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THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

TUESDAY MAY 29, 2001

## Reding racer's OFSAA medal hopes looking awfully strong

*Butcher's time in midget boys 400m among best in Ontario*

By **STEVE LeBLANC**

*The Champion*

Ian Butcher has to be feeling awfully confident these days.

The Bishop Reding midget boys runner has been constantly trimming time from the 400 metre since the high school track and field season began — and did so once again during Thursday's South Regional Championships.

Amid ideal weather conditions at Hamilton's McMaster University, Butcher shed more than a second off his personal best mark to upstage Clarkson's 400m ace and finish first.

The 14-year-old — who still has another year of midget eligibility ahead of him — clocked in at a sensational 52.5 seconds, which if equaled or bettered in the slightest this weekend should almost definitely assure him a medal at OFSAA.

"This kid's outstanding. He's gotten faster every time out," said coach Maureen Morrison, of the school's first South Regional champ in seven years.

"I could see even another second coming off. He's certainly a favourite to medal (at OFSAA)."

Butcher's 52.5s performance was less than half a second shy the school record, set in 1994 by Rob Wands — who that spring took fourth in the OFSAA 400m to go along with his golden performance in the 300m hurdles.

Metro Toronto's top midget boys runner recorded a 53.86s finish — making Butcher a top seed for this weekend's season finale in Etobicoke.

Joining him this weekend will be OFSAA returnee Michelle Doell, who knocked seven seconds off her Halton/GHAC 800m time to take third-place honours among the junior girls at McMaster Thursday.

The 16-year-old's provincial bid looked a little bleak through much of the race, but a fierce finish gave her a 2.24.9 showing — and earned her another trip to the innermost sanctum of high school competition.

During her first appearance in 1999, Doell took eighth in the midget girls 800m — with a time nearly identical to the one she delivered Thursday.

Both Butcher and Doell also cracked the top 10 in the midget boys 800m and junior girls 1,500m respectively. Butcher placed ninth with a somewhat disappointing 2.14.5 finish, while Doell clocked in at 5.16.9 for seventh spot.

Meanwhile, BR sent a dozen other athletes to Thursday's South Regionals. Among them were Doell's younger sister Carly, who posted three 10th place performances — in the midget girls 400m, as well as with both the midget girls 4x100m and open girls 4x400m relay teams.

Mike McGill also recorded a 10th place effort, in the midget boys grueling 3,000m.

Rounding out the school's South Regional team were Megan Ames, Luke Brunner, Megan Burke, Diana Cosme, Jonathan Borrelli, John McDougall, Miroslav Moslavac, Kelsey Mountain, Ava Stofast and Kathryn Weston.

