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# SPORTS

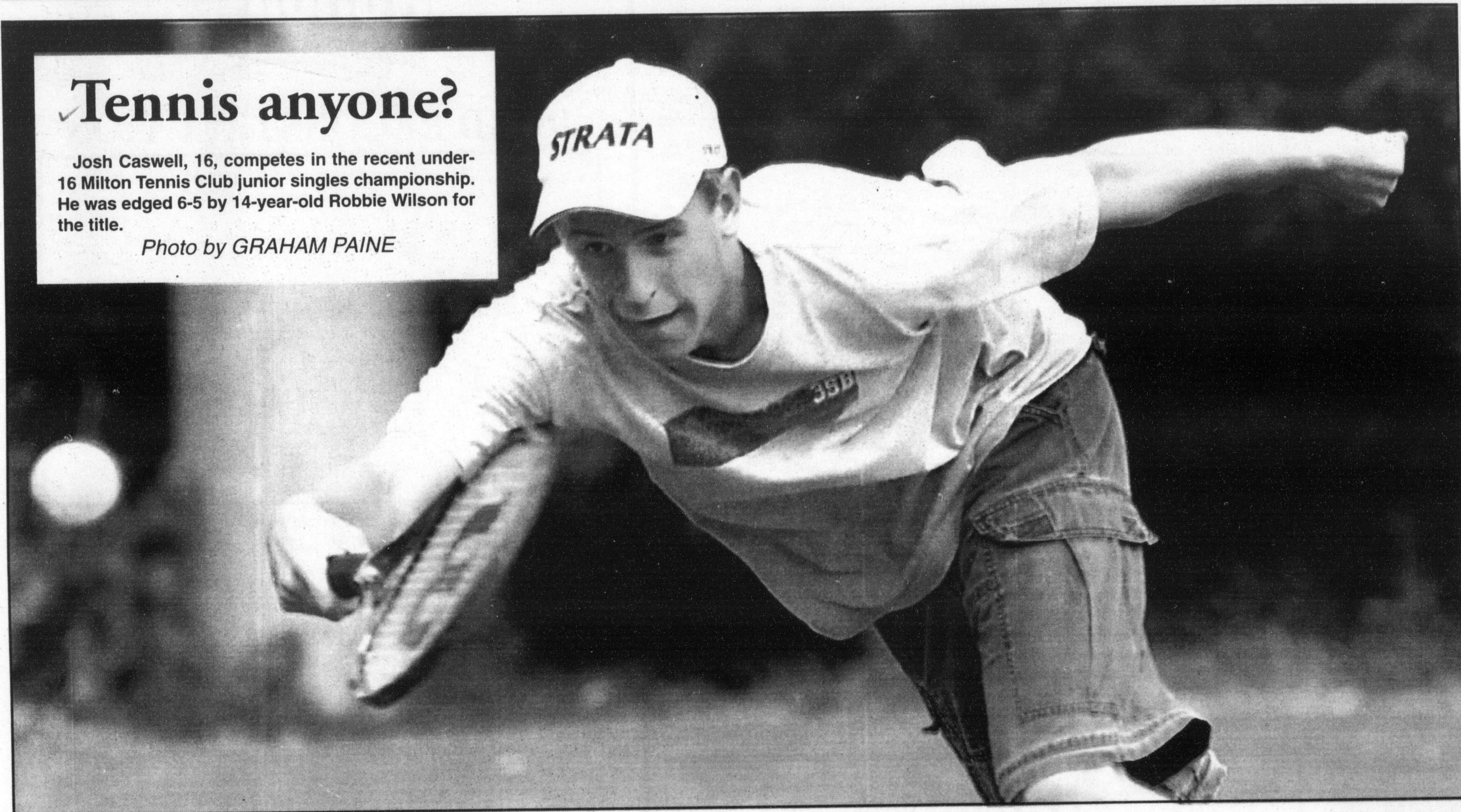
THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

TUESDAY AUGUST 7, 2001

## Tennis anyone?

Josh Caswell, 16, competes in the recent under-16 Milton Tennis Club junior singles championship. He was edged 6-5 by 14-year-old Robbie Wilson for the title.

Photo by GRAHAM PAINE



## 'Mini' shows strongly at Predators' rookie camp

Former Merchants star nets hat-trick in week-ending clash

By STEVE LeBLANC

The Champion

No hockey player can actually score at will, but Miltonian Darren (Mini) Haydar continues to make a strong case to the contrary.

The 21-year-old right winger has made a career out of coming through in big game situations — and did just that at last month's Nashville Predators rookie camp.

During the week-ending contest of July 13, Mini led freshman scoring with a hat-trick for his white team. The five-foot-nine, 163-pound forward's side lost 7-6 — but that paled in comparison to the sensational showing delivered by Nashville's 1999 ninth-round draft pick.

"I thought I did pretty well," said the Merchants' all-time goals and points leader. "Hopefully this was another step forward (to playing in the NHL)."

