

SPORTS

SPORTS EDITOR: STEVE LeBLANC e-mail sleblanc@haltontsearch.com

Marauders put the brakes on winless ways

Dump Sarnia for first victory of season

By Murray Townsend
SPECIAL TO THE CHAMPION

It was fitting that the sun broke through late in the fourth quarter, just as it was assured the Marauders would enjoy their brightest moment of the season.

In their final home game Saturday, Milton slogged its way to a 29-8 decision over the Sarnia Imperials — earning its first win of the year.

It didn't look as if either team was going to score in the early going, as they traded field position for much of the first half, both sides having a difficult time holding on to the football in the steady downpour.

With less than a minute remaining in the half, a bad snap forced the Sarnia punter to scramble, with Mark MacGillivray right on his heels. He managed to get a line drive punt away that landed right into the arms of Craig Davoren, who brought it back 30 yards to give Milton their first lead of 2007.

The Marauders picked up a single point on their first possession of the second half on a missed field goal and then used some razzle dazzle to set up their second touchdown.

Running back George Baiden came out of the game with a minor injury and was replaced in the backfield by Craig Hawkins, a quarterback who's seen limited play this season. Brandon Nikiforuk pitched the ball to Hawkins, who fired it down the sidelines to Damian Hannaford for a 45-yard gain. Then Baiden came back into the game and finished it off with a 21-yard touchdown run.

Milton scored again early in the fourth quarter after a swing pass to Dave Van Alstyne gained 39 yards and put the Marauders on the four-yard line. A pass over the middle from Nikiforuk to Krishawn Thompson accounted for the major.

The Marauders' final score came late

in the game when Sarnia tried an on-side kick, which unfortunately for them went right into the arms of Baiden. He left everybody in his dust as he sped 50 yards for the touchdown.

This happened right after Sarnia scored their only points of the game. They kept getting the ball at the one-yard line with some very questionable pass interference calls and the Marauders kept turning them back. It took nine plays before they were finally able to punch it in.

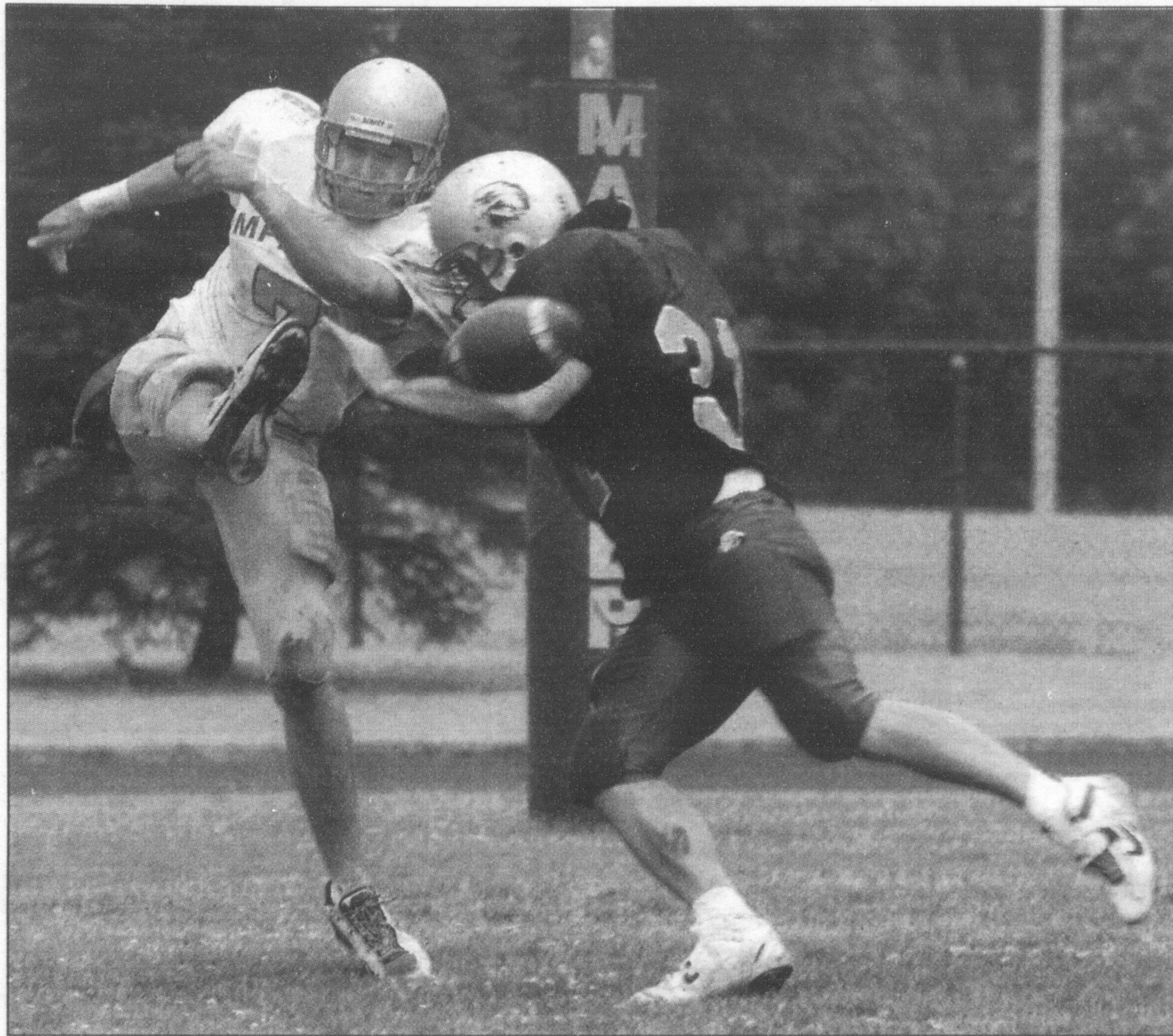
Baiden had his usual sensational game at running back — amassing 181 yards on 28 carries — and Davoren was his usual outstanding self on defence, with 10 tackles, and was often in the Imperials backfield about the same time as the ball got there.

