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Sports

SHORTS

Select try-outs

The Acton Soccer Club Select teams are hoping to get an early jump on the new season. The Acton Under-10 Selects will begin workouts at the McKenzie-Smith gym today (Sunday) at 10 a.m. under the watchful eye of coach Janisse Bailey. Call 853-3866 for more information. The Under-12 Select squad Sunday will work out at noon at the McKenzie-Smith gym. For more information on the Acton Under-12 try-out schedule, contact Mike Petkoff at 853-0104. The Under-15 Selects will begin try-outs at 2 p.m. on Sunday, also at the McKenzie-Smith gym. Contact coach Shelagh Bailey at 853-3866 for details. The Select teams will compete in the Five-County Soccer League with teams from Fergus, Woolwich, Hillsburgh-Erin and Rockwood.

Golf Scramble

The Optimist Club of Georgetown is holding the second annual Optimist Mayor Russ Miller Golf Scramble, July 13, Georgetown Golf and Country club. Contact Shell Lawr, 877-9109 or John Fendley, 877-6901.

Chess Club

Halton Hills Community Chess Club invites chess players of all ages and levels to attend our spring season. Meetings held every Wednesday evening 7-10:30 p.m. at the Georgetown District High School. Both casual and tournament play. For further information call Dave Bowman, 877-9924 or Peter Welling, 877-4154.

Youth Activity Night

Hey, kids, Grades 6, 7 and 8! Drop in at Ecole Sacre Coeur on Wednesday nights for sports activities with your friends. This Recreation and Parks Department program is a pay as you go series, \$3 each Wednesday from 7-9 p.m.

Gourmet Mother's Day

Learn how to cook a gourmet breakfast delight for Mom on her special day. This two-hour class is designed for one adult and up to three children aged 7-10 years. \$5 per person registration fee. Saturday, May 8 in both Georgetown and Acton. Call the Halton Hills Recreation and Parks Department at 873-2600, ext. 275 for info.

Self defence for teens

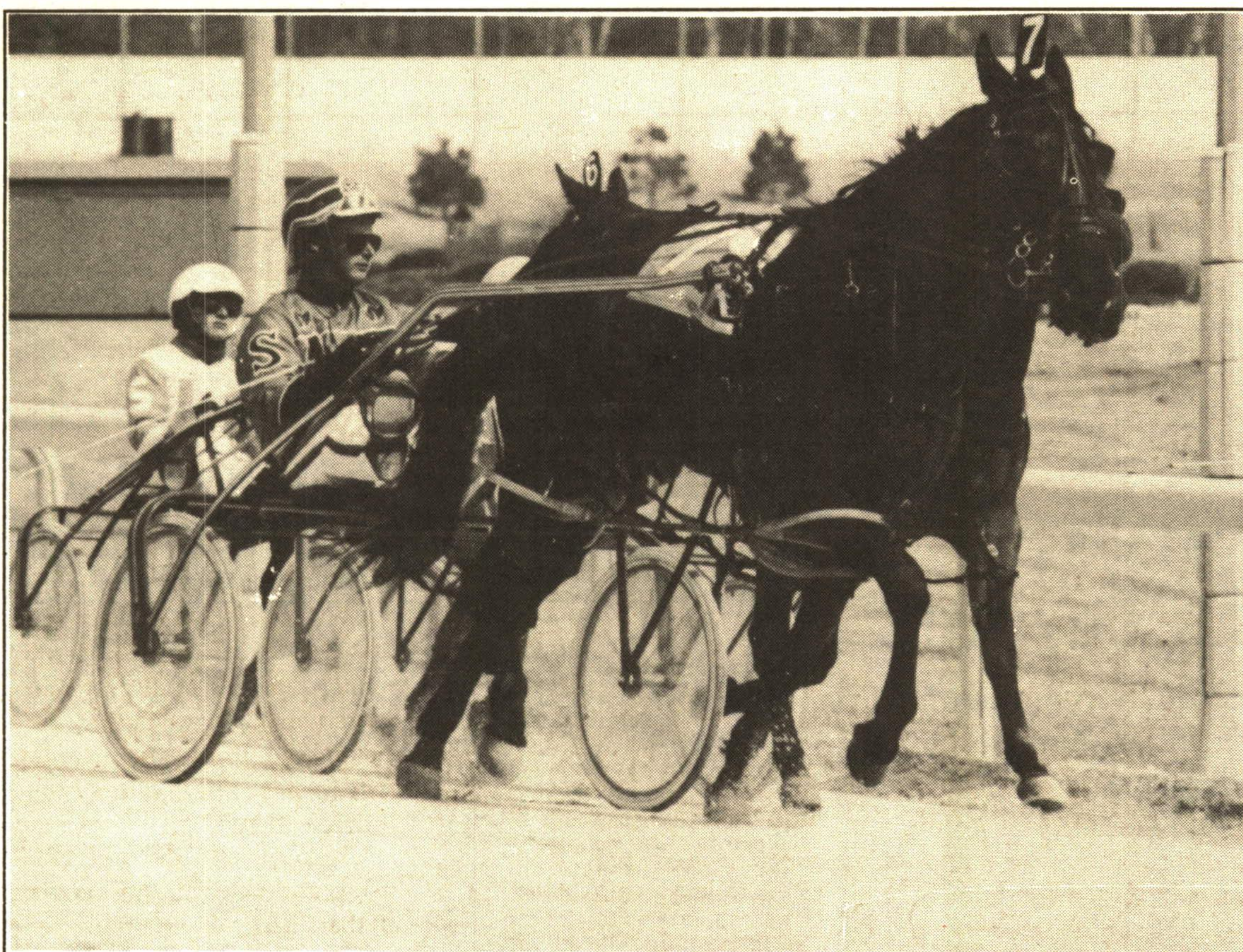
Don't be scared... be prepared! Learn the basics of self defence from this program offered by the Recreation and Parks Department. Wednesday, April 28 from 7-10 p.m. \$20/person.

