

# Spirits lure 1,968 fans in 'debut'

By LEN HOYES  
Journal sports writer

If Dave Parro saw flying pucks in his sleep Wednesday night, there's a reason.

He looked at 'em for 60 minutes at IMA Sports Arena.

The Milwaukee Admirals fired 53 shots between the pipes while taking a 7-4 victory before 1,968 fans to spoil the first home game for a new group about to assume ownership of the International Hockey League franchise.

The special \$4 price lured the largest mid-week crowd of the season.

Bob Perani, spokesman for the new group, said, "we were pleased by the attendance, especially after the snowstorm. Previous Wednesday games averaged only 1,124 so this is a hopeful sign."

"They kept coming left and right," said Parro, shaking his head as he sat in the dressing room. "It's frustrating. It's nothing new and you can't get down but it's still frustrating."

The 53 shots were the most by any rival this season at the Sports Arena and rank No. 4 overall.

The Spirits, 12-40-0, had only 28 chances at goalie Jim Ralph who was making his season debut in the Admirals' net.

The disparity in shots finally caught up with the Spirits who defied the law of probability for more than two periods. They took a 3-2 lead into the finale but Milwaukee scored five straight goals before the Spirits answered.

On paper, this was a mismatch.

The Spirits had only 11 skaters, four below the limit, but shocked the visitors with two early goals. From there it was a question of holding off the bigger and more experienced rivals.

The Admirals pelted 'em with at least 16 shots per period, finally breaking the dike in the third.

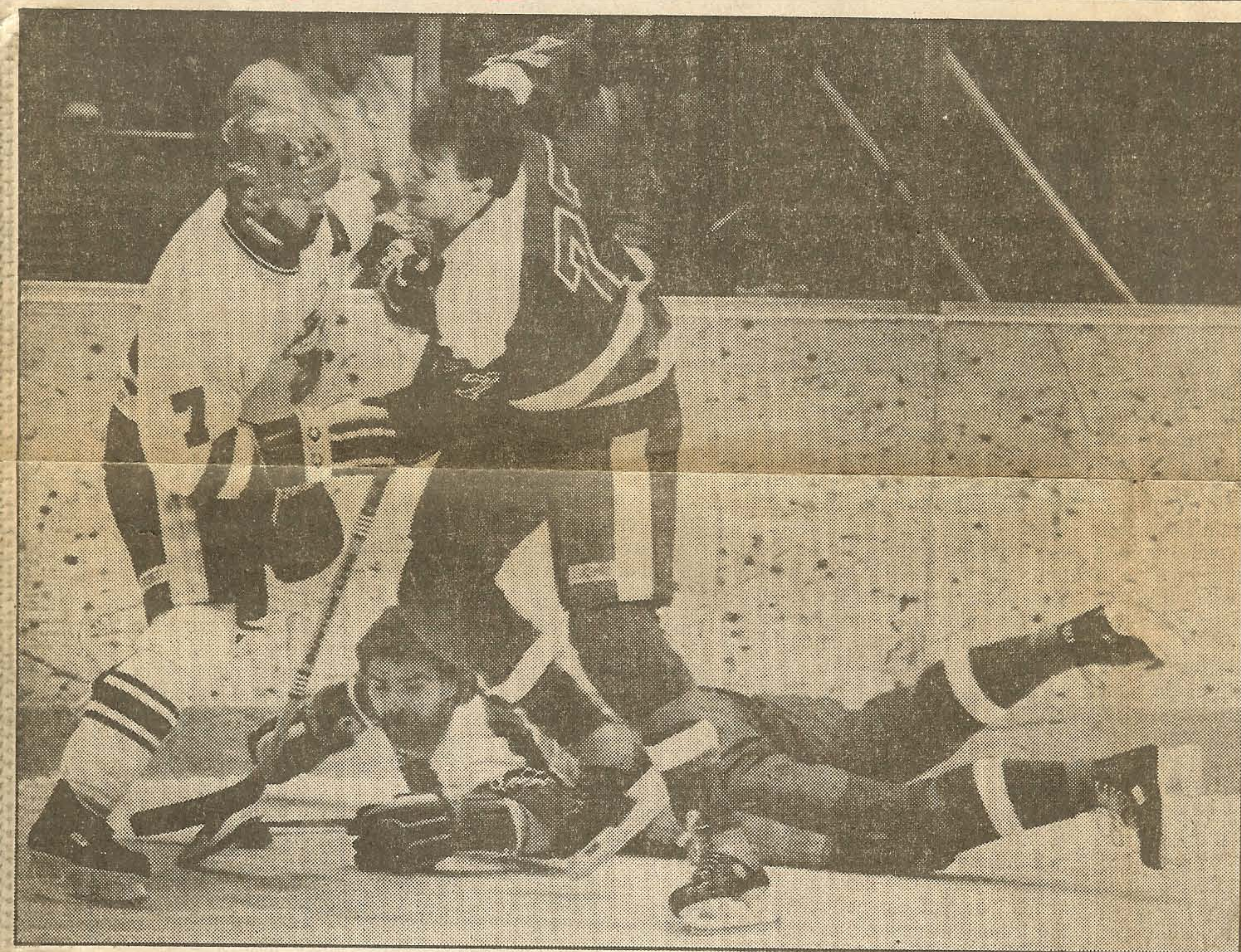
Greg Tebbutt created a 3-all tie at 6:07. Bill McCreary scored at 8:02, then Daniel Lecours bagged the winner at 9:42. Dale Yakiwchuk continued the blitz at 13:22 and Al Graves finished at 16:28.

Graves and Tim Molle scored earlier to help the



Spirits goalie Dave Parro falls to stop Milwaukee's Alan Graves on one of 53 shots by the Admirals.

JOURNAL PHOTO/ROD SANFORD



## SPIRITS

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Admirals improve their record to 26-20-1.

Flint's goals came from Glenn Oliver and Scott Brydges in the first period, Jim Egerton in the second and Oliver in the third.

Oliver scored his sixth goal and Brydges his third at 6:47 to get the 2-0 bulge. Egerton's team-high 31st goal created a 3-2 lead at 19:49 of the third.

Oliver finished his second two-goal game of the season at 16:55 of the third period.

He said, "I had some good chances for another goal earlier in the game."

Coach Doug McKay said, "We played very well for two periods but I knew we were tired when those three-on-tuos started to show in the third period. We missed some good early chances.

"Three of their goals were out-and-out giveaways. We didn't pass that good to each other.

"Parro was sensational. He outguessed their shooters six or seven times on breakaways."

He was pleased by his first look at newly-arrived Scot Birnie. "He showed he wants to play," McKay said, "but I'm not sure he figured on getting that

much ice time."

Birnie had one shot on goal and wasn't on the ice for a goal by either team.

The extra ice time took its toll on others.

Defenseman Tom Searle said, "I was dead tired at the end of the game. We just can't play much longer with 13 guys."

The wait may be a week.

McKay said the first of seven injured players expected back is defenseman Kelly Hubbard who may be ready next Wednesday.

He said winger Paul Stone will miss at least a month after knee surgery on Wednesday. Winger Carmine Vani will miss 7-10 days after surgery on a fractured cheekbone. Winger Mike Bycina's return from an ankle injury will depend upon a doctor's examination.

Defenseman Greg Hudac has been hospitalized because of a back injury.

But the toughest break of all struck winger Mike Opre whose misfortune was the talk of the post-game lobby.

Already nursing a knee injury, he fell Wednesday and suffered a broken finger.

That's called double jeopardy.