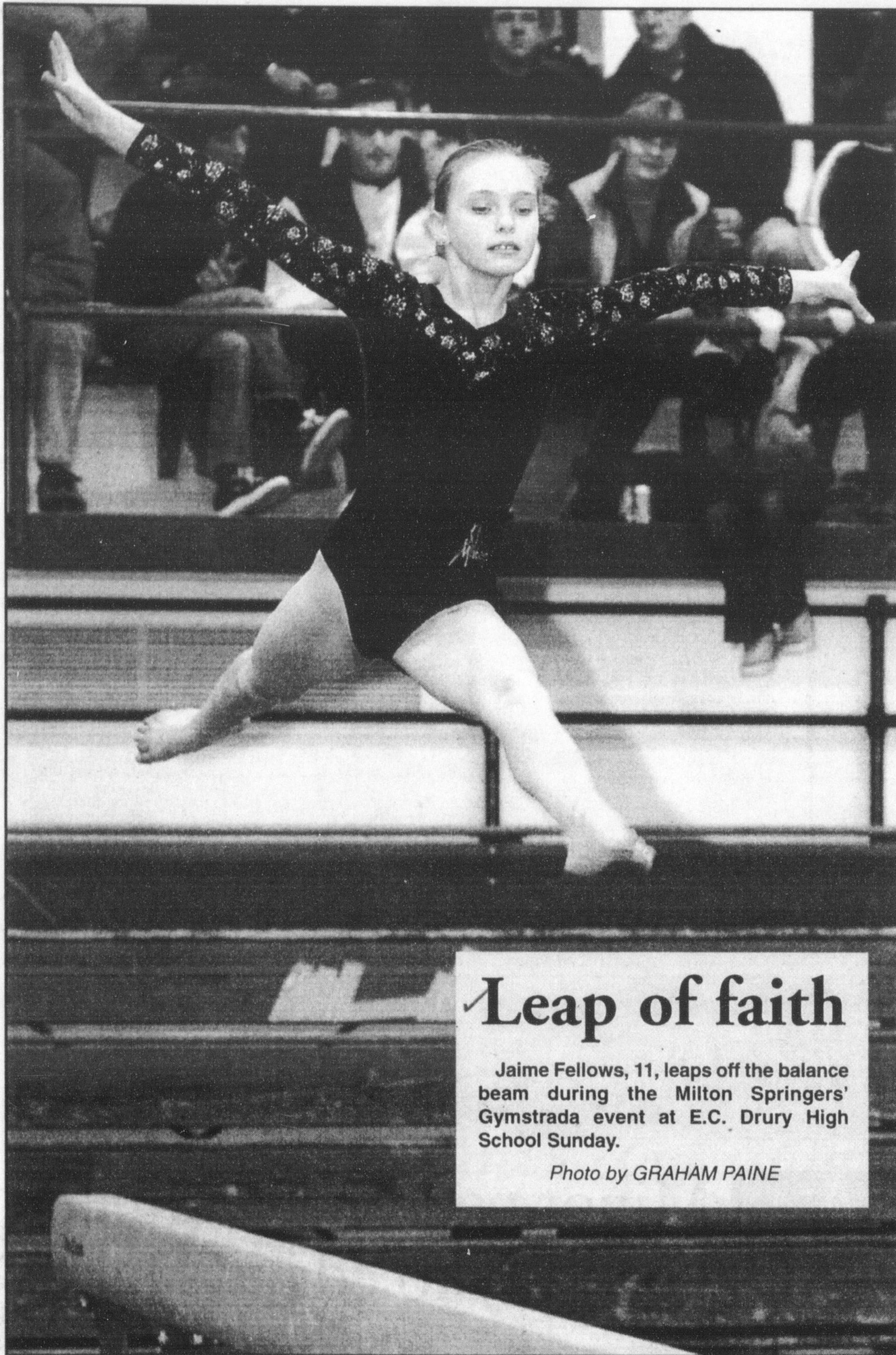




# SPORTS

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

TUESDAY MARCH 6, 2001



## Leap of faith

Jaime Fellows, 11, leaps off the balance beam during the Milton Springers' Gymstrada event at E.C. Drury High School Sunday.

Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

## DeLong's overtime heroics clinch series for Jr. A Merchants

By STEVE LeBLANC

*The Champion*

Double D in double OT.

Putting the brakes to a potential round two turnaround at a packed Memorial Arena Friday, Milton Merchant Dan DeLong scored five-and-a-half minutes into the second overtime period to eclipse the Mississauga Chargers 4-3 — and eliminate them in five games.

His heroics — delivered via an unassisted goal-mouth scramble shot — capped a series-ending tilt that was as exhilarating as it was long.

