

# Milton show jumper continues a breakthrough year with big wins

By **STEVE LeBLANC**  
*The Champion*



**Ainsley Vince**

Ainsley Vince is enjoying a November to remember. Currently Milton's star show jumper is putting the finishing touches on a watershed season at Toronto's Royal Horse Show.

Last Friday she made a fantastic first impression at the fall fair by winning the \$30,000 Cantel AT&T Opening Night Classic. Aboard Catch 22, a nine-year-old Dutch Warmblood gelding, Vince kept the crowd on the edge of its seat until the bitter end — as the very last rider and eventual champion.

With a few tight turns and an impressive gallop to the final fence, the local duo tamed the course in a remarkable 35.96 seconds to shade U.S. Equestrian Team member Bezzie Madden by under two tenths of a second.

"He (Catch 22) was awesome," said the 23-year-old, still elated to have topped the international class in which one half of the 30 entries posted clean rounds. "Being a local rider, the crowd was really routing for me and it was just a great way to start things off."

While no stranger to the annual show, this marked the first major triumph there for the Miltonian.

Sunday, Vince continued to electrify hometown fans — only this time with a little help in the \$20,000 Nutram Dog & Pony Show.

In this division, once the riders complete their jumping course the performing dogs set off over a series of canine obstacles. With Jasmine, Vince was third in a time of 30.02 — but when paired with border collie Whizz, the pair had the fastest combined time.

Said Vince, "The crowd really loves it. It's one of the more popular events at the show so it was great to do so well and get that extra bit of exposure."

Not that she's been lacking in that department this year.

With some astounding qualifying results this past spring and summer, the local competitor was named to the five-member national team that went to the Pan American Games in Winnipeg.

Though restricted to alternate status, because of her youth and inexperience, just making the team was an amazing achievement for a rider her age.

Heading into this week, she and Catch 22 sat second in the Canadian League World Cup standings.

This after taking the runner-up spot in the October 31 \$50,000 World Cup Qualifier at the Washington International Horse Show.

And with just one hurdle left to clear, they stand a good chance of maintaining a top three placing and earning a trip to next spring's Budweiser World Cup 2000 in Las Vegas.

"At the start of the year I certainly wouldn't have thought I'd be in the running for this," admitted Vince.

"I'm very lucky to have such a great horse and I guess this is just my time."

The Milton rider wraps up the Royal Horse Show tomorrow with the highly prestigious Nations Cup.

# Merchants upset by Mississauga

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Cann. This erased a 1-0 Mississauga lead that had been nursed for nearly half the game. The Merchants failed to capitalize on five powerplay opportunities and surrendered a goal on the first one — courtesy of a blatant blueline give-away.

Tuesday marked the long awaited return of gritty winger Mark Beisel. Unfortunately, he — like just about everyone else in the lineup — failed to pay the price needed for a victory. At 13-4-0-3, Milton sits just two points up on Georgetown. Streetsville, Brampton and Burlington are all within four points as well.

**Merchant notes:** Milton has averaged just four goals in their last 10 games and gone 4-6 over this stretch ... Elliot Altberg has only four penalty minutes this season and is among the top 15 West Conference scorers, which makes him an early candidate for the most sportsmanlike player award ... Tonight, Milton plays host to Brampton.

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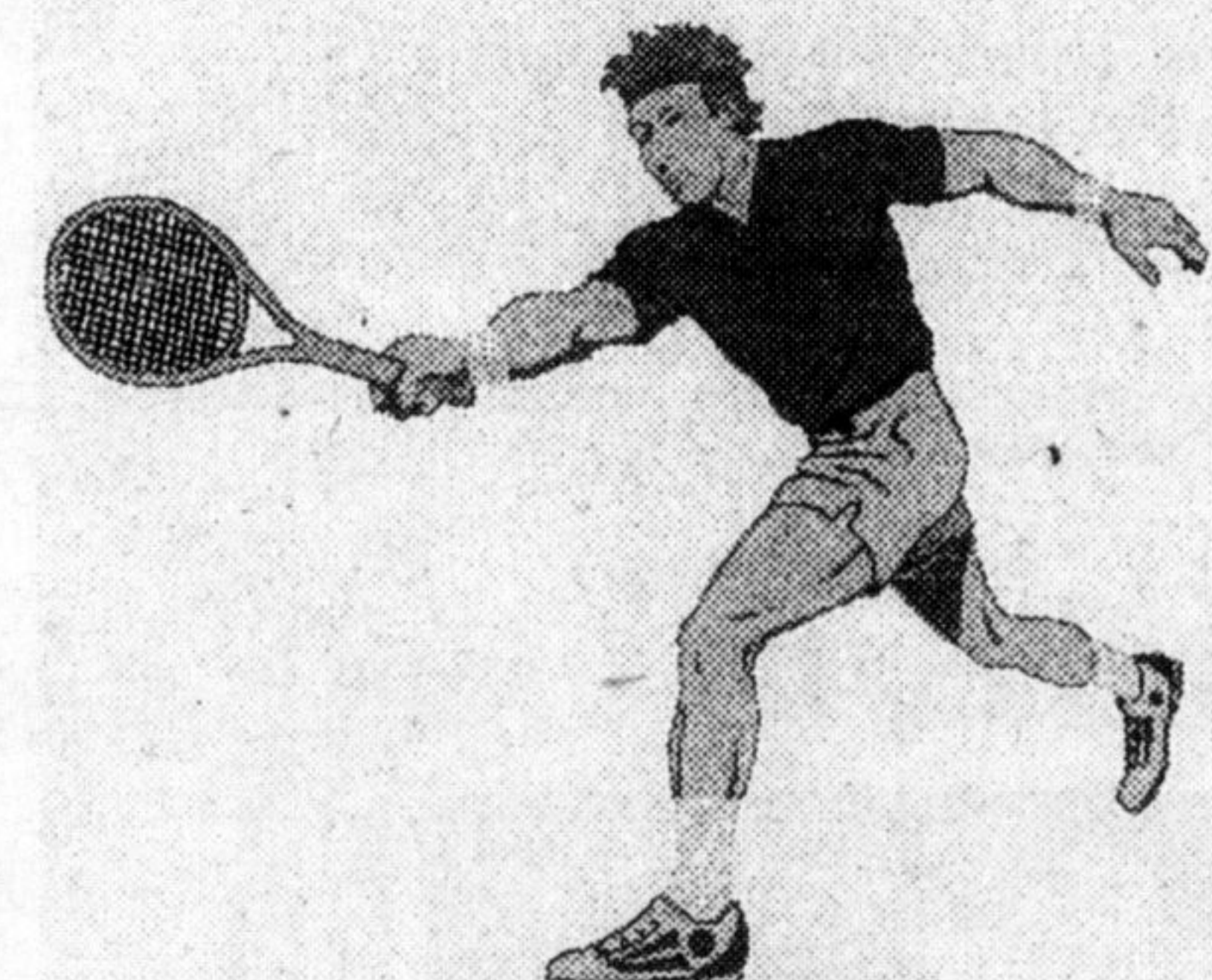
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**We thank all applicants, however, only those under consideration will be contacted.**



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