

Wait nearly over for much-needed sports facilities

All good things come to those who wait.

So, for those who have been waiting about 20 years for Milton to get new ice facilities, congratulations, they're on the way.

For as long as I've lived in Milton, I've heard that Thompson Road arena would add an additional ice surface. For as long as I've lived here, the only additional ice I've seen around there has come in the form of slushies at the snack bar.

As early as the end of this year, construction could begin on a new arena. "We're still in the process of completing implementation strategy," said Ken McAlpine, coordinator, parks and facilities development for Milton.

He says a location has to be confirmed and then it has to be determined whether they build a rink with two pads or four. After that, it goes to town council for approval, and then they get into detailed design and construction.

The Parks Master Plan recommends that in order to keep up with population growth, two new ice pads are needed by 2001 and an additional two more by 2009. We could get all four from the start.

According to one proposal, and again nothing has been approved yet, there could be a Community Park, which would be built on Derry Road, between the hospital and Hwy. 5. It would house the new arena and all kinds of sport facilities, including baseball diamonds and soccer fields.

If you've traveled much around the province for your kids' sports, it's the new wave. "It allows a one stop shopping for recreational facilities, which is ideal," notes McAlpine.

It's not the only new recreational facility planned, either.



Out in left field

with MURRAY TOWNSEND

They've mapped out a proposal of needs and proposed locations all the way to 2016 when Milton is expected to be home to approximately 85,000 people.

In fact, it makes the whole process of the population boom more palatable, and even exciting.

New tennis facilities, indoor and outdoor pools, hard surface courts for basketball and ball hockey, lit and unlit baseball diamonds and soccer fields, all coming our way.

Recreational facilities are being given a high priority when it comes to the expansion of Milton. Now all we have to worry about is that they do it right.

One report shows input from outdoor user groups at a workshop in November of 1999, which documents their ideas, needs and suggestions. Good stuff there.

What concerns me most, though, is the hockey arena. I hope we go with four pads because I'm greedy and because I think we can find plenty of use for them. More ice surfaces are great for tour-

naments, maybe figure skaters could get some better times, and hopefully we can start a girls hockey league. Maybe even the AAA Halton Hurricanes could play their games in Halton.

The problem is that most four-pad arenas are terrible. The trend is to put a restaurant/bar through the middle at the top, which allows viewing access to all the ice surfaces. If they provide any outdoor seating at all, it's usually a small area and appears to be an afterthought.

Keep the people in the bar area and have them spending money is the plan. There's no hockey atmosphere in those places and no character.

The only good one I've seen is Iceland in Mississauga, near the Hershey Centre. When you go in, an open glass concept lets you see all the games in action from the ground floor.

More importantly, each of the ice surfaces has ample outdoor seating, as well as upstairs indoor viewing areas. The indoor viewing areas actually have a speaker that allows you to hear the action on the ice. They have one of those restaurant/bars but it only overlooks the main arena, so you have a choice between indoors or outdoors.

When I'm out of town and it comes up that I'm from Milton, do you know what they say most often about our sports facilities? "Oh yeah, they have that great snack bar at the arena."

It's funny and it's not funny.

I'm proud to be from Milton and am proud of our town when people come to visit. Let's make sure we build the type of facilities that will make us even prouder.

Correction to race story

A story in Friday's Champion regarding the Subaru Milton Triathlon contained incorrect information.

The article reported that Miltonian Marath Bannock was the top local female finisher in the duathlon — 2km run, 30km bike, 8km run — when in fact it was Campbellville's Mary Morandin, who

tamed the course in 1:48.36.

She placed 95th overall and won her age class while Bannock was the second best local woman finisher with a time of 1:56.16.

The Champion regrets this error as well as any embarrassment or inconvenience it may have caused.

Mavericks' title runs crushed with overtime losses at tourney

Overtime heartbreak struck twice for the hosts during this past weekend's Milton Lacrosse Tournament.

The 12th edition of the invitational showcase saw both the local peewee reps and tyke selects vanquished in sudden death during playoff action Sunday.

The tykes' demise came in an unprecedented triple overtime, when Mavericks netminder Cody Krauss was finally beat for a 4-3 loss to Mimico in the qualifying round at Memorial Arena. The hosts' goals in the marathon morning clash were delivered by Sean McGovern, Mark Nordstrom and Keenan Peppiatt.

Milton finished third in its division with 8-3 and 5-1 defeats to Burlington and Whitby respectively. Spencer Abraham did all of the round robin scoring.

Meanwhile, Milton's peewees rallied from a two-goal deficit in the semifinals against Halton Hills — only to fall 3-2 nine minutes into sudden death at John Tonelli Sports Centre.

Joey De'Athe potted both goals, including the equalizer late in the third period, to force the extra session.

He also tallied twice in the peewees' weekend highlight — a 7-2 round robin toppling of Brantford. Leading offensively in that one with a hat-trick was Scott Stover — who two games earlier exploded for four goals to tame Burlington 6-2.

These wins sandwiched a 2-1 heartbreaker to Fort Erie.

Milton's only other team, the novice selects, were bombed 11-1 by Scarborough in the qualifying round Sunday. Andrew Brown recorded the lone marker, and scored twice in a 5-3 round robin loss to Burlington.

Other multi-goal efforts — in the defeat to Burlington and a 9-3 humbling at the hands of Brantford respectively — were offered up by Ethan O'Connor and Richard Monk.

The Mavericks were not represented in either the bantam or midget age divisions this year.

Local trainer has top contenders in Gold Series hunt on Thursday

By SANDRA SNYDER

Special to The Champion

An exciting line-up of three-year-old pacing fillies are slated to take part in tough Gold Series racing at Woodbine Racetrack Thursday night.

