

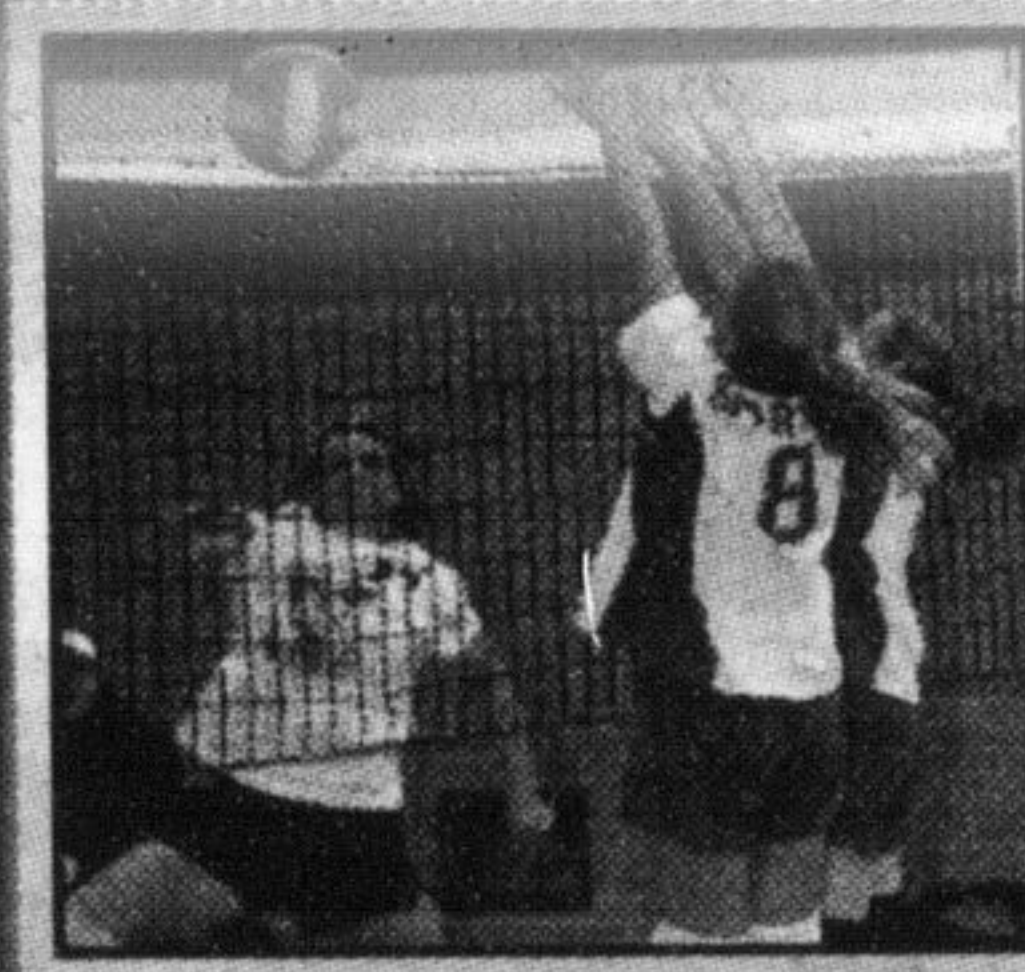
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## Teachers stage job action in ongoing contract dispute

By IRENE GENTLE  
*The Champion*

After two weeks of intensive contract negotiations broke off, Halton public secondary school teachers launched legal job action Friday.

Bargaining is set to resume Thursday, with compensation being fingered as the main issue, said Halton District School Board Director of Education Dusty Papke.

The time away from bargaining will be spent researching tabled proposals.

"I'm very hopeful we'll reach an agreement," said Mr. Papke. "I think the negotiations are progressing."

Schools will remain open despite the job action by Ontario Secondary School Teacher's Federation District 20, and teachers will continue to instruct all assigned classes.

But they won't attend board or school committees or fill in for absent colleagues.

"We'll be stopping coverages for staff that are away and there will be no hall and lunchroom monitoring," said teachers' union leader Larry Chud of the campaign which has been dubbed 'Let Teachers Teach'.

But how teachers tackle the issue of extracurriculars will be up to each individual.

"There are no plans to escalate job actions," he said.

At its worst, the job action could lead to classes being left unattended in the event a severe supply teacher shortage short-circuits attempts to bring in replacements, said Mr. Papke.

"But we're hopeful that won't be the case," he said. "I think everyone will be working hard to have that not happen."

He said safety is the board's main priority, and schools will be carefully monitored to ensure students are adequately supervised.

At the heart of the negotiations is the teacher's union's desire for a significant raise and the board's inability to supply it under the current funding formula, said Mr. Papke.

He described the negotiations as tense but amicable, and said the two sides are looking at creative ways to reach an agreement.

"We're going back Thursday with the intent of reaching a deal and I think they are, too," said Mr. Papke.

That was echoed by Mr. Chud. "People on both sides still want a deal," he said.

If a settlement hasn't been reached before the end of the week, negotiations will likely resume in the new year.

The talks affect 1,000 teachers and 16 secondary schools across Halton.



Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

## Here comes Santa Claus

Snow flurries and smiling faces show Old Saint Nick is on the way at Campbellville's annual Santa Claus parade. Bundled up crowds lined the main street to take in Sunday's event. See more photos on page 14.

## Suspect charged in stabbing

A bail hearing is expected to be held today at the Steeles Avenue courthouse for John Wray, 20, of Wilson Drive on charges of attempted murder and aggravated assault.

Mr. Wray remained in custody at Maplehurst Detention Centre over the past week, after turning himself

in to police in connection with a stabbing outside an Oakville bar.

According to Halton Regional Police Det. Rod Wilson, witnesses report that the stabbing victims were inside their vehicle, along with their girlfriends, when a man started swinging at them with a baseball bat, at 2:45 a.m.

November 29.

The two men got out of the car and chased the man, who was accompanied by a group of men.

A brawl ensued, and a knife was pulled. One victim received cuts to his face and head, while the other was stabbed in the liver. Both have since been released from hospital.

**INSIDE**

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