

Marauders' unbeaten record snapped with poor outing

By Murray Townsend
SPECIAL TO THE CHAMPION

There was no spark, no smoke and no fire from the Marauders at Milton District High School Saturday afternoon — and the fireworks didn't begin until after the game.

It was supposed to be an easy victory for the undefeated Marauders against the winless Toronto Raiders, who had failed to score a point in their first two games.

Instead, Milton dropped a 14-9 decision — and deserved to.

Whether or not it was over confidence, very little went right for the hosts. The Raiders bobbled the ball around in the early going and kept turning the ball over to the

Marauders, who could do nothing with it. As the game progressed, the Raiders started to believe they could win, and played like it.

For Milton, the receivers often reacted as if Kelly Hughes was throwing poisonous snakes rather than footballs, as catchable balls went through hands, off fingertips or were simply dropped. Even the secondary — which had been almost perfect the first three games — left receivers wide open and had their worst game of the season.

Hughes did connect with Danny Bobb late in the game for a 29-yard touchdown strike, and John D'Ovidio kicked a field goal early to account for Milton's other points.

For Toronto it was one-man wrecking crew Ricky Clarke who did the damage. He

took a catch 71 yards for a major, had a key interception and carried the ball in from the 10-yard line for another touchdown.

Milton's level of frustration started to show late in the game, especially among the receivers, at least one of whom was angry with himself and tossed his helmet, but it wasn't until after the game that the spit hit the fan.

During their post-game recap on the field, the chat escalated into a shouting and pushing match. The Marauders players unleashed their frustrations with an emotional firestorm that eventually calmed down.

While that may seem like an insignificant event much of the time, for them it was not. It may be the key to their season because it will determine whether or not the team becomes a 'team.' Not everything goes your way as it has with Milton in their first three games, so a little adversity now may be the best thing for later.

Fiery lineman John Attardo, a staunch supporter of the team concept, believes that's exactly what happened with the loss and post-game festivities. "We're learning a lot about our team — this helps our character."

Attardo suggested that it will show up in their next game, and beyond. "We're still going to win the championship," he said confidently.

Coach Ken Lashley said the loss was "100 per cent on me."

He said that coaching mistakes were responsible and will be rectified, and that he's learning and adjusting as he goes.

As for the post-game fireworks, Lashley could see the positive. "It's great to have as opposed to the opposite because it shows the players care. You can never look passion in the face and say it's a bad thing."

Lashley also noted that it's another step towards the team's maturity and improvement.

"It's a different mental attitude. Last year when we lost it was like whatever, that's how we roll."

He still claims the team will be great at some point, so time will tell if this hiccup will have a positive effect.

Now 3-1, the Marauders have their last home game of the regular season this Saturday against defending national champion and NFC front-runner Sault Ste. Marie. Game time at Milton District is 3 p.m.



Jiu-jitsu students impressive at own meet

Members of the Milton School of Jiu-Jitsu showed strongly at their recent junior grappling tournament.

A dozen of them secured first-place honours, including Ben Austin, Codey Boers, Lauren Boers, Brock Corbett, Balkarn Gill, Jacob Gogolewski, Shayaan Jafri, Kyle Lambert, Julio Lima, Matthew Palermo, Tristan Richardson and Tristan Van Tonder.

Mark Anderson Dann, Scott Coulson,

Kaylee Coverdale, Alex Gesualdi, Michael Giles, Komalijit Gill, Kobe Iwasa, Jackson Smiley, Herlinda Wordley and Robert Wordley placed second.

Claiming third were Seth Albergaria, Thomas Anderson Dann, Zachary Barrow, Xander Defend, Jonathan Huerta, Theo Schlotzhauer, Samantha Smith, Erik St-Pierre and Jack Turner.

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