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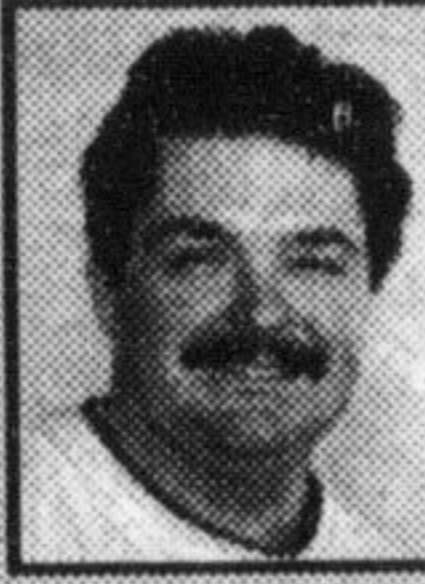
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# Tears of joy were flowing at Optimist band's victory

By **KAREN SMITH**

*The Champion*

Tears streamed down the faces of local pipers as their hoped for world championship title became reality.

"The girls were crying, the parents were crying, everybody was hugging each other and even the boys were teary-eyed," said pipe major Gail Brown of the Milton Optimist Pipe Band.

Ms Brown returned home last Friday from the World Pipe Band Championships in Glasgow, Scotland, where the local pipe band took first-place honours in the grade 3 category.

The 1997 band comprised of 16 Halton pipers aged 13 to 28 years were congratulated by thousands of spectators during a post-victory parade.

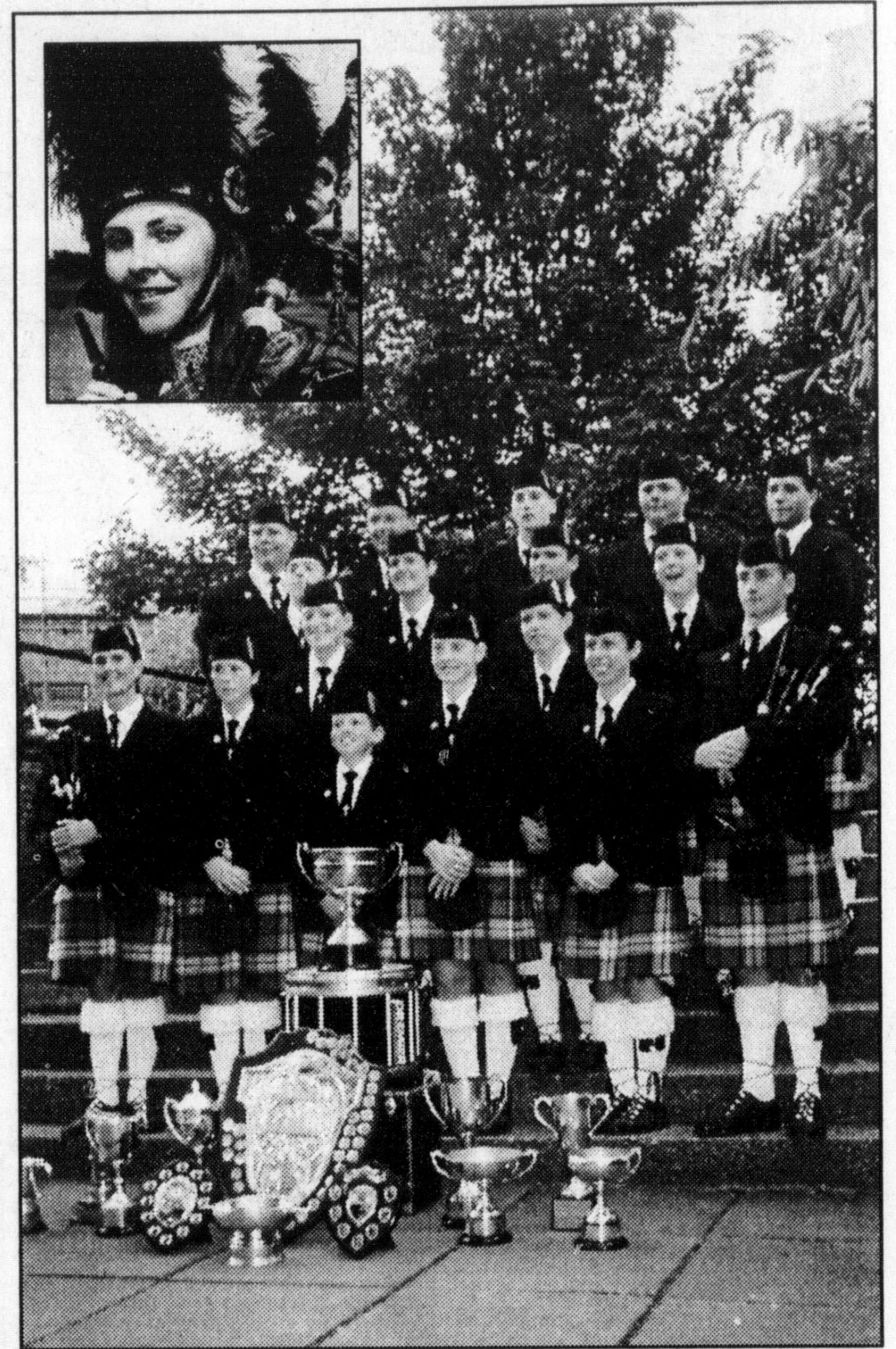
The group beat 59 bands for the title, with their stiffest competition coming from Scotland's Strathendrick Pipe Band. A total of 208 bands competed in four divisions.