Exhibiting his remarkable versatility to Predator personnel, Haydar scored once on a doorstep rebound, once after cutting to the goal from the corner and once by converting a two-on-one

rush.

Despite being one of the smallest prospects at camp, Nashville isn't overly concerned about the local star's lack of size.

Explained Mini, "They're more interested in me getting quicker — not so much skating wise but with the puck."

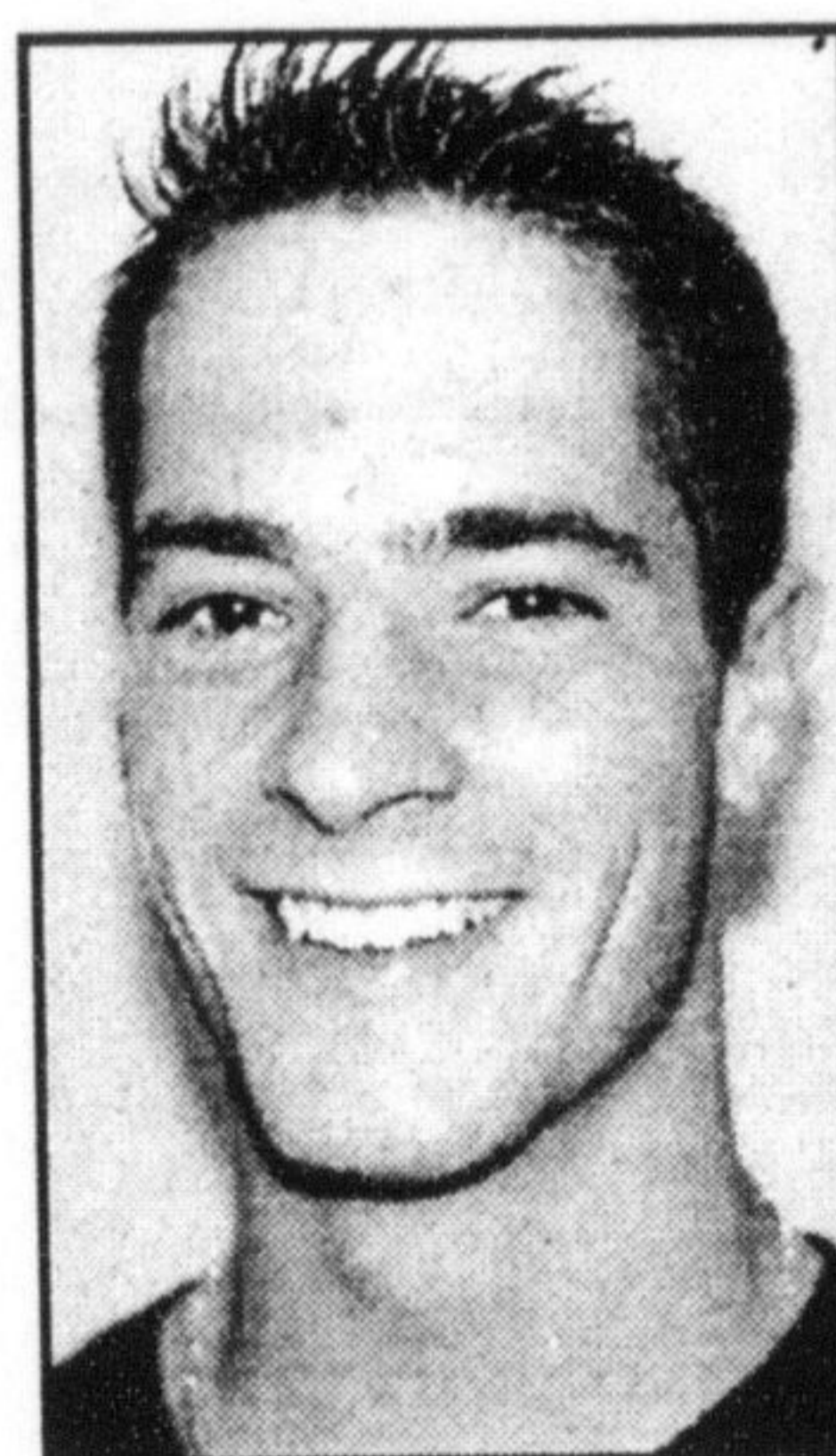
That's something he's been working on over the past three seasons with the New Hampshire Wildcats — whom he helped to back-to-back NCAA tournament appearances in 1999 and 2000.

Will wear 'C' this season

Now Mini is set to don the captain's "C" for his upcoming senior year. It's an honour he's looking forward to, but at the same time not taking lightly. "Adam (Bertoli) and I split the role when we were kids, but I don't think I've ever been a full-time captain," he said. "I've got some big shoes to fill here."

Looking ahead to 2002-03 and beyond, Mini remains fairly confident that he'll someday dress for NHL competition — using his big-game track record as an ongoing source of inspiration.

"That's what you've got to do — produce when you get your



Darren Haydar

opportunities."

