

SPORTS

# Senior Royals' playoff magic ends in Tier 2 championship

By Herb Garbutt  
METROLAND WEST MEDIA GROUP

One month into the season, and coming off a crushing 31-0 loss to Oakville Trafalgar, David Montoya offered his 1-3 football team a harsh dose of reality.

"One more loss and you're eliminated from the playoffs," the Bishop Reding coach told his players.

Over the final three weeks, the Reding defence held its opponents to a combined 18 points as the Royals rallied to finish 4-3 and claim the fifth of six playoff berths. Still, few could have expected to see the Royals in last week's Halton tier 2 final at Nelson Stadium in Burlington.

The Royals faced a formidable opponent in the T.A. Blakelock Tigers, who came into the game with a perfect 8-0 record. Meanwhile, Reding was looking to continue a magical playoff run that had seen the Royals avenge it loss to O-T with a 16-10 triple overtime victory in the quarter-finals before edging White Oaks 4-3 on a last-minute field goal in the semis.



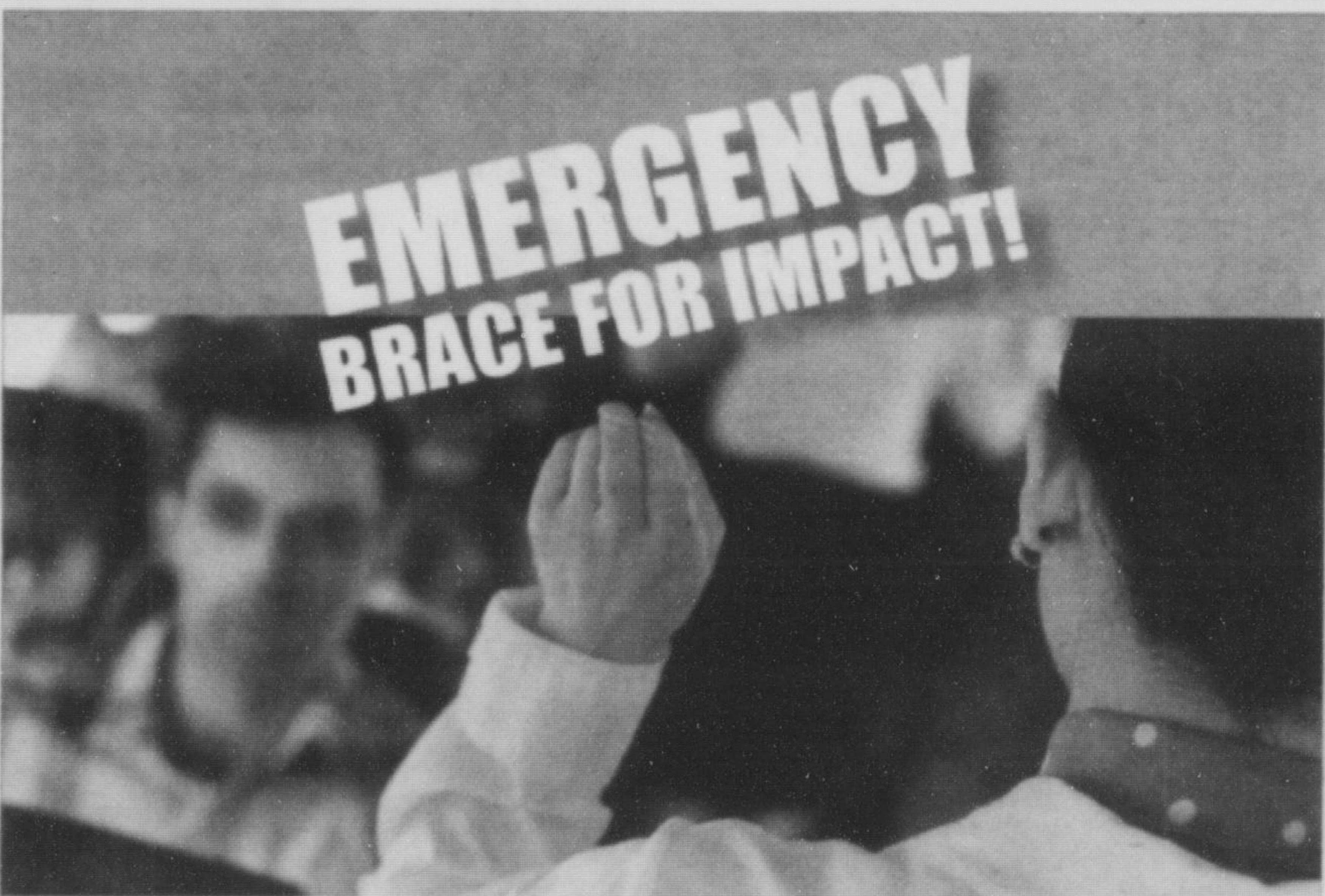
And it looked like Reding might have a chance to continue its miraculous run. Trailing Blakelock 14-7, the Royals recovered two fumbles in the final five minutes. The second, with just 1:17 to play, would have fit nicely into a storybook finish for the Royals. Unfortunately, Reding was not able to

move the ball past midfield as the clock stuck midnight on their Cinderella season.

"No one gave us a chance after we started 1-3," said Ryan Tanason, who scored the Royals' touchdown. "We were the underdogs when we won in three overtimes, we were the underdogs and we won in the last seconds. We were the underdogs again today and it's just too bad we couldn't pull it off."

Blakelock came into the game with the league's best offence and defence. The Tigers moved the ball well on its first two possessions capitalized on its second, capped when Brandon Tyrell caught a five-yard touchdown pass.

Reding responded just three minutes into



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