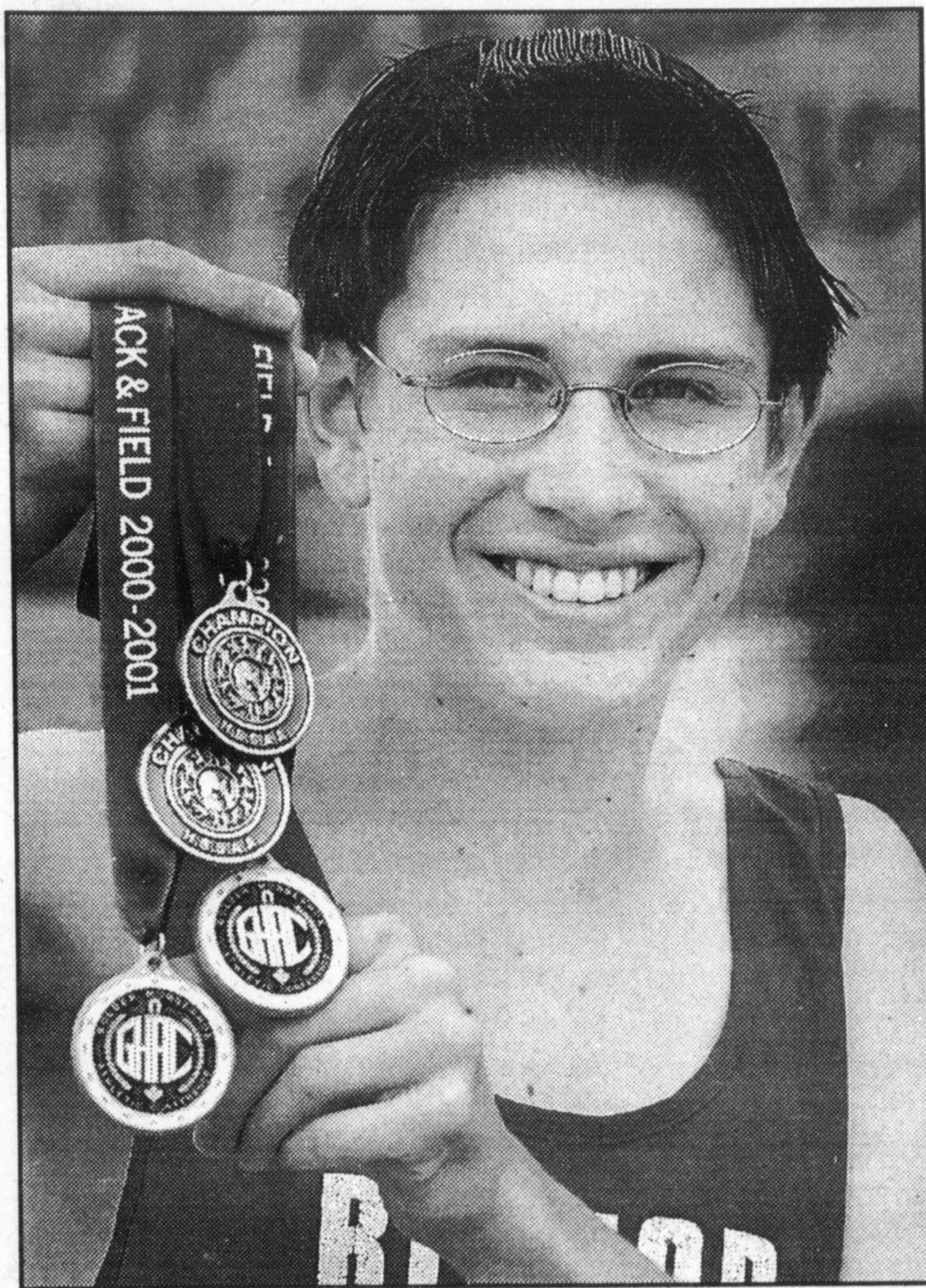


Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Bishop Reding's Ian Butcher hopes to add to his medal haul at this weekend's OFSAA Championships. And if recent results are any indication, his chances of doing so are extremely good.

## Senior Royals put 'icing on cake' with GHAC win

By **STEVE LeBLANC**

*The Champion*

The championship beat goes on.

Writing another chapter to its dream season at Burlington's Sherwood Park Friday afternoon, the Bishop Reding senior boys soccer squad battled back from a pair of one-goal deficits to edge Hamilton's St. Thomas Moore 3-2 for the Golden Horseshoe Athletic Conference (GHAC) crown.

Onel Martino punctuated the team's strongest second-half performance of the year, delivering a bottom-shelf deposit — his third game winner in just eight days — with under five minutes remaining to clinch the title.

"We wanted (to win) Haltons bad. This is just icing on the cake," said jubilant co-coach Fernando Costa.

Friday's championship comeback mirrored the team's dramatic season turnaround. Much like the initial stages of this spring —

which were marred by subpar offensive efforts that resulted in a couple of disappointing losses — the Royals were too passive through the early going of the GHAC finals and were frequently beat by their opponents' fierce transitional play.

Having already qualified for OFSAA with their Halton finals victory over Loyola, it was questionable whether the local lads could pick it up in a game that did not have do-or-die implications.

