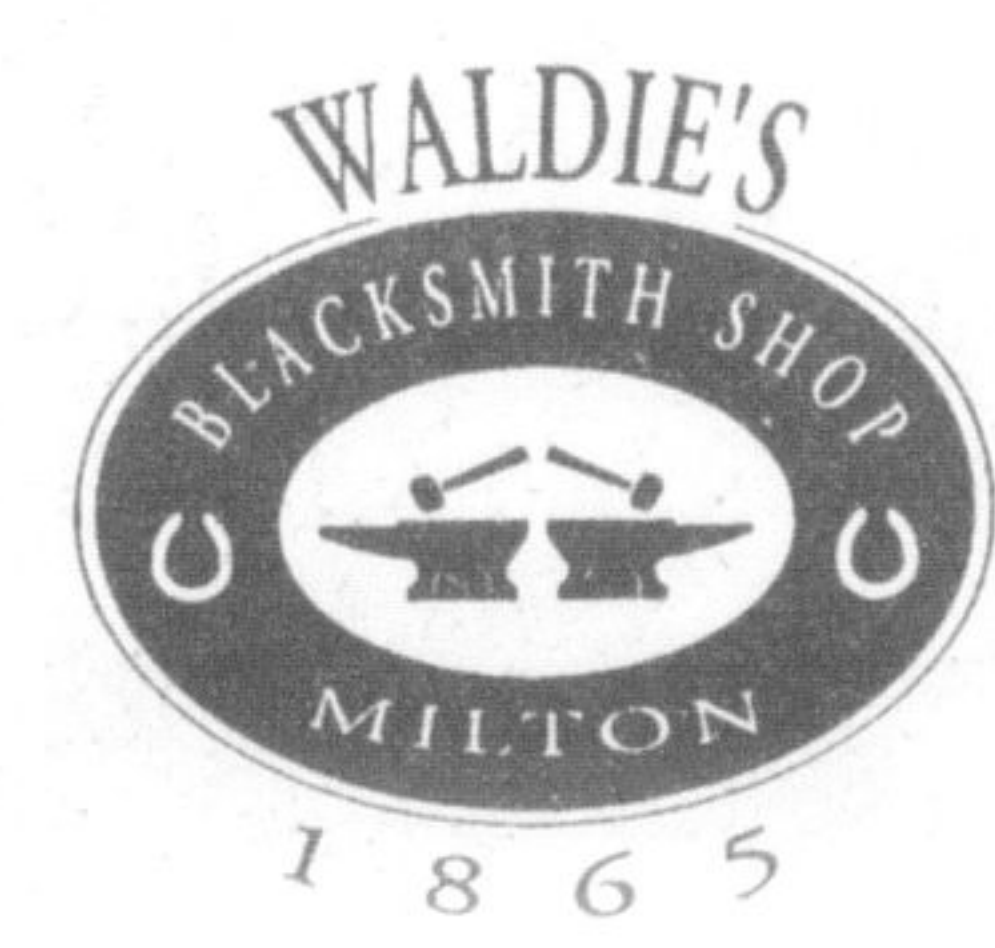
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