

# ✓ Lack of competition continues to plague local boxer

*Hart Jr.'s progress stymied by no-shows and canceled events this year*

By **STEVE LeBLANC**

*The Champion*

Matt Hart Jr.'s boxing progress continues to be KO'd.

However, it's not superior fighters that are proving to be the stumbling block — but rather a lack of competition altogether.

That troubling trend continued in Hamilton Saturday.

Within the friendly confines of his Regency Boxing Club, Hart Jr. failed to get matched up in his middleweight division and walked away from yet another event without any experience to show for it.

"I've been getting better every week, but just haven't been able to prove in the ring," said the 24-year-old, who's expected to be featured in Below The Belt's September/October edition.

Hart Jr. — the only known active local boxer — was sidelined with an eye injury back in the winter and since then has had to contend with canceled club shows and opponents backing out due to their own ailments.

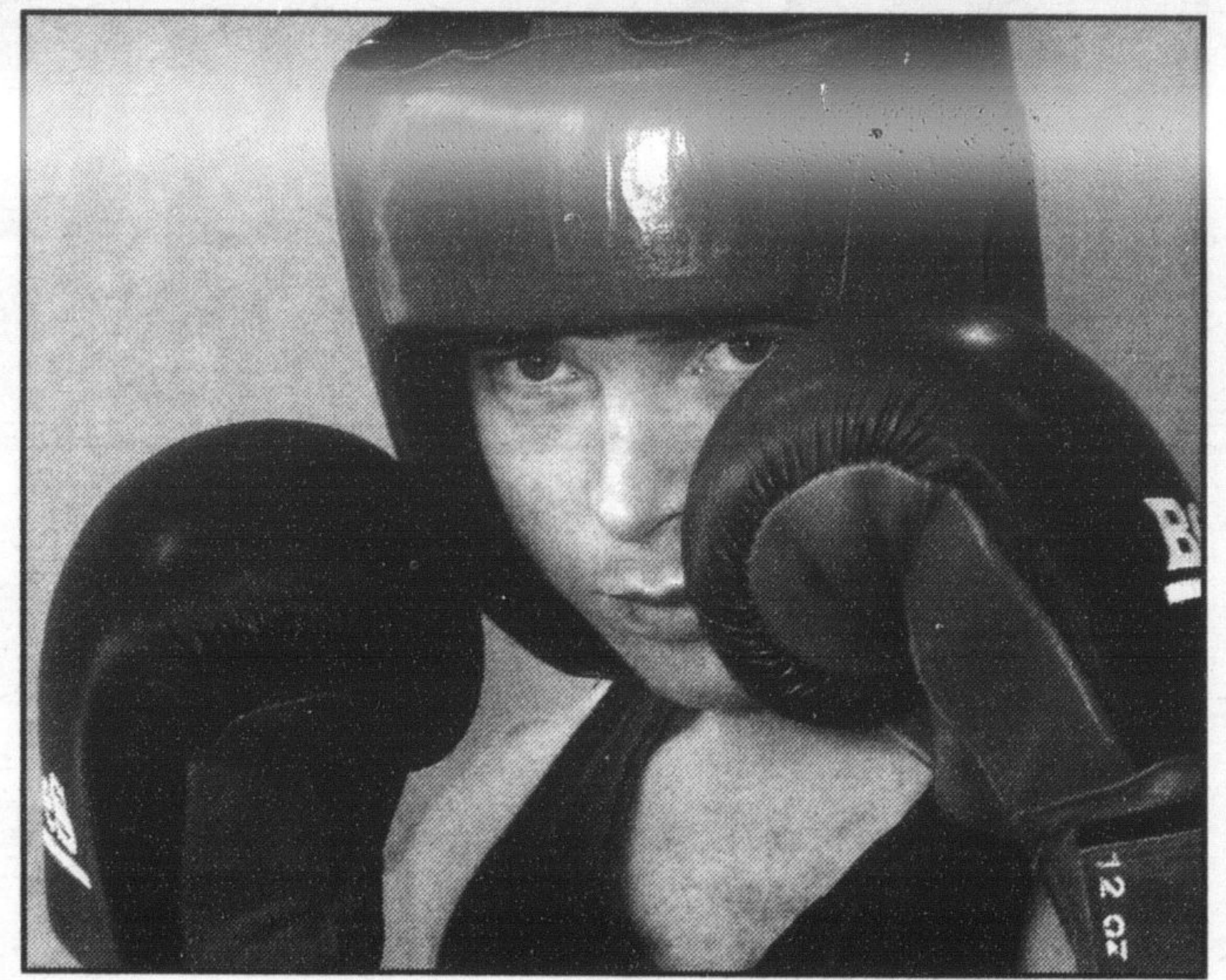
These setbacks aren't doing much to advance the 165-pound pugilist — who returned to training late last summer after a two-year hiatus but has since had just three fights, and only one in the past eight months.