The feat represents the pipe band's second world championship victory after only seven years of existence.

The Milton band won the world title in the juvenile division in 1994 and finished second in 1995.

Only one other team from outside Scotland managed to win a world title this year — the Los Angeles Pipe Band, who were victorious in the grade 2 loop.

Last year, the Milton band didn't attend the competition due to a lack of funding, said Ms Brown, a local piping instructor who founded the band in 1990.



The Milton Optimist Pipe Band recently won the world title in the grade three category in Scotland. Pipe major Gail Brown is inset.

• see PIPE on page 20

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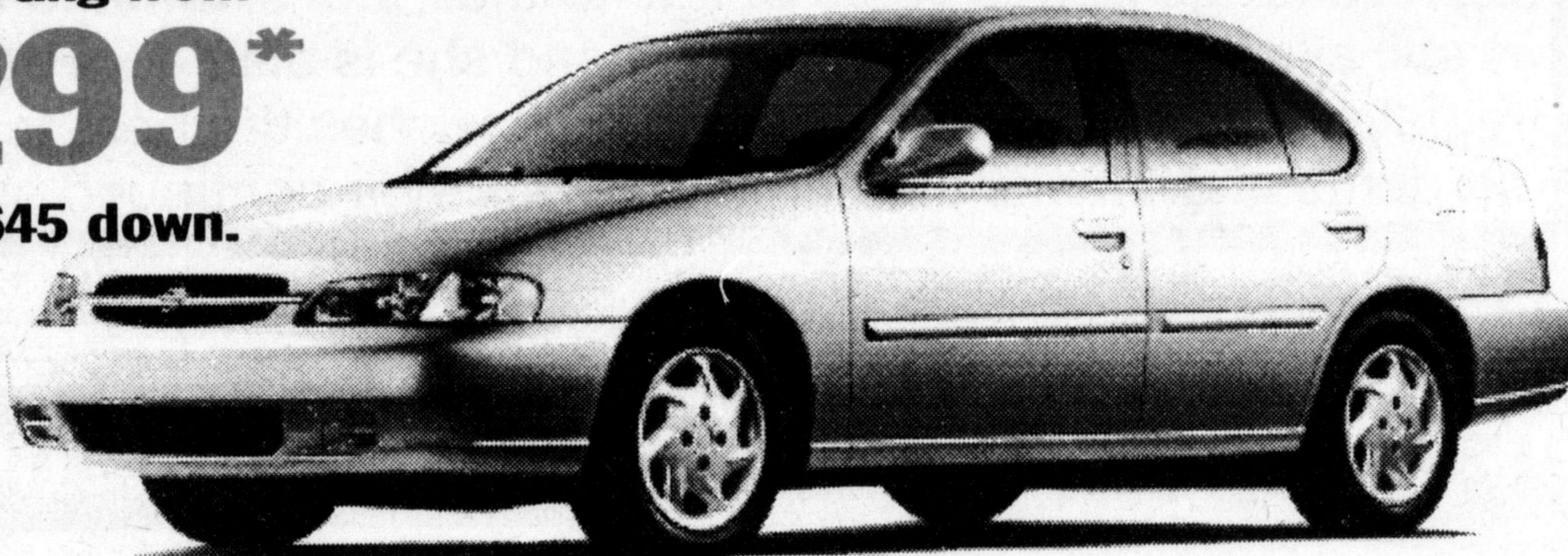
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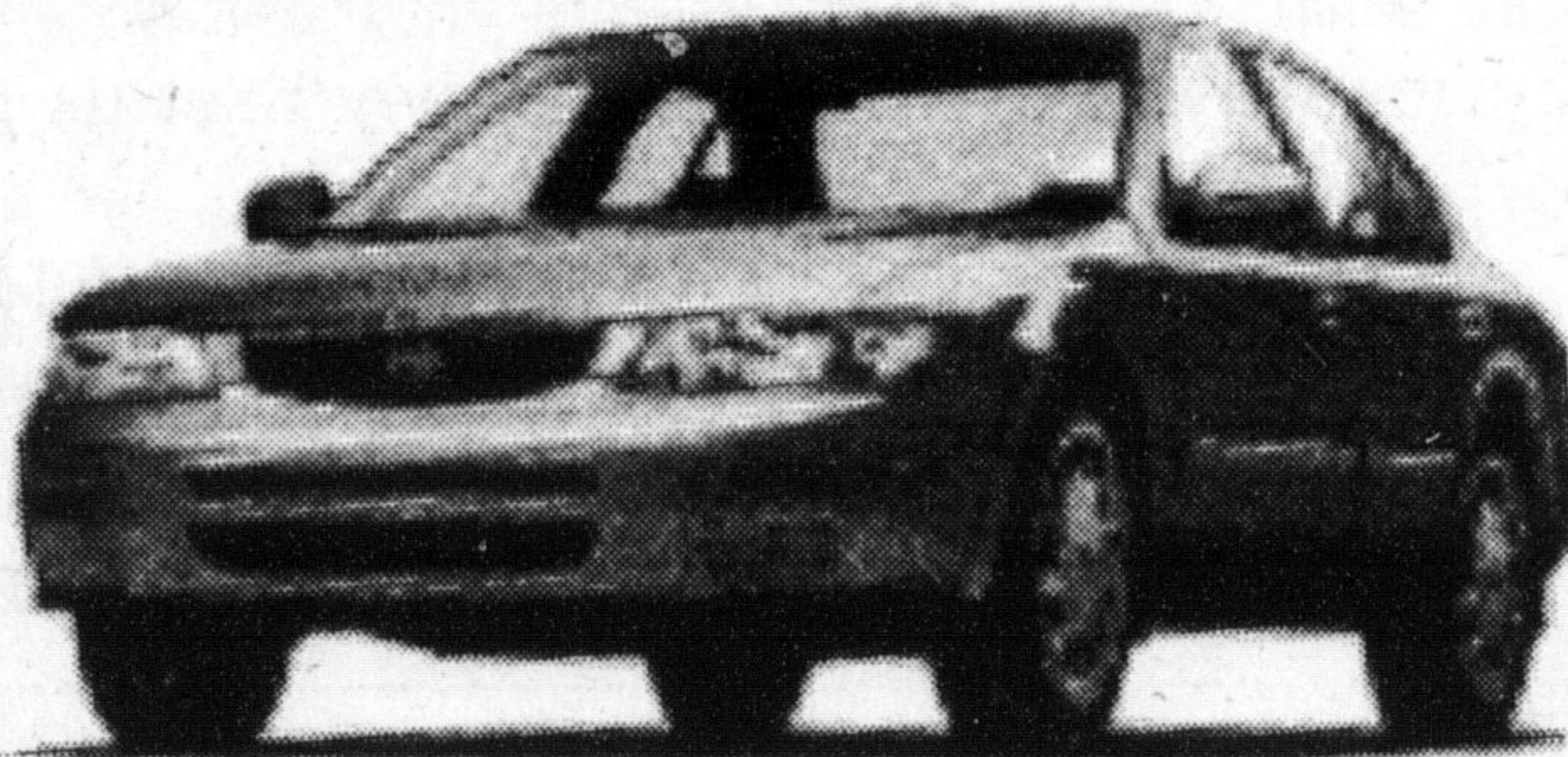


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