

# Clippers salvage draw in Midget A opener

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The Stouffville Clippers did not get off to the start they were hoping for when they took to the Stouffville Arena ice for their first game in the Ontario Hockey Federation Midget A championships against the Northern Ontario champion Schumacher Cubs Friday afternoon.

Although the Clippers did not lose the game, they managed to salvage a point in a 2-2 game.

"I think we were a little disappointed with the outcome," Clippers' head coach Don Easter said afterward.

Especially since the Clippers held what appeared to be a safe 2-0 lead entering the final frame.

What hurt the Clippers were some untimely penalties in the final frame — infractions that were retaliatory in nature, Easter said.

And ones that the Cubs capitalized on to score two power-play goals enabling them to tie the game.

The equalizer came with less than five minutes remaining in regulation time.

"Taking those penalties got us out of our routine," Easter said. "And it took away some of our momentum that we had."

"Our biggest problem was that the game was chippy. We didn't maintain our composure. There was a lot of retaliation that went on. It didn't work in our favour."

The Clippers took a 1-0 lead after one

period on a goal by Connor Cadaret.

In the second period, the Clippers took advantage of a power-play opportunity when Marco Mastrangelo one-timed a shot that staked them to a 2-0 lead.

If there was one bright spot for the Clippers, Easter was quick to praise the work of netminder Sal Rabito.

"He played well and made some big saves early on," he said.

Josh Machesney, James McLeod, Daniel Perry and Clifford Taylor each earned one assist for the Clippers.

The Clippers had to regroup quickly as they were to face the Amherstburg Stars at 7:30 p.m., after the Sun-Tribune's deadline.

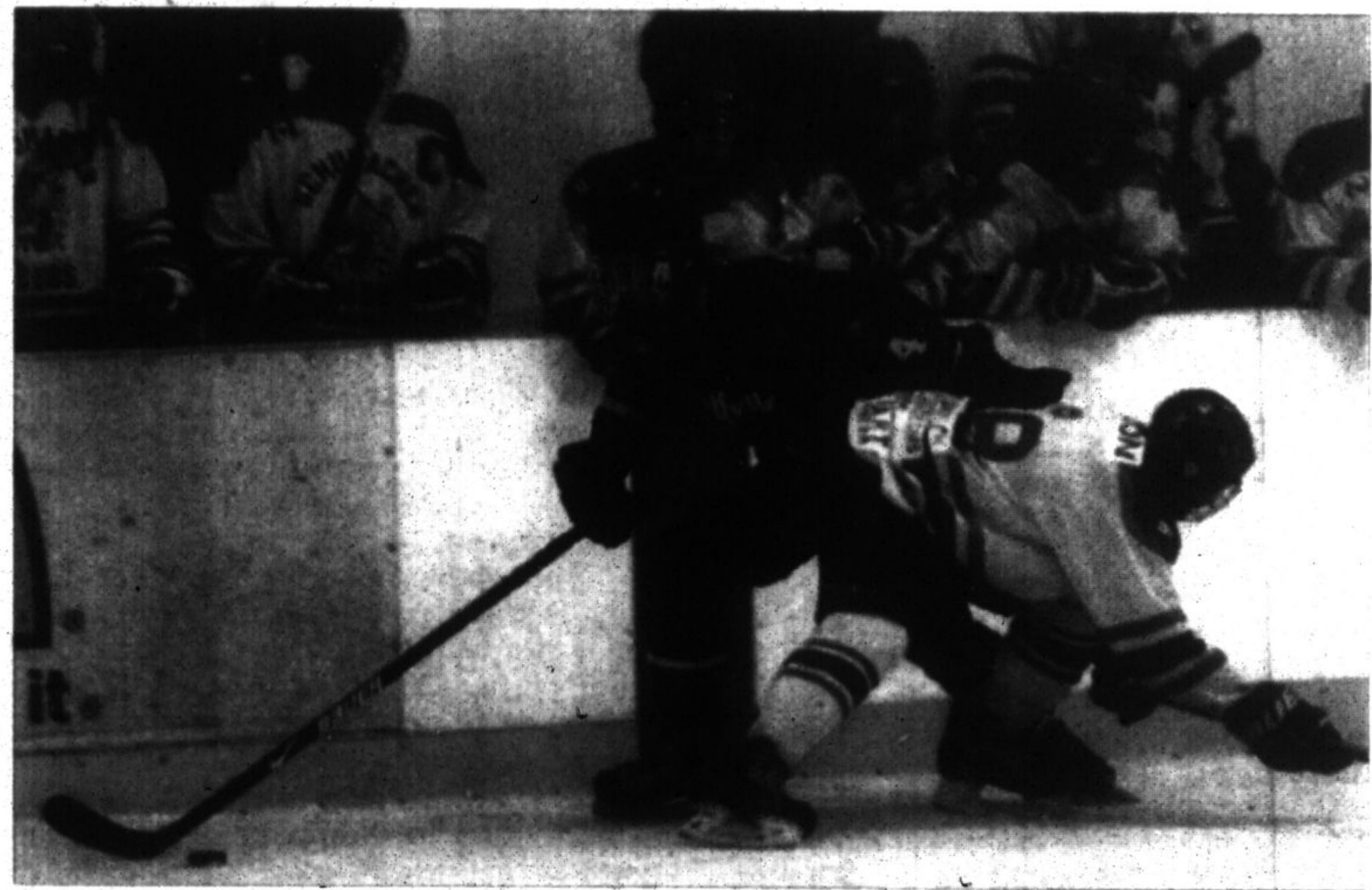
The two teams are quite familiar with each other as the Stars defeated the Clippers to capture the Ontario Minor Hockey Association title last month.

Based on their encounter with the Stars in the OMHA final, which was decided by one goal in the fifth game at the Stouffville Arena (a 2-1 decision), Easter anticipated the game would be closely contested.

"Both teams will be up for the game. Maybe we will have a little more incentive working for us," Easter said. "You've got two evenly matched teams."

With the tournament involving five teams and each playing two round-robin games in a two-day period, Easter acknowledged his club cannot afford a loss after earning a tie in their opening game.

"It's a war of attrition, there's a lot of



STAFF PHOTO/SJOERD WITTEVEEN

Stouffville Midget A Clipper Dalton Mills escapes the squeeze by Schumacher Cub Zach Joron in first period action at the Stouffville Arena yesterday afternoon. The teams skated to a 2-2 tie in the opening game for both teams in the Ontario Midget A Championship.

games to be played in a short period of time," he said.

The Clippers will complete their round-robin today with games against the Alliance champion Sarnia Jr. Sting at 11:15 a.m. and

the Greater Toronto Hockey League champion Credit Valley Wolves at 4 p.m.

In other games played, the Credit Valley Wolves opened the tournament with a 5-2 win over the Sarnia Jr. Sting.

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