



OPINION

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

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Getting down to nitty-gritty

A group of politicians, police and private citizens are currently working to reduce Milton's high accident rate — one that tops Halton Region per capita.

Members are in the early stages of their honourable fight against injuries and deaths on the town's municipal and regional roads.

We believe a key ingredient for solutions can be found through examining the causes. Determining the average age of the drivers and the time and place of the crashes is important information, as already determined by Halton. But other vital factors so far haven't been addressed.

Here's something to think about. Were most of the accidents caused by drunk drivers or by motorists speeding and not being able to react in time to an unforeseen obstacle or situation? Many people take back roads to try to avoid police when they're impaired and the rural atmosphere is inviting to speeders.

Did the drivers make foolish judgment calls in taking unsafe risks like passing other vehicles at the wrong time or place? Did the drivers drift off, were they just not paying attention, and going through red lights or stop signs? Were the drivers confused at a busy intersection or trying to beat the light?

What were the charges laid in the collisions — following too closely, careless driving or making an unsafe turn or lane change?

We suspect a variety of these scenarios represent the causes and that should be the base for finding solutions, if there are any. Ways of tackling the problem should directly reflect the drivers' state of mind when committing the human errors that resulted in disaster.

Gathering the data would take a lot of work but much of this information is public and should be readily available through police reports.

We agree with Staff Sergeant Roy Smith that you can't just sit back and do nothing. Let's see if the community can indeed make a difference, but let's determine the causes so we can accurately come up with solutions.

Karen Smith

Put yourself in his place before you complain

The first exhibition hockey game had barely ended and outside the arena the parents had already started in on the new coach. By the second game, the angry mob was organizing a lynching.

He hadn't been a head coach at the rep level before, and he was making mistakes. Worse than that, he had committed the cardinal sin. Everyone who coaches knows, or should know, that you can't give the appearance of favouring your own kid.

Now, it's not unusual for parents to overestimate the talent of their own child. In fact, I think the majority of parents do that. Often, the coach's kid is one of the better players, but when he's not, the coach better recognize it.

It's what parents notice first, and beyond that very little gets by them anyway. Before and after every game, the parents have at least an hour of nothing to do but talk to each other and analyze the team and coaches.

Very few coaches are beyond reproach, and almost none are liked by everyone. Depending on how good at sales the unhappy parents are, they can poison everyone. I've seen it happen.

I'm not saying there aren't lousy coaches, because I've seen a ton of them, but parents should at least have some understanding of the coaching process.

I had a chance at coaching a minor peewee A team (not in Milton) this year, and was given a good indication before the interviews that I would get the job. I did a lot of work to prepare, practically mapping out the entire season, from practices to the different systems we'd be using, to the people I would get to help.

I was leaving nothing to chance because I know how critical hockey parents can become. But, mostly because I wanted to do a good job, which I think is the aim of every coach. When it appeared the ladyfriend's son was going to make the AA team, however, I withdrew the applica-