"I don't even know if I can talk. I'm just on such a high right now," said a euphoric and tear-stricken DeLong. "We worked hard for this and deserve it."

Following Thursday's 4-2 loss at Iceland Arena, Milton had to battle through adversity to finally knock off its second round opponents and advance to the Western Conference finals for the fourth time in five years.

Captain John Nadalin was sidelined with a groin injury — leaving a huge hole to fill not only in the blueline but special-teams play as well — while the hosts also had to contend with both a great deal of stick work and a boisterous traveling fan base that, to say the very least, revitalized Mississauga.

But the regular season champions overcame these hurdles in gutsy fashion, rallying from a pair of one-goal deficits and persevering through a nerve-wracking sudden death that was rich in quality scoring opportunities.

Said head coach Glenn Walsh, "After 18 years of coaching I've been through these kind of situations before, but when it gets down to double overtime strategy almost goes out the window. You just say 'go out

there and score' and hope they can."

With Vince Guiducci nursing a charley horse and seeing limited duty Friday, Milton's defensive unit was essentially missing its top two members.

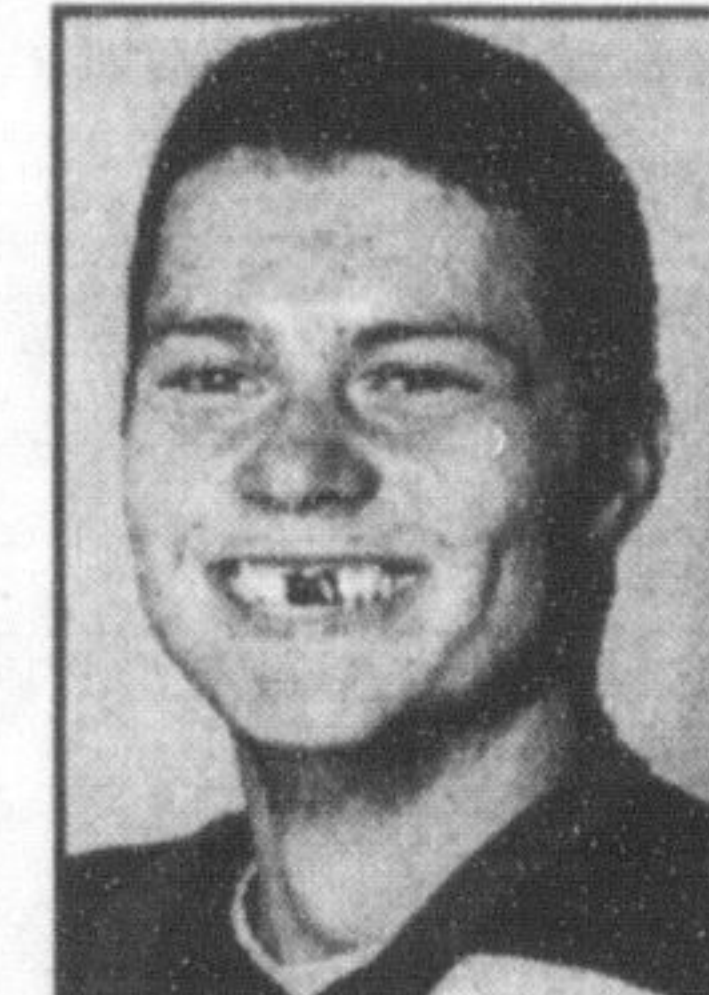
But the remaining rearguards — led by youngsters Adam Sturgeon and Rick Janco — picked up the slack and showed strongly, especially down the stretch when their team was behind.

While Friday's spotlight shone brightest for DeLong — the centerpiece of a spirited checking line — rookie winger Kevin Arruda and goaltender Joel Cameron each grabbed a little bit of it for themselves.

Arruda assisted on Dan Bognar's shorthanded tally in the closing moments of period two and then forced overtime by

depositing a close-range bouncing puck with under five minutes to go in regulation time.

• see MERCHANTS on page 19



Dan DeLong

## Drury still champs!

They've done it again!

E.C. Drury High's powerhouse wrestling team retained its OFSAA crown this past weekend — turning back all challengers at Guelph Memorial Gardens.

Led by gold medalist Chris Holmes, Larry Jaroslowski's Spartans outpointed Hagarville 169-145 to stay atop the provincial pecking order.

For full results on the local team's triumph, see Friday's Champion.

## Protecting our natural heritage

Jean Fau is a chief park warden for Parks Canada. He and his colleagues protect the plant and animal life in our national parks. They also help Canadians explore and enjoy these special places. This is just one of the hundreds of services provided by the Government of Canada.

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