While Mini prepares to close out his NCAA stretch, big brother Jeff Haydar is set to begin a new chapter to his own hockey career. Captain of the 1997/98 Merchants — who made it to the national Royal Bank Cup in Nainanō, B.C. — he recently inked a deal with the East Coast Hockey League's Trenton Titans, who in just their second season made it all the way to the league championship finals.

A big reason for that was the much-improved play of fellow Miltonian Scott Bertoli, whose scoring touch and defensive prowess last season earned him an invitation to the Washington Capitals' rookie camp this summer.

If successful at cracking the NHL squad, he would be reunited with his old Princeton linemate Jeff Halpern.

However, he's more likely to find a home at either the IHL and AHL — which would still represent a major step up the professional hockey ladder.

Said Mini, "Scott really did great last year. It wouldn't surprise me one bit if he made it to the A(HL) or I(HL)."

Mini will be among about two dozen Merchant graduates who'll be toiling in the NCAA this coming season.

Among the more notable names on that list are Ron Baker, Kevin O'Flaherty, Ryan Carrigan, Andy Rozak and outgoing captain John Nadalin.

## MILTON OPTICAL Anniversary Sale

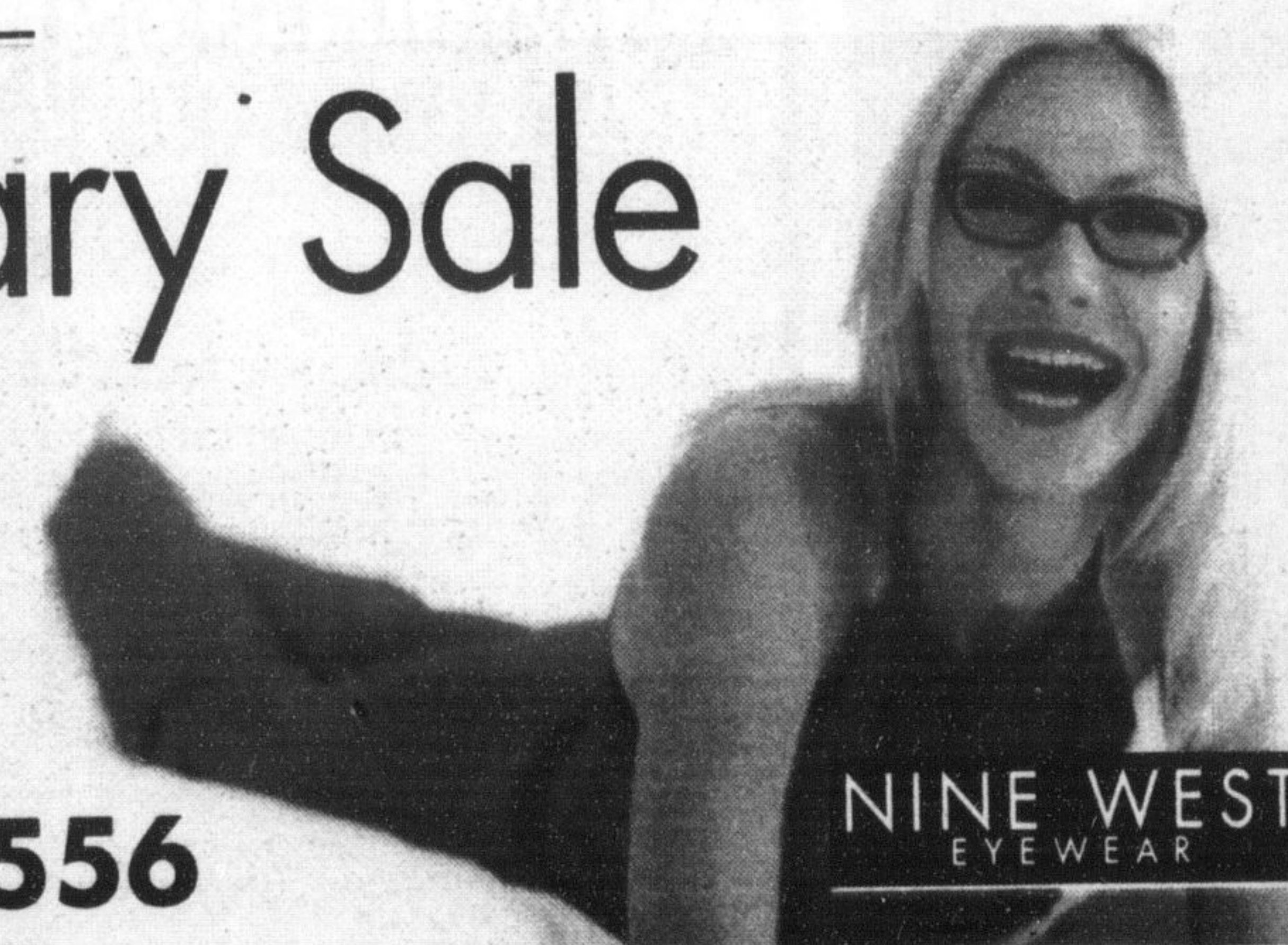
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