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Acton teen on national bronze medal team

By FRANCES NIBLOCK
The New Tanner

Key blocking and attack by Acton's Jeff Birrell helped the Bronte Beach Volleyball Club Northwind juvenile team to a bronze medal at the national championships in St. John's Newfoundland on Sunday.

The 18-year-old, 6'6" Acton High school student said he was slow to start but "stepped up" his level of play to make some key blocks as the Oakville-based team, undefeated in pool play, moved onto the semifinals.

"It wasn't until the quarterfinals when we needed to win that I started to step up my level of play and just re-

ally came through," Birrell, who has played for Bronte Beach for three years, said on Tuesday.

Bronte Beach downed New Brunswick in the best-of-three quarterfinals and coach John Burt said Birrell's right-side blocking and attack were pivotal to the team's overall defence and attack with the outside hitters.

In the semifinal, Bronte Beach lost three games to Alberta - the eventual gold medal winner - and to that point was the only team to take a game from the Red Deer squad.

Bronte Beach met its rival, West Side of Brampton, in the bronze medal match and took the first game 15-11. West

Side took game two of the best-of-five final 10-15. Bronte Beach, a team that likes to make comebacks, took the third game 14-4 and West side won game four 4-15. Bronte Beach finished off its rival 15-13.

"Starting and continuing throughout this match, Jeff was a key 'go-to-guy' on defence and in blocking a strong West Side attack from two teams that knew each other extremely well and each wanting to prevail," coach Burt said in an e-mail from St. John's.

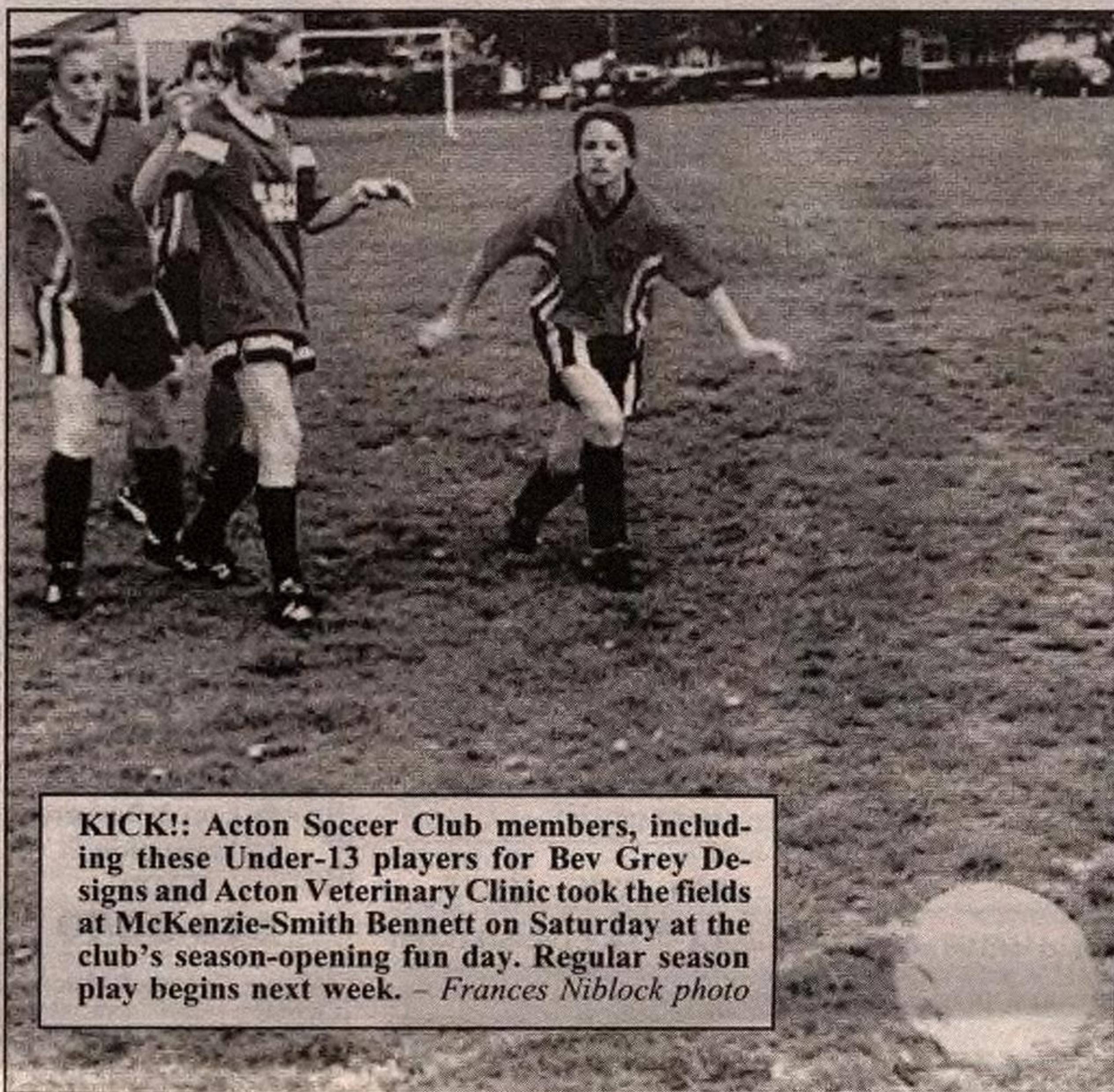
Birrell said the last rally point match wasn't the best of the tournament for Bronte Beach, but the team did what it had to do.

"There was a lack of intensity on the court but we finally in the fifth set realized - wait a minute - we want to take something home," Birrell said, adding it was incredible to meet all of the other players from the 20 men's and 24 women's teams from across Canada.

The bronze medal win ends the season for the team. Although it's eligible to for the Junior Olympics in Colorado, the cost is prohibitive.



VOLLEYBALL BRONZE: Acton's Jeff Birrell (standing, third from left) poses proudly with the Oakville-based Bronte Beach Volleyball Club that captured the bronze medal at the Canadian juvenile championships in St. John's, Newfoundland on Sunday. - Submitted photo



KICK!: Acton Soccer Club members, including these Under-13 players for Bev Grey Designs and Acton Veterinary Clinic took the fields at McKenzie-Smith Bennett on Saturday at the club's season-opening fun day. Regular season play begins next week. - Frances Niblock photo

Acton bowlers shine at Special Olympics

By ELLEN PIEHL
The New Tanner

Acton put on a good showing at the Special Olympics Invitational Five-Pin Bowling Tournament, recently held at Acton Bowling Lanes (May 1-2).

Acton 1 placed first, while Acton 4 took second. Hamilton 1 and Brampton 3 placed third and fourth respectively.

Other Acton winners included Luc Casey, who won in the High Single Flat category with a 256 and Colin Key, who won in the High Triple Pins-Over-Average category with a +117.



WARMING UP: Acton's Luc Casey warms up before participating in the Special Olympics five-pin bowling tournament at Acton lanes May 1-2. - Ellen Piehl photo



WELCOME CHEQUE: The proposed Acton Youth Centre and other local teen programs will benefit from the generous cheque Acton Subway owner Gus Galimanas handed to Rosslyn Dowell, executive director of Halton Hills Community Support and Information, on Monday. Subway donated \$1 from each sub sold on Mother's Day for youth programming. Youth Services Canada participants Kim Lusty (left) Kristy Allen and Sabrina Mitchelmore are working on plans for the centre. - Frances Niblock photo

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