

MPPs accuse
CCAC of
mismanaging
its funds

See page 3



Paramedics
saving lives
on bicycles

See page 3



Local golfer
qualifies for
international
competition

See page 21

Halton regional
council approves
child care plan

See page 5

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Alliance members support review of federal leadership

By **RICHARD VIVIAN**

The Champion

Thoughts of a right-wing reunion have taken a back seat to federal leadership discussions for the Halton Canadian Alliance Riding Association.

The association announced its support for an early leadership review of Stockwell Day following a special meeting recently.

"It's no secret that generally in our riding, and other ridings too, there are questions about the national leadership," said Tim Dobson, who represented the party in the November election.

Mr. Dobson said he didn't feel comfortable discussing the reasoning for association members voting as they did. An early review received 90 per cent support.

Before Mr. Day's leadership was called into question by 11 dissident Alliance MPs across Canada, local party supporters had been considering unification discussions with the Progressive Conservative party, Mr. Dobson said.

"The leadership events of the past months have really taken a lot of the wind out of the sails of (unification) discussions on a national level, in my view.

"From our side, there is definitely an interest. We have individuals working on our board who have long-standing friendships with active participants in the Progressive Conservative party. It has been an objective of some of those individuals, and mine also, to try to extend the level of local discussion and negotiation."

Calling for Mr. Day's resignation, several MPs have been expelled from the Alliance caucus and stripped of critic duties. Mr. Day is scheduled to face a lead-

ership review in April, but support continues to grow for an earlier review.

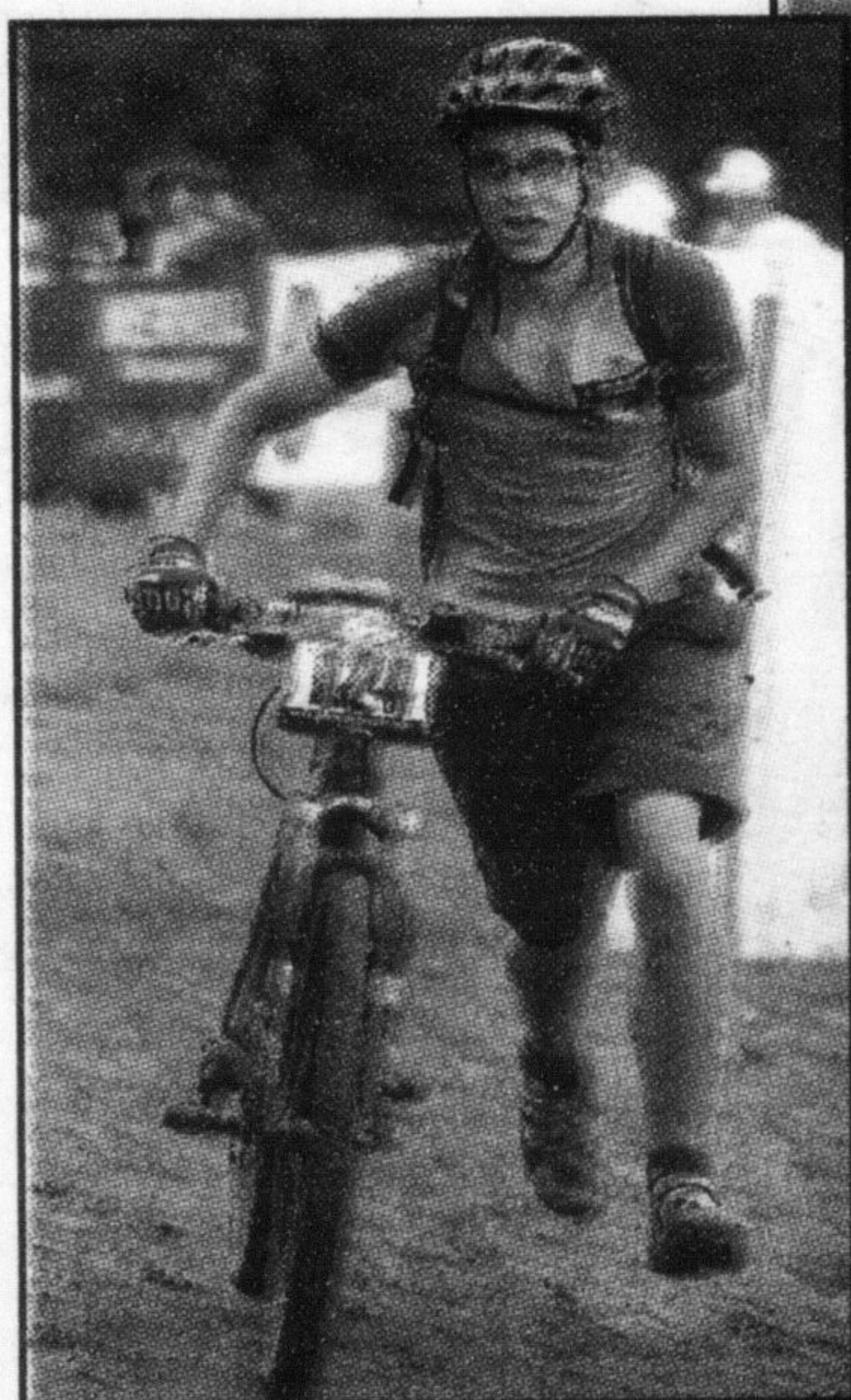
According to a recent Gallup poll, Alliance support has fallen to 6 per cent since the November election — at which time they recorded 25 per cent support.

Halton PC and Alliance candidates fell to a landslide Liberal (Julian Reed) victory in November. Combined vote tallies would have put a unified right-wing party less than 500 votes bellow Liberal support.

Area Alliance supporters haven't been polled on their opinion of a unification, but there's support for it, Mr. Dobson said.

Halton PC candidate of record Tom Kilmer told *The Champion* he wouldn't consider unification at this point.

"At this point, the message seems to be they are a splinter party and we'd just stay away. They've got enough problems — we don't need to get involved in those."



What a rush!

Solo and team riders took to the trails at Kelso Conservation Area over the weekend to compete in the Kokanee 24-hours of Adrenalin mountain biking event. Here, racing into the transfer area is Joyce Pennie, who competed in the co-ed 12-hour race, and Mike Smith, 16 (inset), of the Sporting Life team. See more coverage of the event in Sports.

Photos by
GRAHAM PAINE



INSIDE

Comment	6
Business	9
Classified	22-24
Dateline	25

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