But other defensive players also stood out. Sarnia came into the game with a 3-2 record, and the top team running attack in the league, but were stopped in their tracks, or behind their tracks, much of the time. MacGillivray had another strong game, and big defensive plays came from Ryan McGowan, Sergio Simas and John Dixon. In the secondary, Andre Clarke had two interceptions.

Coach Ken Lashley wasn't exactly popping the champagne cork over his first victory as head coach. "It's just one win," he shrugged. "There's still a long way to go."

Even so, it's a major step, not just because they played well, but because they also executed well, including the game plan, which mostly involved handing the ball to Baiden. "When you have the best back in the league, it makes it easy to call the plays," said Lashley.

The Marauders head to Sault Ste. Marie this coming weekend before finishing the season at winless Quinte-Limestone. A victory in the final game will likely ensure a playoff spot for the Marauders.



GRAHAM PAINE / CANADIAN CHAMPION

UNDER PRESSURE: Marauder Mark MacGillivray partially blocks the punt of Sarnia kicker Russ Barker — which resulted in Milton's first touchdown — during Saturday's NFC game at Milton District High School.

Minor bants eke out tourney title

Talk about coming through under pressure.

Down by a couple of runs with two outs in their final at-bat of the Mitchell Tournament championship, the minor bantam Red Sox pulled off the ultimate clutch performance — scoring four times before shutting down Listowel in the bottom of the seventh to prevail 10-8.

Playing huge dual roles in Milton's dramatic title win were Alex Cunningham and Brady Riml, who pitched a big seventh inning to earn the victory just moments after driving in the tying and go-ahead run on a well-placed single.

Equally instrumental in the narrow triumph, Cunningham ignited the late surge with a single — later scoring on a Hayden Mancini hit — and retired the last Listowel batter with a diving snag and throw-out from second base.

The Red Sox relied far more heavily on their defence and pitching prowess to reach the championship, dumping Wyoming 12-2 in the quarterfinals before a 3-0 semifinal shutout of Thamesford.

The minor bantams remain first in league play with a 9-4 record.

"Tooth preserving dentistry with a caring touch."

Arista Dental Centre



New Patients Welcome!

- Family & Preventative Dentistry
- Evening & Weekend Appointments
- Prompt Emergency Treatment
- Veneers, Crown and Bridges, White Fillings
- Digital X-Rays
- Zoom! Whitening

***Free Professional Tooth Whitening**
(LIMITED TIME OFFER. CALL FOR DETAILS)

Dr. Vincent Yeung & Associates
377 Main St. E., Milton
Tel: 905-203-0068
www.aristadental.com

WE ACCEPT DIRECT PAYMENT FROM MOST INSURANCE COMPANIES



Clarke's Golf
www.clarkesgolf.com



SkyCaddie

Clarke's Golf is now selling the SG2 and SG4 SkyCaddie. You have seen them advertised on the Golf Channel so now come to Clarke's and see the most popular GPS rangefinder in golf.



PING FITTING DAY
Tuesday July 24th 2-7
By Appointment Only

18 Thompson Rd., Unit 7&8, Milton
905-878-1818

Titlist Callaway Golf
Cobra
TaylorMade FootJoy