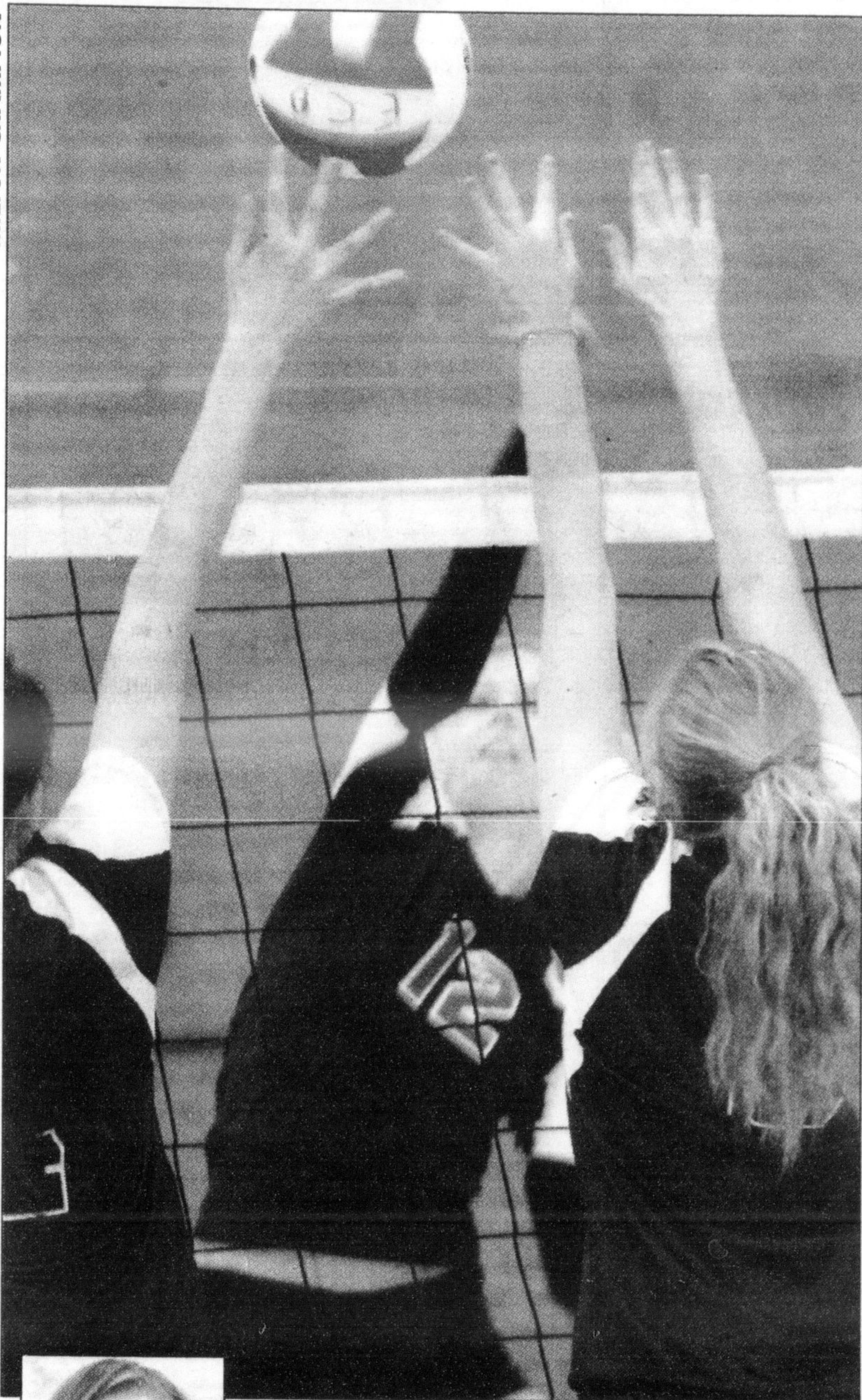


SPORTS

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



FILE PHOTO BY GRAHAM PAINE / CANADIAN CHAMPION
HANDS UP: Meg Rector (#12 above and at left) will compete with Ontario's U-18 volleyball team at next week's National Team Challenge Cup at the University of Toronto. Bound for Nova Scotia's Acadia University in the fall, Rector is now in her second year with the provincial program. Meanwhile, fellow Miltonian Devan O'Connor will also be part of next week's national tournament, as one of the younger players with the Ontario U-17 team.

O'Meara back with 'Riders

But o-lineman questions his CFL future

By Steve LeBlanc
 CANADIAN CHAMPION STAFF

Matt O'Meara has been around too long to get too excited about his latest opportunity.

