



OPINION

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

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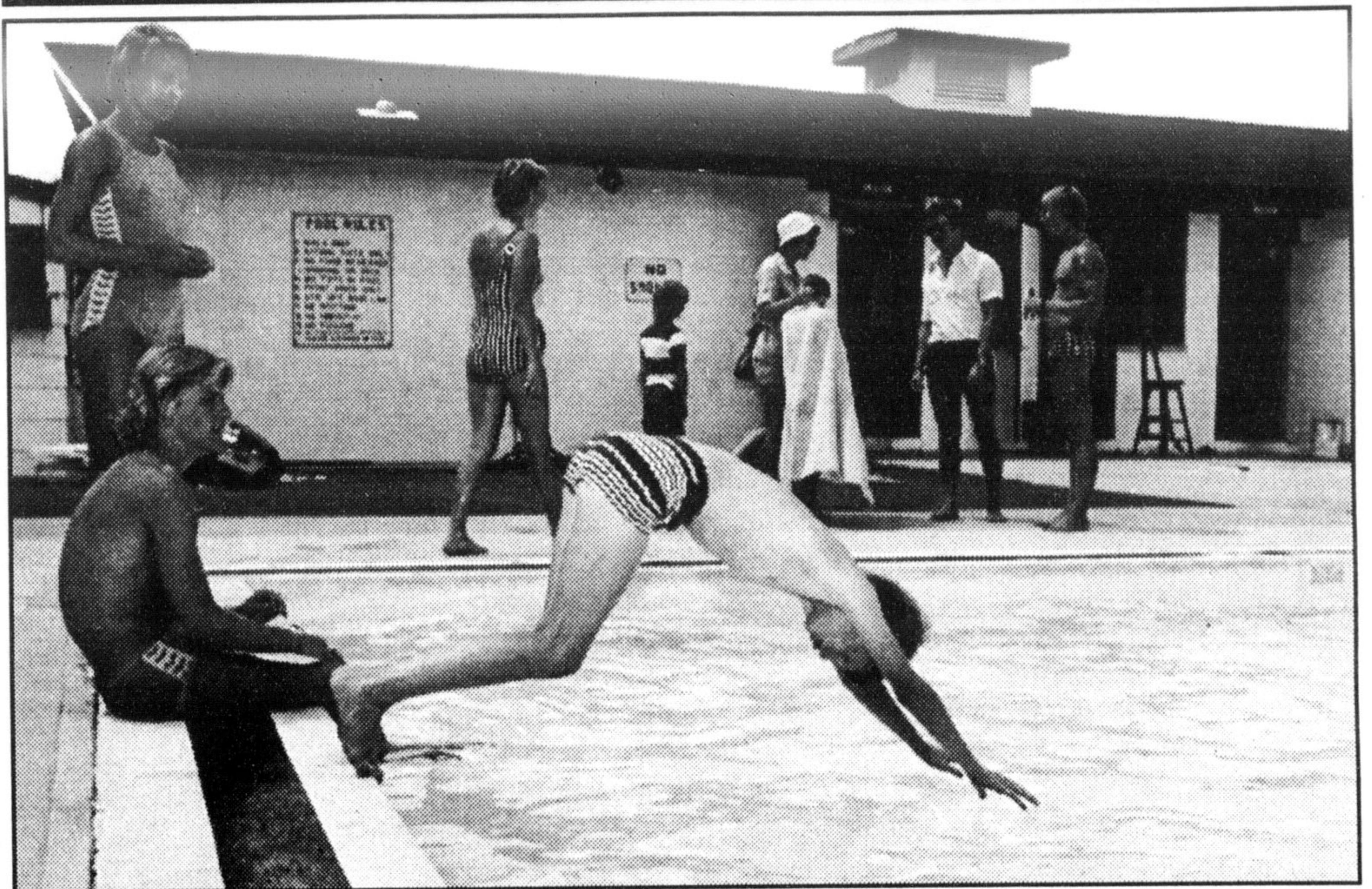
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Looking Back ...



As one swimmer dove into the pool, two others kept track of the number of laps during a swim-a-thon at the Rotary Park pool in August, 1976. The swimmers expected to earn more than \$800 for their efforts.

Keep your nose out of it

I was driving my kids and their friends to various activities when a Beatles song came on the radio.

Instantly, my kids started to moan -- afraid that I would sing along and embarrass them in front of their friends.

So, I just hummed quietly to myself and did my head and shoulder dance when no one was watching.

I am amazed at the things that may embarrass a teen. Anything a parent does can embarrass a teenager.

Don't even try to guess why they are embarrassed. Don't try to argue that they shouldn't be embarrassed. They're entitled to their feelings (and it's hopeless anyway).

I am also surprised, however, at how many kids have legitimate complaints, complaints that cannot be attributed to adolescent hormonal overload.

Many parents really are nosy, pushy and embarrassing.

Kenny really wanted his mom to stop bugging him about girls.

