

Lynch suffering the setbacks of baseball

By STEVE LeBLANC
The Champion

Pat Lynch appears to be the latest victim of professional baseball's precious pecking order.

Just a few weeks ago all signs pointed to the Blue Jays prospect moving up to single-A ball in St. Catharines this summer.

But despite a highly impressive extended spring training camp, upper management had other plans for the Milton pitcher.

"Being sent back to the rookie team in Medicine Hat was definitely a surprise," said Lynch, who turned 20 Saturday. "I had a lot more strikeouts in Florida this spring and was hitting the inside pitches well. I really thought I'd done well enough to move up."

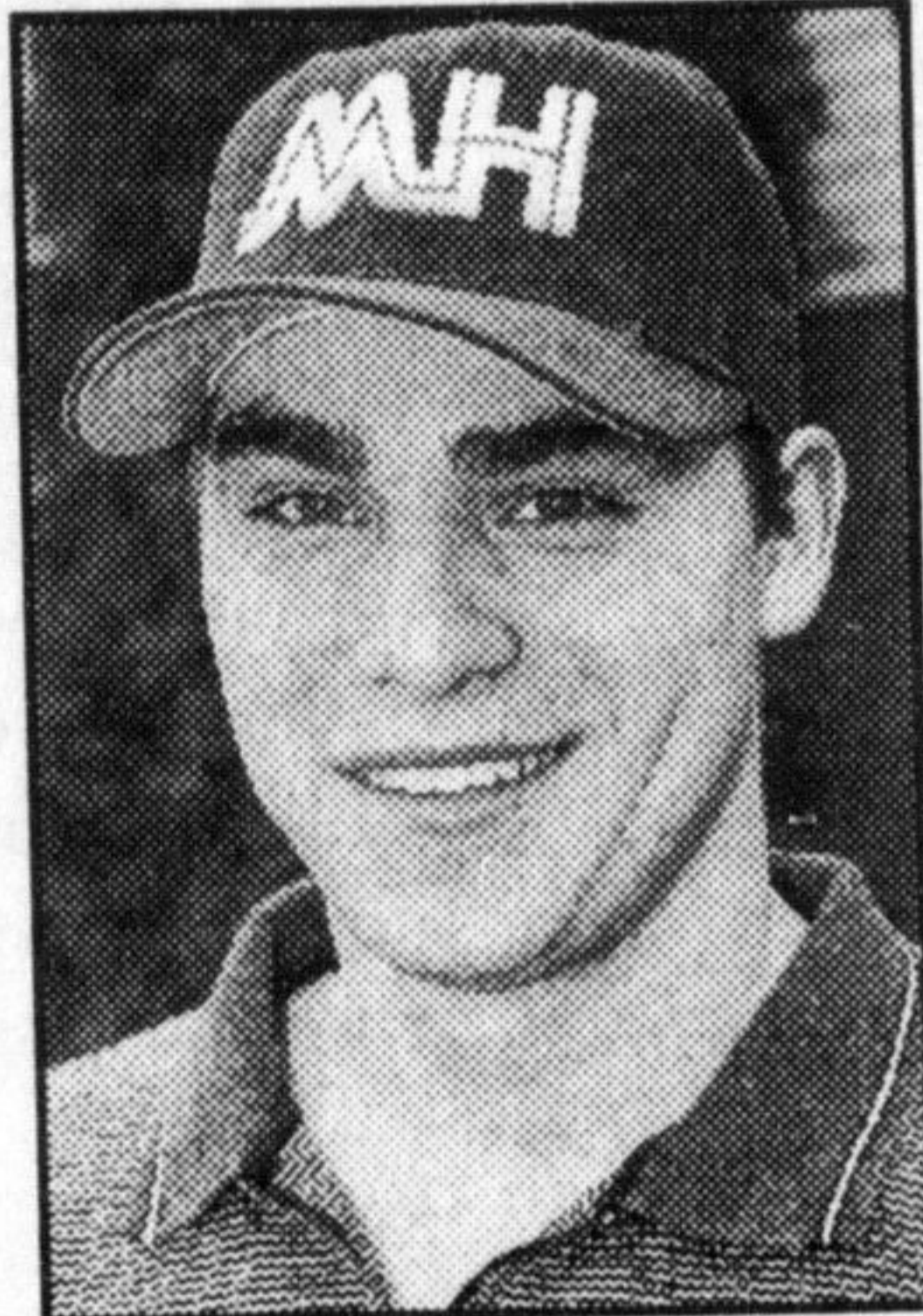
"The spring training instructors all felt the same way."

Lynch figures his return to Medicine Hat has more to do with the Blue Jays wanting to give most single-A veterans another shot and less to do with his own performance.

However, this theory offers little consolation.

Remarked the former Milton District High star, "What's disappointing is that the decision was made by someone who probably didn't even see me play this spring."