Hockey banquet

Acton (OMHA) Minor Hockey will hold their annual banquet and awards evening at the Acton legion on Monday evening, April 26. Door will open at 6 p.m. with a potluck dessert at 6:30 p.m. Guest speaker and presentations will follow. All players and families are welcome to attend.

Barrie wins

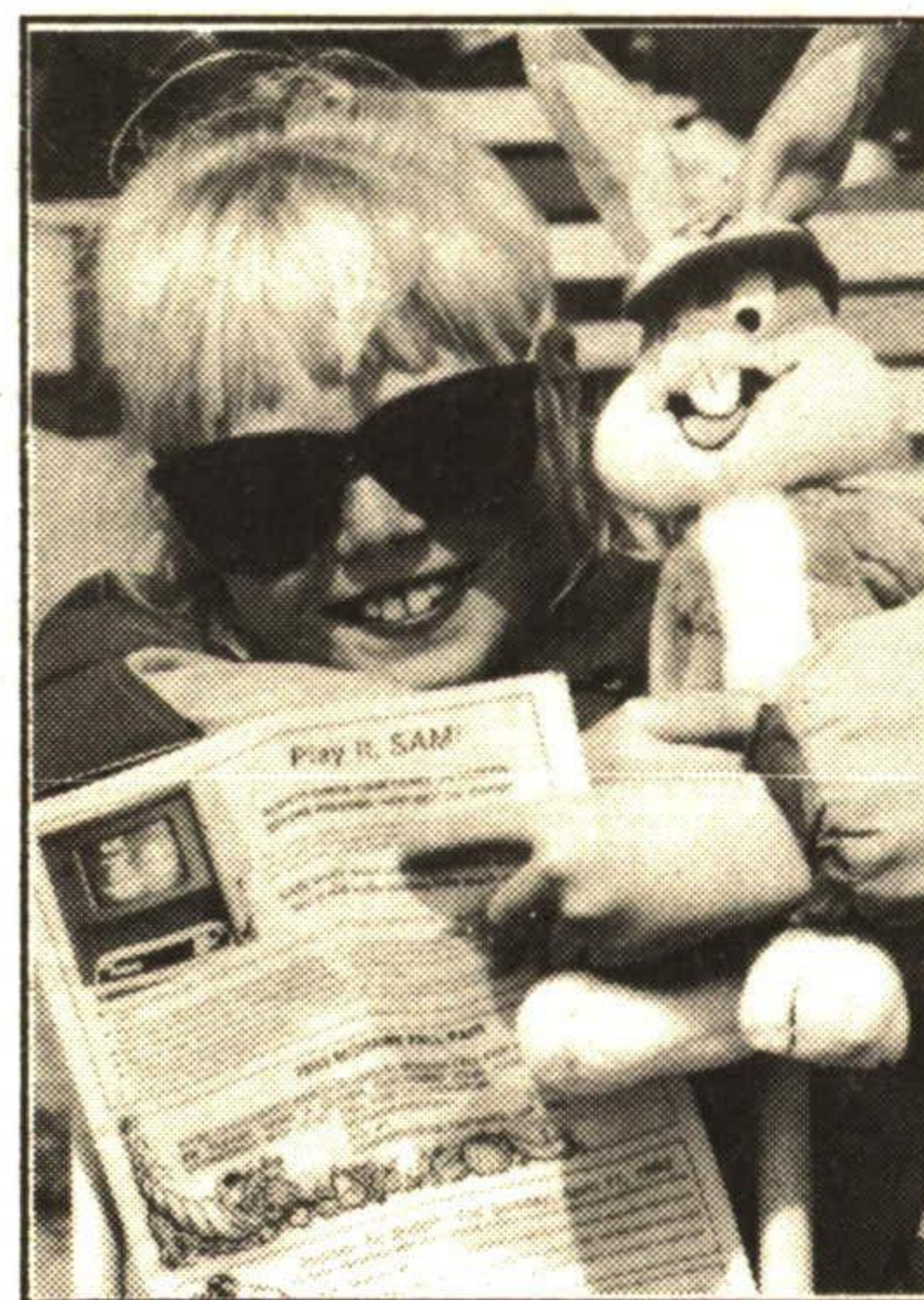
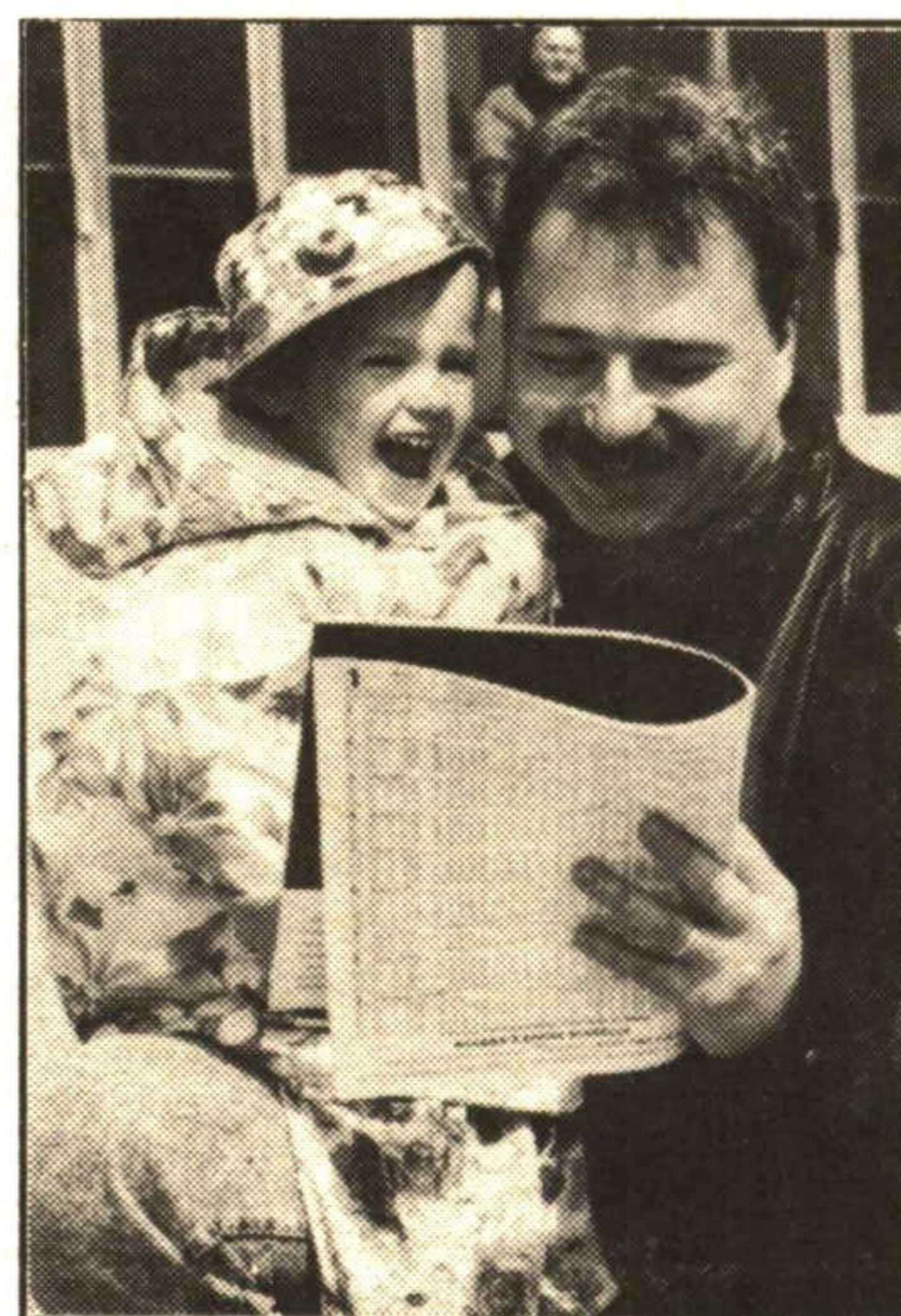
The Barrie Colts claimed the Central Ontario Junior A hockey crown with a 4-0 sweep of the West Division champion Brampton Capitals. The Colts now meet the Hamilton Kilty B's in OHA semi-final play.



