

# SPORTS

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## WinterHawks enjoy championship revival



GRAHAM PAINE / CANADIAN CHAMPION

**WE'RE #1:** Above Winterhawk tyke defenceman Michael O'Shea and goalie Kyle Droge celebrate their championship win. Inset right, Winterhawk sniper Peyton Bizier skates past Orangeville's Tanner Buck during his three-goal showing in the finals.

### GoodLife Beaver tourney hosts net trio of titles

By Steve LeBlanc  
CANADIAN CHAMPION STAFF

The drought is over. Refusing to close out a fourth straight GoodLife Fitness Beaver Tournament without any gold, the host Winterhawks enjoyed a huge championship revival Sunday afternoon — with the tykes, minor atoms and minor midgets all prevailing at Milton Sports Centre.

Adding to the hosts' overall success was a trip to the finals for the minor bantams — who helped deliver perhaps the most dramatic finish to the four-day holiday showcase in its 32-year history — and at least one victory for all six Milton teams.

Here's a look at the Winterhawks' three championship wins and one title loss, in the order that they were played.

#### Minor midgets

Punctuating an unbeaten December with another topnotch defensive effort, Milton's oldest representatives ignited the hardware haul with a measure of déjà vu — beating the Ajax Knights with an identical 3-1 score they secured in round-robin play.

Ajax was the only team to score against the Winterhawks, whose run to the finals included 2-0 and 3-0 whitewashes of Flamborough and Mississauga, their fifth and sixth shutouts of the month.

Milton had some trouble penetrating the Knights' sizable blueline unit early on in the high-stakes rematch, but eventually wiped out a second-period deficit and got some sharp goaltending from Mark Prusha.

He and Dan Plater finished the tournament with one shutout apiece and just one goal against each.

Matthew Dupont scored the game winner with about five minutes left, while Braden Lawther helped set up Vikram Kalia's second-period equal-

izer and sealed the deal with a last-minute empty netter.

Eric Scarffe offered an exceptional performance on defence.

#### Tykes

Destined to claim a title at some point, the tykes — a perfect 20-0 in league play — exacted revenge for a recent championship loss at the Brampton Tournament, blanking the Orangeville Flyers 3-0.

Hardly surprising, Peyton Bizier was the offensive standout in the finals, netting all three goals to push his tournament total to 13.

A late unassisted tally essentially slammed the door on the Flyers, whom the Winterhawks had toppled 5-0 in round-robin play.

Overall, Milton surrendered just one goal — in a 10-1 dismantling of Fergus — thanks to a fundamentally-sound defence that's quite rare at the

seven-year-old level. Efforts in that department were highlighted during Saturday's 3-0 semifinal win over Hespeler, that didn't manage a single shot against Kyle Droge. The young goalie had a much more hands-on approach in his championship shutout the next day, making half-a-dozen big saves.

Mitchell Hewitson, Joey Szabo and Justin Wilson drew assists in the finals, while a couple of big penalty kills factored into the title win as well.

#### Minor atoms

Avenging their lone round-robin loss with the title on the line, the Winterhawks got three-point efforts out of reliable forwards Jonathan Vaca and Jacob Wickware to stone the previously unbeaten Richmond Hill Stars 3-0.

Wickware put Milton ahead before the game was a minute old and Vaca tallied twice in the third to seal the deal and earn payback for a 4-3

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