Taking a positive approach has already translated into three strong outings in Medicine Hat. In a combined 16 innings he's surrendered just three earned runs and two measly walks while fanning 20 — a team high after week number three.



Pat Lynch

Half of those strikeouts came last Tuesday in Montana where he scattered three hits over five innings and paced his club to a 10-3 triumph over Helena.

"I was getting ahead in the count a lot and had them (Helena batters) chasing my fastball," said Lynch of his latest start.

"I've been very pleased with my performance as late. My control is much better."

Lynch said recent modifications to his delivery — to maximize his finish — have caused his curve ball to take a temporary leave of absence.

However, surfacing in its place has been a much more effective slider that has already frustrated numerous batters.

Should he continue to dominate on the mound Lynch could still find himself in St. Catharines this summer. Still, having been passed over once already he's not holding his breath.

"I'm not even thinking about that anymore. I just want to pitch well here and whatever happens, happens. Besides, Medicine Hat has a great shot at winning the Pioneer League this year."

Riders show well

• from WILD on page 18

During one crash team member Edward Dawe strained a shoulder and sprained an ankle yet still managed to hold up his end of the workload.

Escaping with only a slightly bruised hip, Minkhorst said, "this course is much harder than Hardwood Hills (where last year's Kokanee Race was held). Here the laps are 35 minutes each compared to an hour at Hardwood Hills so you don't have as much recovery time between shifts."

"We've got to thank Spokes and Slopes for fixing our bikes twice. They were a real lifesaver."

They finished tenth. Making up the rest of the team were Karl Pasternak and Tim Sparrow.

Also sponsored by Kodiak Power Equipment was Burlington's Paul Maltby, who finished fourth among solo cyclists.

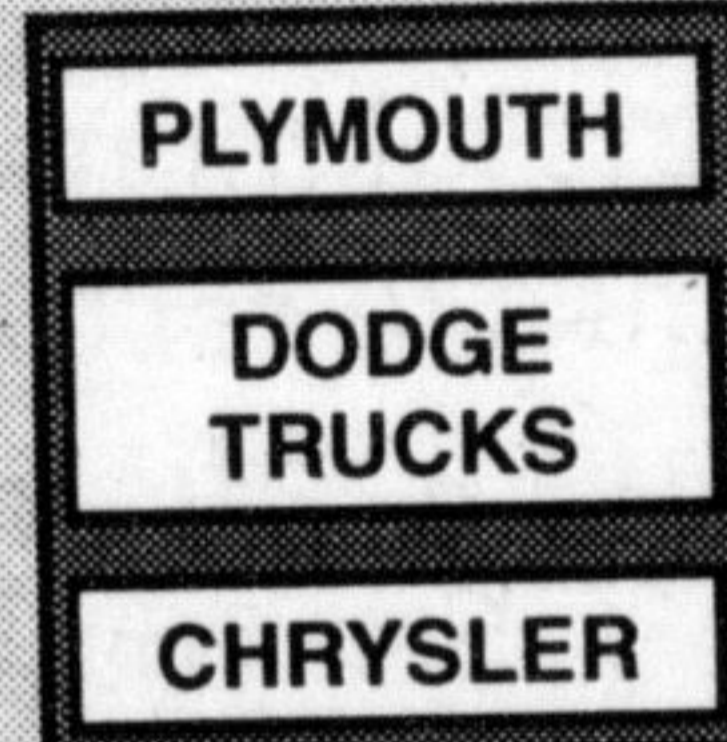
The race drew more than 100 teams from across Ontario as well as special guest Steve Bauer, of Tour de France racing fame.