### Slight mistake proved costly

That bout came complete with a painful lesson for the up-and-comer, who let down his guard for a split second and was clocked with a straight-away right to the nose — which dazed him enough for the referee to deliver a standing eight count and subsequently stop the fight.

Hart Jr. hopes to take that experience into battle next month for the Summer Haze Tournament in Brantford. From there, he'll look to show strongly at October's Ontario Championships in St. Catharines.

"Those are two big events, and I plan on coming out on top in both of them," he said.



Milton boxer Matt Hart Jr. plans to come out on top.

# ✓ Dreamfair Vogel tops the field at Confederation Cup

By **SANDRA SNYDER**

*Special to The Champion*

As usual Flamboro Downs' Confederation Cup program on Sunday offered more than its share of excitement for Ontario harness racing fans, including a North American season's record by the two-year-old pacing colts in Gold Final action.

For the second time in less than two weeks, Dreamfair Vogel scorched around the half-mile oval in record-setting time. The Village Jiffy colt stopped the Flamboro teletimer at 1:54.4 — shaving one-fifth of a second off the season's record he posted at Elmira Raceway August 6.

Leaving from post three, Milton driver Randy Waples settled Dreamfair Vogel in fifth spot while favourite Daylon Frontier went straight to the front. As Daylon Frontier clocked fractions of :27.2, :56.3 and 1:25.2, Waples moved his colt steadily up the outside behind cover provided by Stonebridge Pride and was sitting second by the top of the stretch.

As the colts turned for home, Waples asked

Dreamfair Vogel for another gear and the colt responded with a finishing kick that saw him hit the wire a full length in front of pacesetter Daylon Frontier and three lengths ahead of third-place finisher Clifton's Revenge.

John and Mary Lamers of Ingersoll bred and own Dreamfair Vogel, who boosted his lifetime earnings over the \$200,000 mark with the win. Jason Libby trains the talented youngster, who adds the Gold Final hardware to his Battle of Waterloo trophy.

Waples also captured the other \$100,000 race on the card, the Gold Final for three-year-old trotting colts, when he steered Liberty Balance to a commanding wire-to-wire victory.

Made the heavy favourite when reigning Gold champion Bionic Ballad was scratched due to illness, Liberty Balance went straight to the front from post three and cruised home unchallenged to a two-length, 1:58.4 triumph.

Thomas and Elizabeth Rankin of St. Catharines own Liberty Balance, who is trained by Cambridge's Pat Hunt. The win elevated the Balanced Image son's earnings to \$170,364 and

improved his record to five wins and four seconds in 10 starts.

Ring Of Life scored an upset in the Confederation Cup Final — stopping the clock in 1:54.2. Ontario Sires Stakes competitors Ton Of Diamonds and Awesome Light rounded out the top three.

Local favourite Bettors Delight made an uncharacteristic break in stride and finished last in the field of nine.

The two-year-old pacing colts enjoy a six-week break before resuming their Gold Series rivalry on September 27 at Mohawk Raceway. The three-year-old trotting colts will also get a holiday before returning to action at Windsor Raceway September 19.

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It was a profitable Wednesday afternoon for a pair of local entries when the three-year-old trotting fillies took to the track at Flamboro Downs for a trio of Trillium Series races.

In race five, Sweet Dreams Baby earned the biggest slice of the provincial pie for her 2:01.4

winning effort on behalf of owners Rene and Kim Bourassa of Rockwood and Gilles and Huguette Caouette of Campbellville.

Starting from post position four, the Super Pleasure filly and Milton driver Chris Christoforou sat in third-place through the early going until charging ahead to take over the lead at the halfway mark. From there, the three-year-old — conditioned by Rene Bourassa — had no trouble getting to the finish line ahead of the seven-horse field.

Coming home behind Sweet Dreams Baby in second-place was Savion. Francesca Hanover — another local entry owned by Waples Stable Inc. of Puslinch — John Burns of Mississauga and Richard Dinner of Etobicoke, was third.

In race nine, the Trillium spoils went to Hornby Gail, owned by Hornby's John Grant. Leaving from post two, the Super Pleasure daughter took command of the race immediately and landed Christoforou back in the winner's circle 2:00.1. The duo returned a tidy \$13.60, \$4.20 and \$2.40 for their Trillium win to wagering supporters.

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