But BR laid those concerns to rest down the stretch, exhibiting about as much intensity as they have all season long — even after surrendering a second goal just moments after scoring their first.

Said goalkeeper Allen Lourenco, "That (second goal) kind of set us back a bit, but the guys really pulled together and worked hard for this win. This was pure heart and effort today."

St. Thomas Moore's cager was finally beat early in the second half on a close-range fake by Paul Szafer.

About a minute later the Royals were caught flat-footed, allow-

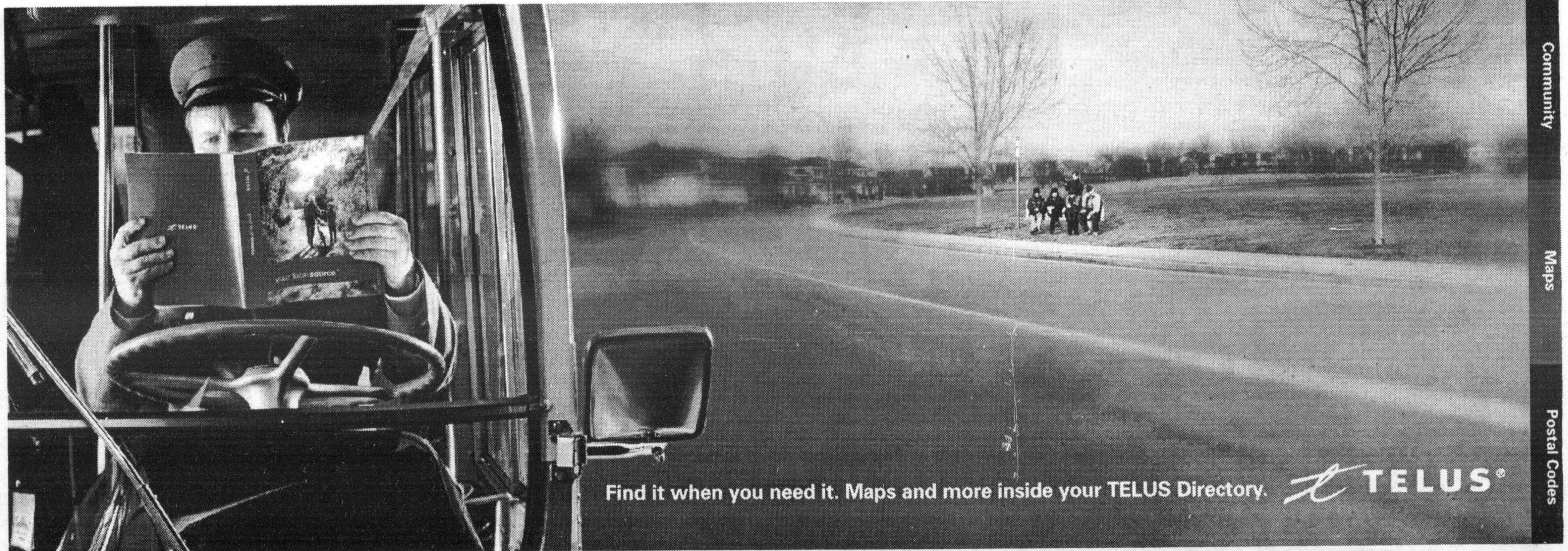
ing steeltown's champs to walk in and restore their lead on an odd-man rush.

Reding needed several more minutes to penetrate an effective neutral-zone trap before Kyle Grant buried the second equalizer, redirecting a corner kick by Stefan Linder.

For the balance of the contest the eventual victors clearly had the momentum and missed on two big opportunities both before and after Martino's game-winner — which brought his playoff scoring total to six, equaling that of Grant.

Linder, Chris Casa and Matt Stockton offered spirited play for BR Friday.

The Royals head into this weekend's provincial showcase on a six-game winning streak — during which they've outscored the opposition a whopping 25-3. About two dozen teams will compete at OFSAA, which runs Thursday to Saturday at Hamilton's Bishop Ryan Secondary School.



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