

Interception TDs allow Marauders to stay unbeaten

Upstage Toronto Maddogs in rather ugly NFC showdown

By Murray Townsend
SPECIAL TO THE CHAMPION.

It may be winning ugly — as head coach Ken Lashley calls it — but those victories still count in the standings.

The Marauders now sit on top of the Northern Football Conference at 3-0 after a 15-7 defensive struggle over the Toronto

Maddogs Saturday night at Birchmount Stadium.

Neither the previously unbeaten Maddogs nor the Marauders could mount or sustain any offense near the beginning of the game.

A single point by Toronto on a punt into the end-zone was the only scoring until about five minutes remained in the first half.

In the space of less than three minutes Damian Hannaford changed all that. The safety caught an errant pass from the Toronto quarterback at his own 30-yard line and appeared to set a speed record in the 80-yard dash, leaving both teams in his wake as he bolted down the sidelines for the touchdown.

Two plays later, one after a Toronto receiver dropped a touchdown pass in his hands, the third down pass once again found its way into Hannaford's hands.

This time he was a little slower until he found an opening and turned on the jets the rest of the way for a 65-yard interception return.

"I was trapped," said Hannaford, "but somebody threw a block — I don't know who it was — and that opened up the sideline."

Toronto battled back for an 11-yard touchdown pass in the final minute before half-time — making the score Hannaford 13, Toronto 7.

The only score in the second half was a Milton safety, when Toronto chose to surrender the two points when punting from their own end-zone.

The Maddogs' defense had only allowed 18 total points in their first three games, all victories, and they were sharp again.

Milton was without injured running back George Baiden, but Sean Faulknor ground out some tough yardage, especially late in the game when the Marauders were trying to run out the clock.

Mark Demerling connected on passes to

Will Thompson a couple of times, but the drives were all stalled and Milton didn't get close enough to even attempt a field goal.

Defensive standouts included Craig Davoren — as usual — and Roger Tomlinson, who also has a knack of being one of the first downfield on punts and kicks. Mike Dingsdale contributed two sacks, and of course Hannaford was also a threat on punt and kickoff returns.

Hannaford, who is one of the few original Marauders still playing from their expansion season, took some time off and then joined Oakville for a couple years before returning to Milton.

He leads the team with four touchdowns, the two others coming as a receiver. Surprised the team is still unbeaten, he points to the season-opening win over Oakville as an explanation.

"That game gave us the confidence that we could beat any team in the league," explained Hannaford. "We're confident, but we're not over confident."

Lashley is also surprised at the 3-0 start, adding, "I'm just happy that we won this game because realistically we shouldn't have. Last year we lost games like this, this year we win."

He did offer some concern about the offense, noting that a team can't depend on its safety to return two interceptions for touchdowns to win.

"Once we get our offense going we're going to be a tough team to beat."

The Marauders will host the winless Toronto Raiders Saturday at 3 p.m. at Milton District High School.



Junior Red Sox cap tournament campaign on heartbreaking note

The Junior Red Sox fell heartbreakingly short of playoff action at this past weekend's Vaughan Tournament.

Milton had runners on second and third when they were finally vanquished 7-6 by the Aurora Jays Saturday afternoon. The narrow loss finished them up at 1-2 — not enough for advancement.

Led by a 3-for-4 effort by Will Hunter, the Red Sox erased an early 3-0 deficit and pulled to within a run later on before being eclipsed.

Craig Howse had a pair of hits and a walk while driving in two runs, while Lee Mathé also stood out with three walks and a couple of runs.

Milton kick-started the 'A' level tournament in dominant fashion, dismantling the Bolton Braves 11-0 Friday night. The five-inning mercy saw starter Scott McTrach give up just two hits over four frames and John Brady come in to wrap things up. Just about

everyone contributed to the offensive onslaught.

With their bats still asleep early the next morning, the Red Sox were toppled 6-1 by the Brampton Royals.

Sean Mathé was impressive on the mound until a three-run triple in the last inning put things out of reach. Milton managed just two hits and wasn't quite at its best defensively either.

The Red Sox sat at 6-3 in league play heading into last night's (Tuesday) road trip against the Brampton Braves.

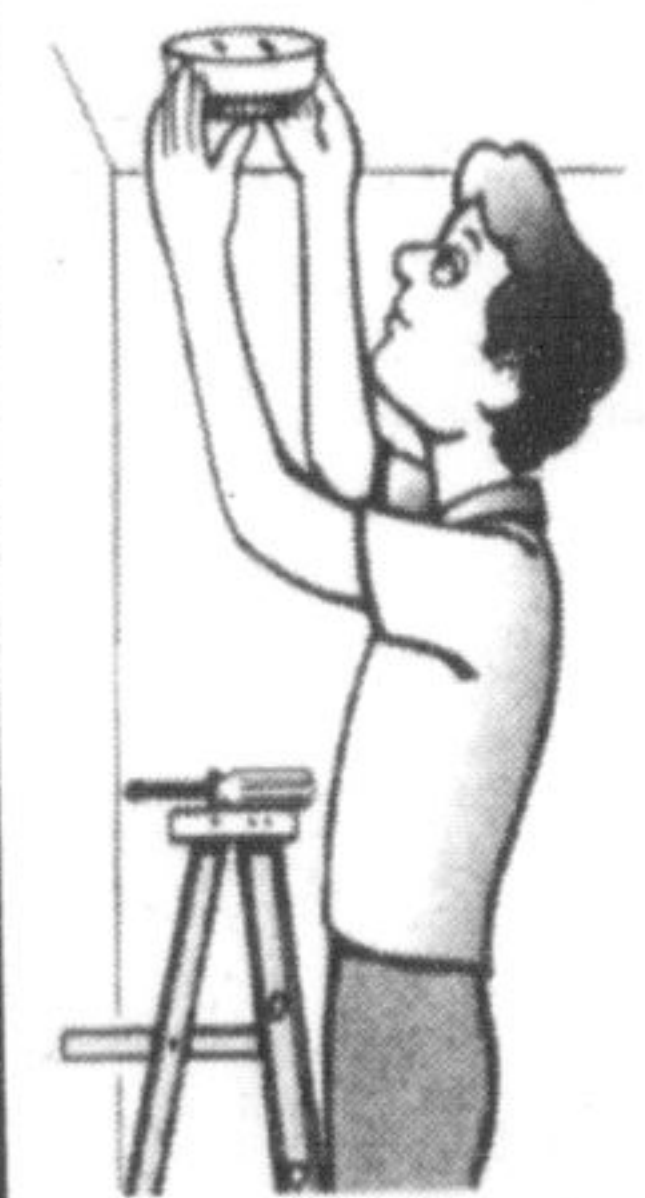
Meanwhile, the Senior Red Sox split a Saturday afternoon doubleheader with the Oakville As at Brian Best Park.

Rallying from a 10-3 humbling in the opening game, Milton got a strong complete-game effort from Tyler Wilson to take the second tilt 6-1.

Now 5-7, the seniors are in Mississauga tonight to face the North Tigers.



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