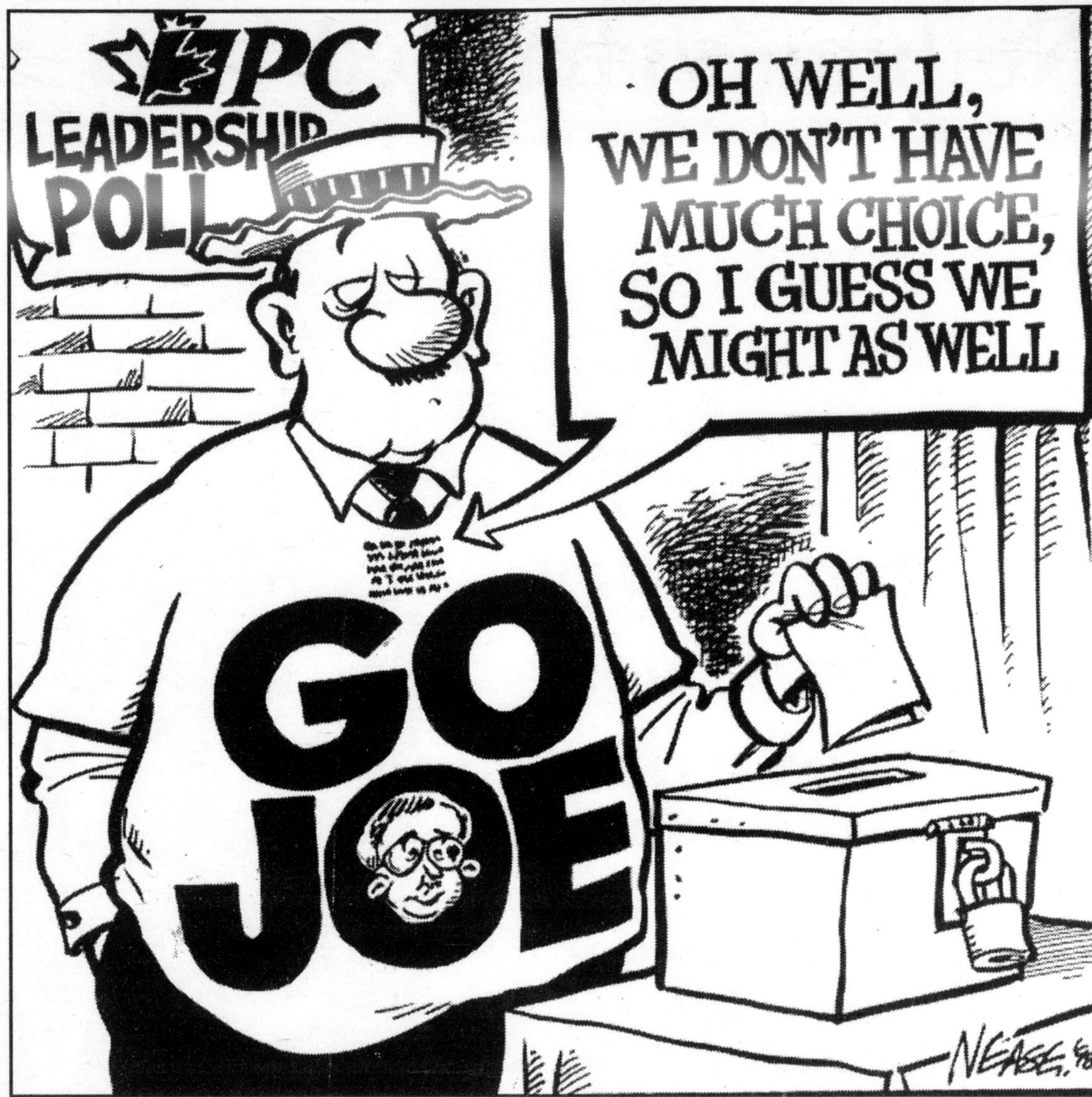
with MURRAY TOWNSEND

tion.

I've coached rep softball for a number of years and while that's not on the same level as hockey, I can give you an idea of what goes through a coach's mind.

Never mind that all coaches are volunteers. And never mind that most of the critics didn't apply to coach the team themselves. Nobody considers that in their evaluation.

Coaches do a lot of thinking. They're responsible for the team, and you better believe it occu-



OUR READERS WRITE

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

It's a mixed-up water plan

Dear Editor:

Be aware! The debate on chlorine in the town's water supply pales beside growth plans.

Many present residents seem to believe they will be retaining their current water supply from wells, while new subdivisions will be getting their supply piped from Lake Ontario.

Planners, at a meeting held at Bishop Reding Secondary School, proposed both supplies mix in a reservoir prior to distribution to all residents, present and future.

This is supposed to save \$14 million. But we will have a dramatic increase in population and industry as well.

Where do these planners live who are trying to control our peaceful Milton? Is there a bigger controller at Queen's Park?

H. Shauer
Milton

Royal Bank comes through for rape crisis centre

Dear Editor:

The women at the Halton Rape Crisis Centre would like to express their sincere thanks to the Royal Bank in Halton.

The bank has generously donated \$10,000.

As a result of the donation, the rape crisis centre will be able to expand its education on the date rape drug, and anti-harassment and discrimination in the workplace.

These are serious problems existing today and the Royal Bank realizes the necessity of enlightening the community on these issues.

Special thanks to Marjorie Dawson at the Royal Bank, who was instrumental in making this donation possible.

Louise Carlin, financial co-ordinator
Halton Rape Crisis Centre

pies their minds away from the arena. What can I do about this? How can I give this player more confidence? Why aren't we very good at that?

One of my coaching philosophies is that a team is only as good as its weakest player. Another philosophy is that the more you expect from a player, the more they will try to meet those expectations. Yet another philosophy is that kids need to be confident to perform to the best of their abilities. Okay, one more philosophy is that kids should feel good about themselves as people as well as players.

Beyond that, a coach has to worry about discipline, team cohesiveness, disruptive parents, gaining respect from the players, individual improvement, game strategy, correcting mistakes, evaluating performances, and the thought processes of 15 or 16 kids.

It's much easier for us to sit up in the stands and evaluate than it is to do the coach's job

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