There will be plenty of action at Mohawk Raceway in Campbellville on Sunday evening as eight of the top harness drivers compete in a charity event. Among them will be area driver Mike Saftic (above left), who drove Classy River Gal to a first place finish during a Sunday

afternoon card last week. Checking out the action on the Easter Sunday were (above right) Jennifer Muir, and Ken Little and daughter Kayla. Below right, Saftic chats with fellow driver Doug Arthur.

Photos by GRAHAM PAINE



Top harness drivers racing for charities

Eight of the world's best harness drivers - Ron Waples Sr., Catello Manzi, Mike Lachance, Ron Pierce, Doug Brown, Steve Condren, Paul MacDonell, and Mike Saftic - have combined during their careers to drive horses to earnings in excess of two hundred and seventy-five million dollars and over 30,000 winners.

But on Sunday, April 18 this all-star cast will not be driving to put money in their own pockets but rather into the pocketbooks of eight children's charities.

On this date The Ontario Jockey Club's Mohawk Raceway will host the second annual Drivers' Charity Challenge.

The Challenge will involve six races and each driver will earn points based on where he finishes in each race.

The Ontario Jockey Club will donate a total of \$12,500 to the children's charities.

The driver who earns the most points

in the six race challenge will have \$5,000 donated in his name to the charity that he's teamed up with at the start of the evening, prior to the challenge.

The runner-up driver will have \$3,000 donated in his name to his respective charity and the third place finisher will have \$2,000 donated to his charity. All remaining charities will receive \$500.

Fans will be able to participate in the Drivers' Charity Challenge by voting for the driver they feel will be the winner.

At the completion of the event a draw will be made from the fans who voted for the Challenge winner for a trip to The Meadowlands Pace.

As well, there will be photograph and autograph sessions with the drivers.

Join us on Sunday, April 18 at Mohawk Raceway and cheer on your favorite star in The Drivers' Charity Challenge.

Racing starts at 7:30 p.m. and the gates open at 6 p.m.



Winning horse trainer has eye for speed

By KAREN SMITH

Special to the Independent/Free Press

Joe Stutzman defends his success simply - hard work.

While the 31-year-old standardbred horse trainer last year enjoyed a rewarding 113 winners on the Ontario Jockey Club circuit, his career has also included controversy and devastation.

The Milton man's impressive talent of claiming horses and turning them into winners has brought on talk that he alters his horses' abilities with chemicals.

Suspensions prompted an investigation by the Ontario Racing Commission officials, whose job it is to maintain fairness and integrity in the racing circuit.

Following surveillance on him for 10 days, they left without any indication of their findings.

Stutzman says his only means of picking money-makers is homework - keeping a sharp eye out for potential winners, particularly those that show spurts of speed.

"It takes a lot of hard work. You have to keep at it. You get out of it what you put into it."

"I spend a lot of time watching races," he continues, "evaluating the horses I'm looking to claim."

That along with keeping up on the latest training methods has earned him more than \$750,000 in purse winnings through his stables at Mohawk and Greenwood raceways.

The only other downfall of his career was a tragic one. He lost six horses in last April's disastrous barn fire at Mohawk. "I didn't realize how emotionally attached I was (to horses). I get horses claimed all the time, but losing them that way was different."

With a winning record on his side, it wasn't long before



JOE STUTZMAN

Stutzman replenished his stable. He now finds himself having to turn away owners in pursuit of his training skills.

By mid-March this year, Stutzman had 33 first-place finishers among 125 starts. More than half of those horses at least showed.

Not denying the capital benefits, the Delaware native says what drives him is the challenge of taking a horse to its full potential. When it works out in his favor, the feeling is like no other.

Currently training at Campbellville's Mohawk Raceway, he seems to have had luck with horses since he emerged in the industry, which wasn't that long ago. His only previous experience with horses was on his parents dairy farm near Gorrie, Ont., where his family moved when he was six years old.

Starting out as a groom at the age of 18, he saved up enough money to buy shares in a horse, which he co-claimed for \$15,000.

A week later Stutzman recalls, the horse was claimed for \$18,000, but in the transition, he earned enough money to keep going.

The husband and father of two toddlers then tried his hand at training and "kind of rolled from there."

Today, he has 28 horses in his stable - nine he partially owns - as well as another nine racing on a New Jersey track.

Trial and error as well as learning what works and what doesn't from the horses themselves, helped him along the way, he adds.

While the standardbred racing industry is expanding in popularity as well as purse size, he says modern breeding is making the horses faster.

"I think some day they're going to go just as fast as thoroughbreds."