Reacquired as a free agent last week by the Saskatchewan Roughriders — the team he began a spot-duty pro career with four years ago — the 26-year-old Miltonian is no doubt happy to find himself back in the CFL.

And the towering offensive lineman certainly wasn't turning his nose up at an immediate upgrade from the practice roster to a spot in Saturday's 46-36 victory over the Argos at the Rogers Centre.

But given last month's release from the Winnipeg Blue Bombers and the fact that his latest start — like the seven others he'd had, all coming last season — was due to an injury, O'Meara isn't holding out much hope for a permanent place on a CFL O-line.

"I'm not sure how it felt (getting another start). Part of me wanted to give it up (after getting cut by Winnipeg) and part of me wanted to give it one last shot, but in the end I knew I'd regret it if I didn't try once more," admitted the six-foot-five-inch, 285-pounder, who assumed right tackle duty for week two in replacement of an ailing Belton Johnson.

Though part of an offensive line that gave up just one sack and allowed quarterback Darian Durant to get his passing game going and

rally from a 10-0 deficit, O'Meara wasn't overly pleased with his personal performance Saturday.

"It definitely wasn't my best game," said the 2005 first-round pick, who was head-butted in the first quarter by hot-headed Argo Adrian Belli — leading to a 15-yard penalty and subsequent end to Toronto's early momentum. "I didn't think I'd have a problem coming in with only a couple of practices with this line, but it proved to be a little more difficult than I anticipated."

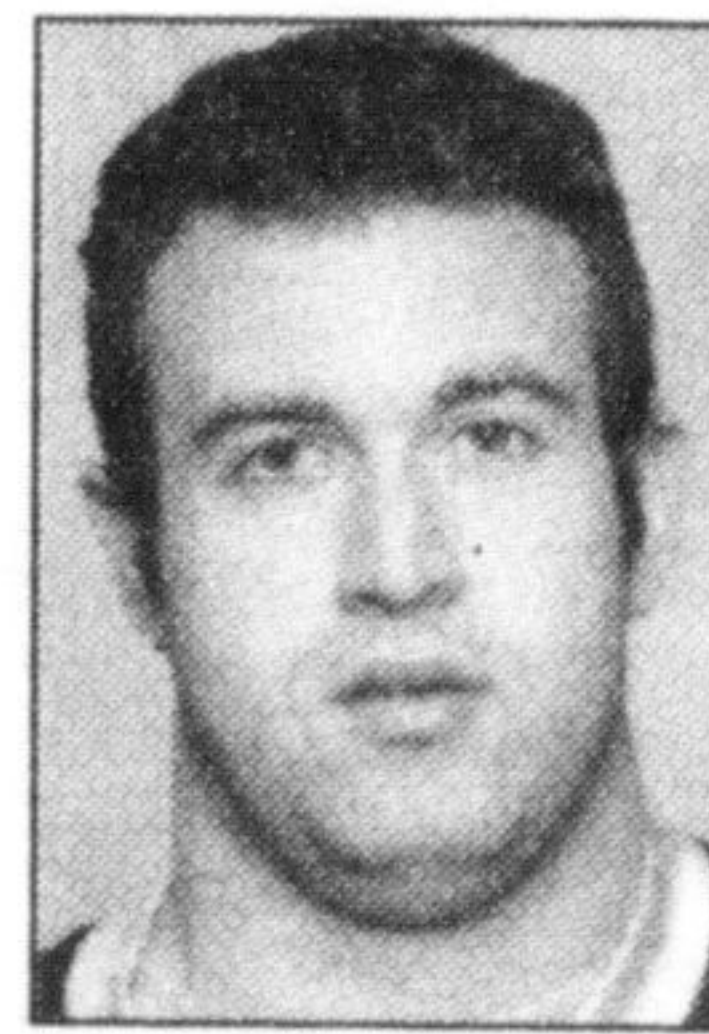
Roughriders head coach Ken Miller said O'Meara's previous work with offensive line coach Bob Wylie,

who worked with the former McMaster University standout before joining Saskatchewan in the off-season, weighed heavily into last week's acquisition.

"We needed someone who had experience and experience with Bob," Miller told the Regina Leader-Post of his replacement tackle, who was traded from Saskatchewan to Winnipeg in 2007 for a fifth-round pick and made his first of eight career starts (at right guard) last July. "It seemed like an obvious fit."