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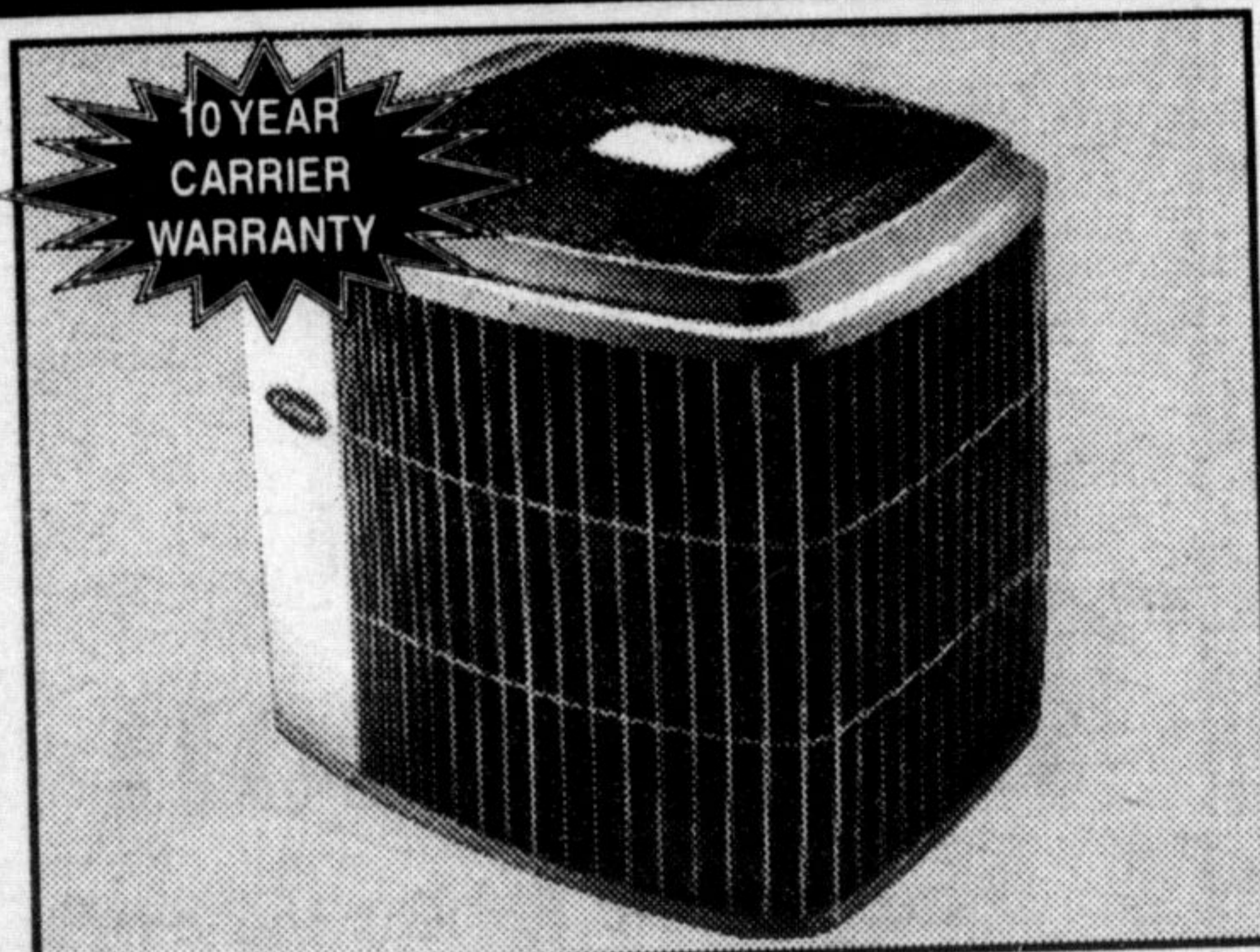


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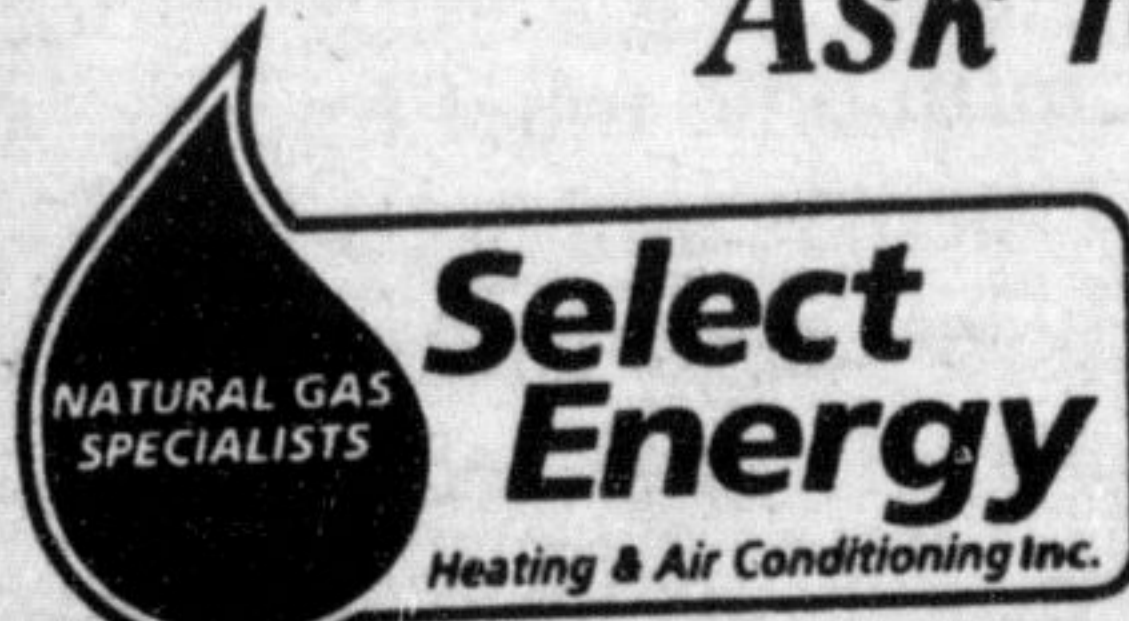
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