A total of 28 talented youngsters will take to the track in three Gold Eliminations and only the top three finishers from each race — plus one fourth-place finisher — will advance to the \$100,000 Final.

Having already seen one of his fillies post a track record time of 1:56.1 in this year's Ontario Sires Stake action at Western Fair Raceway, Milton trainer Ben Wallace is looking forward to getting both of his entries into the Final.

Wallace is hoping that post position nine in the fifth race of the evening will give rookie Queen Of Jacks an edge over some much more experienced competition.

According to the 1999 Canadian Trainer of the Year, being in the inside lane off the gate at a big track line Woodbine can be a detriment, and as far as Queen Of Jacks is concerned "better the outside than the inside."

In her last start, in what was only her second outing, the Dexter Nukes daughter came out of the nine slot on

the Woodbine track to grab an early lead and win in a credible time of 1:54.4.

However, if Wallace is expecting to see a quick finishing time Thursday, he anticipates seeing it in race nine, when his speedy second entry of the night — Armbr Vanilla — goes head-to-head with some fast competition.

It was the Village Jiffy sired Armbr Vanilla who negotiated the tight London track on June 1 to establish a new record time of 1:56.1 — shaving a full two seconds off the previous benchmark.

For her veteran trainer, the key to the bay filly's success has been her good gate speed.

Guiding Armbr Vanilla off the gate in all of her 2001 races has been Milton driver Mario Baillargeon — who will once again take the reins Thursday for Mardon Stables of Loretto.

Starting two posts down from Armbr Vanilla in the last Gold Elimination Thursday will be another record-breaking pacer with excellent gate speed — Countryview Miss. In the Gold Eliminations in Windsor, the Nat Varty trainee absolutely dominated the field to set a new track, Ontario Sires Stakes and Canadian mark of 1:52.1.

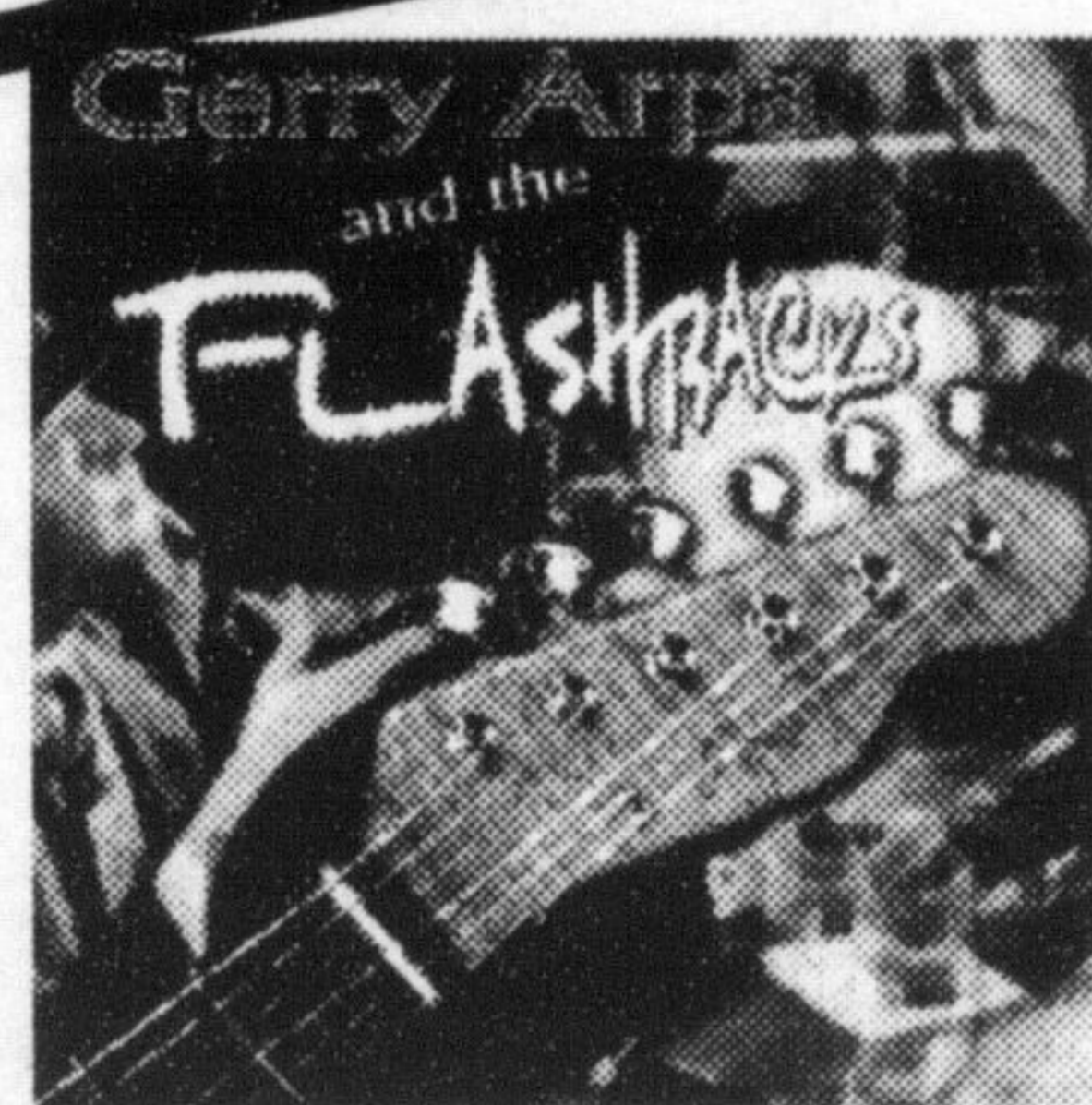


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