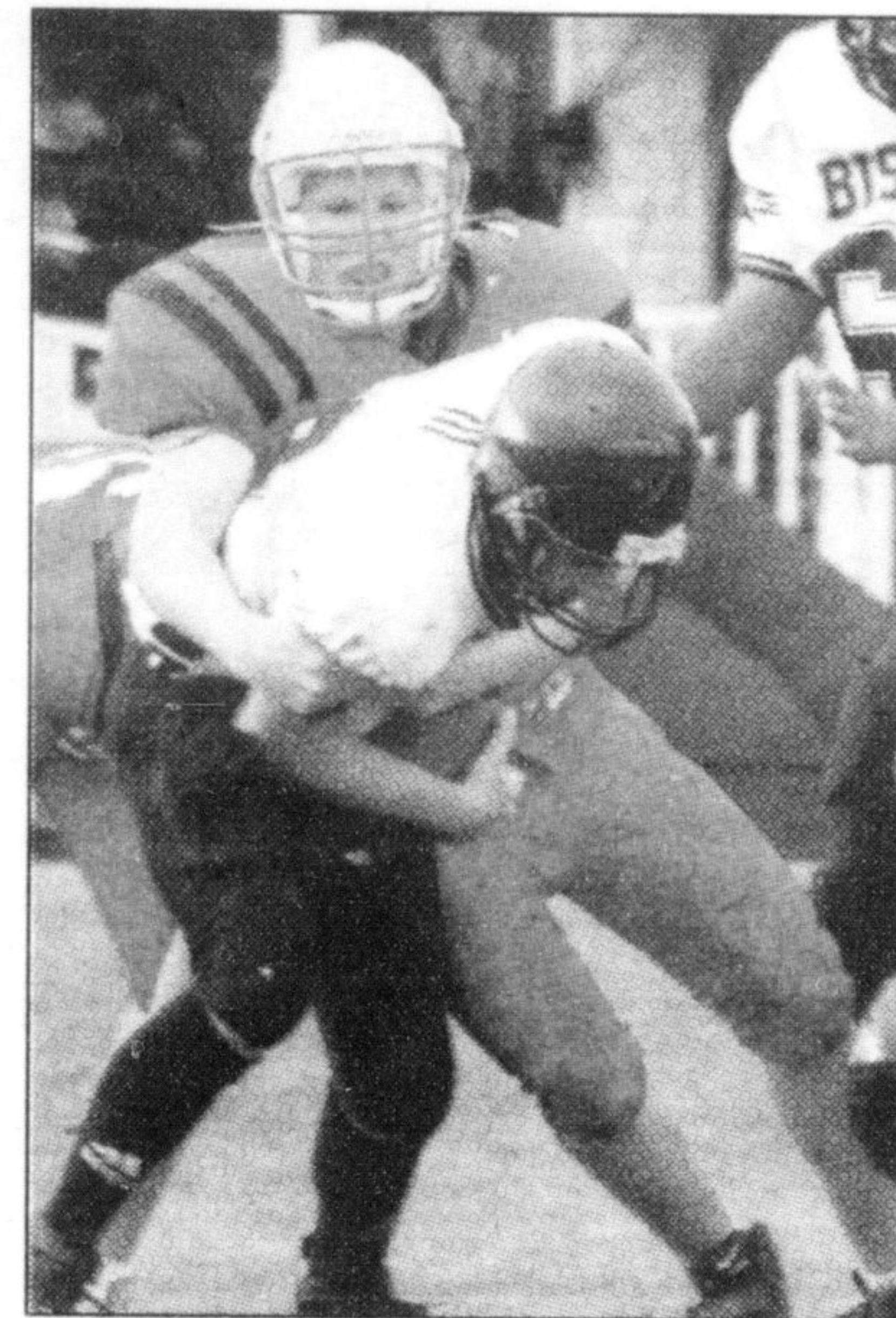
Be that as it may, the local lineman questions if he fits into any CFL team's long-range plans.

"I don't know what future I have in this league, so even if I get a couple more games under my belt (with Saskatchewan) before all the injured guys get back, I'll take it."



Matt O'Meara

Locals fuel big gridiron victory



TAKEDOWN: John Buckles tackles a Brantford ball carrier.

The Halton Hills Crimson Tide peewees clinched an Ontario Varsity Football League playoff berth Saturday, thanks largely to their standout Miltonians.

Defensive back Brandon Gordon intercepted an errant pass and returned it for a last-minute touchdown as the first-year squad squeezed by host Brantford 27-26.

Sharing the spotlight with two majors and a total of 118 yards was reliable running back Chris Reid, while fellow Miltonians John Buckles and Dustin Boden shone on the defensive line, each delivering numerous tackles.

Now 4-3, the Crimson Tide close out the regular season tomorrow in Essex. The playoffs begin next weekend.

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