Her push to know it all was becoming a problem in their relationship. He knew his mom cared a lot about him and that she wanted desperately to help him. But she drove him crazy with her questions, trying to find out what he was thinking, who he was eye-balling, whether he was interested in sex.

She just couldn't wait to be his confidante. Instead, she was alienating him. Kenny wouldn't tell her anything about girls no matter what, because she was so nosy.

She would often ask him, "Do you talk with any girls in your class? Will there be any girls at the party? Does Michael have a girlfriend?"

Kenny resented the questions, as if there was something wrong with him if he didn't have a girlfriend.

He felt this was private, that she couldn't understand.

Mom does need to back off. Kenny's moment in the sun will come and when it does, she will know.



Psychology in the '90s

with DR. ARNOLD RINCOVER

When a teenager falls in love for the first time, the whole world knows. Kenny will be consumed by his new love every waking moment. He will think that no else in the world has ever felt like this.

He will think this is the real thing, the only girl for him, his true love.

He will think about nothing else. This is especially true for Kenny, who makes friends very slowly, but is extremely devoted to the few friends he does have.

He will not have time for his homework, he'll start studying for his driver's licence, and he'll be asking for money or looking for a job.

He will need his parents, not only to negotiate rides, curfews, and money, but he will want to talk about her. He won't be able to keep it inside.

When they break up, he will again need someone to

talk to. So, mom will get her opportunities, if she doesn't spoil it now by being too nosy and making it an issue that is off limits in his mind.

When a teenager gives you a signal that they don't want to say or do something, it's important to stop and put yourself in their position.

Ask yourself the following questions:

Could it be humiliating? Are you nagging them or invading their privacy? Are you giving them a chance to prove you wrong? Are you saying anything new? Are you treating them with dignity and listening to what they have to say?

If your answer to any of these questions is negative, then don't say it.

"Many parents really are nosy, pushy and embarrassing."
 DR. ARNOLD RINCOVER

Have a nice day too, lady

"Have a nice day," said the girl after giving me my order.

I didn't reply, which just completely horrified one of my daughters. "Do you know how rude that is?" she scolded me.

I didn't reply to her, either.

Later I made my case that the girl didn't mean it when she told me to have a nice day, so why should I also say something back that I didn't mean?

No checkout person at any store in Milton, or anywhere in North America, really cares whether you or I have a nice day.

What am I supposed to say back to them, anyway? "Thank you, and you have a nice day, too." Well, they're stuck in that store working, and I don't know their hours. Obviously, they're not going to have a nice day while working and I don't know what time they get off. Maybe there won't be enough time left to have a nice day.

What is a nice day, anyway? Pretty much every day is "nice" as far as I'm concerned. That means they're just saying I should have a normal day. I'd like something better, say, a fantastic day, or a super-duper day.

What I'm really worried about, however, is a terrible day. Maybe they should say, "Here's your order, and please don't have a bad day." I'd appreciate that more and maybe I could see them even meaning it because as little as we care whether anyone has a "nice day" we surely don't want anyone to have a "bad day."

Maybe after they say, "Have a nice day," I should ask them if they'd like me to check back with them at the end of it to let them know how it went. That would throw them for a loop, wouldn't it? Not once has anybody ever asked me if I actually had the nice day they had wished upon me the day before. No, nobody is ever wondering, hoping or caring whether I have a nice day or not.



On the Loose

with MURRAY TOWNSEND

Store people must get tired of repeating the same thing over and over again. I even get sick of saying the same thing when I go through the drive-thru. The other day I ordered what I wanted while sitting in my car at the window and then added, "And I'd like that to go, please."

"Have a nice day," she said, without cracking a smile.

Always at restaurants and sometimes at fast-food places, the waiter or server will advise this: "Enjoy your dinner." This is a good thing to say because we might forget to do that otherwise. I'm tempted to say to them, "I'd enjoy it more if you didn't say dumb things to me." But, as we should know, one of life's golden rules is that you never ever give any reason for a person serving you food to be mad at you. Personally, those people are my very favourite people in the whole wide world.

Okay, let's assume they have to say something when they hand you whatever it is you just bought. Why can't it be something useful and helpful?

For example, if I ordered a lot of stuff at a fast food place, then the person could say, "Have a nice day, sir, and enjoy the tons of empty calories you'll be eating. At your weight, though, may I suggest a salad next time."

Or something even more useful. Thank you for shopping at Bla-Bla's. The forecast for today is 25 degrees this afternoon, going down to 14 overnight. There is a 20 per cent chance of rain."

Or, "Thank you for shopping at Bla-Bla's. And remember to have your pets spayed or neutered."

My daughter works at a grocery store in town. I asked her what she said to customers when she was finished checking out their orders. "Have a nice day," she said. Of course.

Well, then what do the customers say? She actually had an answer for that. Forty-five per cent say have a nice day back, 40 per cent say thank you, and 15 per cent say nothing.

That means only 15 percent of us have really thought this through.

Anyway, enjoy the rest of the newspaper. And have a nice day.



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by
Steve
Nease