

# It's time for that old Milton Merchant magic - Bince

The Canadian Champion, Wednesday, January 17, 1990-14

By BRAD REAUME

It's time to employ a little magic, says Milton Merchant coach Rick Bince. He claims to have a secret weapon for use when the breaks are beating the boys. That weapon will soon be unveiled he says.

**Milton 3, Oakville 3  
Milton 2, Georgetown 2**

Milton could use a touch of magic or at least the magic touch which seems to have eluded them of late. Last weekend they managed a pair of ties with first-place Oakville 3-3 on Friday at home and then the following evening on the road in Georgetown 2-2.

The 14-13-6 Merchants play a tight schedule this week with games in Peterborough and Brampton before hosting Burlington on Friday night.

Presently they are six points behind the third-place Cougars who also have two games in hand. If everything goes according to Hoyle, fourth-place Milton will face the powerful Oakville Blades in the second round of the playoffs.

"I'm not optimistic about catching Burlington. I've been around too long, I know what it takes to catch them and we don't have enough games left," said Bince. "I've got to go into my bag of tricks and pull out a little magic to help conjure up some wins."

In Friday's game against Oakville Milton opened up with the lead at 9:32 when Mark Zebedee shovelled home the final pass of a well-executed three-on-two break. Shawn Healey and newcomer Jason Molnar picked up assists. Milton had the bulk of good scoring chances through most of the first period but they could not convert.

Peter Romeo finally put Oakville on the board at 8:45 of the middle frame when the Milton defence failed to clear the puck. One, two, three cracks at goaltender Chad Muldoon and finally Romeo was able to lift it into the top of the net from the left doorstep.

Milton bounced back with a lot of heart, and two minutes later Warren Hart gave Milton a 2-1 lead when he finished a tic-tac-tow passing play with Ken Guilford, whose playing great hockey, and Paul Hartley picking up assists.

Romeo replied at 14:17 of the second when he one-timed a pass from John Duff stationed behind the Milton net. The puck went right through the legs of a startled Muldoon. Only 59 seconds later, Oakville completed the same play again. This time Tony Galante converted the pass which came more from the right wing corner.

Oakville clung to its 3-2 lead into the third period. In the early going Blade goaltender Jamie Cuff stopped a Milton two-on-one but a few minutes later Molnar slapped the puck towards Cuff. It hit the heel of his goalstick before going in at 6:04 to tie the score.

The teams traded chances to break the deadlock. Zebedee had a golden opportunity with three minutes remaining but shot too quickly and

the Blades had a power play for 1:02 as the game wound down, but they couldn't convert.

"Our team works hard and we let people walk in and score easy ones!" said an angry Bince after the game. He heaved a few buckets around his office and continued, "We make an error and boom it's in the net! We make three errors and it cost us a hockey game. They're (Milton's players) frustrating me, they're frustrating me."

The only teams to have beaten Oakville are Brampton twice, Peterborough and Streetsville. Milton has two ties in six games with two others being decided by one one goal.

Bince expects two more players to come to the team in the next few days. One is a former fourth-round draft pick of the Boston Bruins on an injury rehabilitation. The other has been unavailable this year until recently. Bince will know shortly.

Against Georgetown the next night, Milton piled up 59 shots on Raider goaltender Curtis Green. The home side replied with 24. "We ran into a hot goaltender," Bince said. "It was one of those games."

The Merchants picked up goals by Guilford and Healey both coming after Georgetown had established a 2-0 lead. The tying goal came with only nine minutes remaining.

"We dominated the whole game from start to finish," said a frustrated Bince.

"I can't change things with only nine games to go. I know what we've got to do to beat Oakville (in playoffs) but I haven't got the players to do it. I need a little magic, I think it's time."



Milton goaltender Chad Muldoon hugs the post and keeps a sharp eye on Oakville's Peter Mahovlich (10) in Central Ontario Junior B action last Friday at Thompson Arena. The exciting game ended in a 3-3 tie but Merchant Coach Rick Bince wasn't happy with the draw against the powerful Blades.

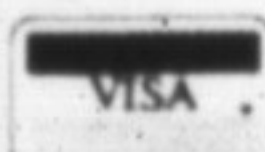
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