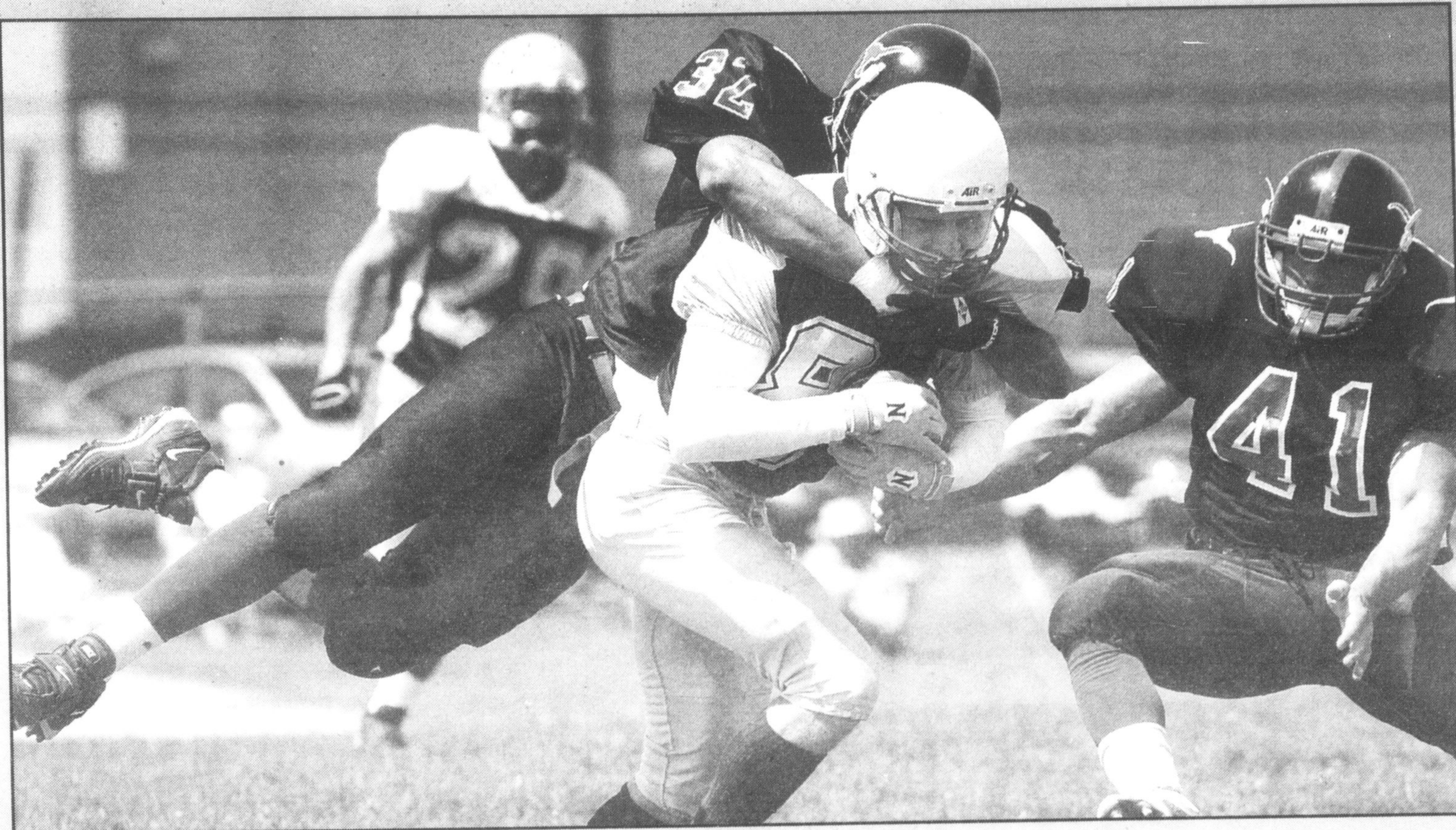




SPORTS

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

TUESDAY JUNE 4, 2002



Welcome to men's football, Milton

Milton Marauder Damien Hannaford gets ganged up on and tackled by Oakville Longhorn defenders Mark Houlder (32) and John D'Ovidio (41) during Saturday afternoon's season opening clash at Bishop Reding. The expansion Marauders were hammered by the defending league and national champions 65-0. For full results of the game, see page 25.

Photo by
GRAHAM PAINE

BR runner sensational at South Regionals

By **STEVE LeBLANC**
The Champion

Bishop Reding's athletic department has to be feeling a little envious of the Maple Leafs these days.

Unlike BR, Toronto at least has the opportunity to retain the services of its standout performer. The Royals, however, have no such luxury when it comes to racing phenom Ian Butcher.

With Georgetown's Catholic high school set to open this fall, its local counterpart has no choice but to bid farewell to one of the province's most gifted young runners.

"It'll definitely be sad to see him go," said BR track and field coach Maureen Morrison, who'll continue working with the 10th grade wonder next year. "He's the most coachable athlete I've ever had. He listens to everything you say."

Butcher is in the midst of delivering a remarkable swan song season at Reding — one that was

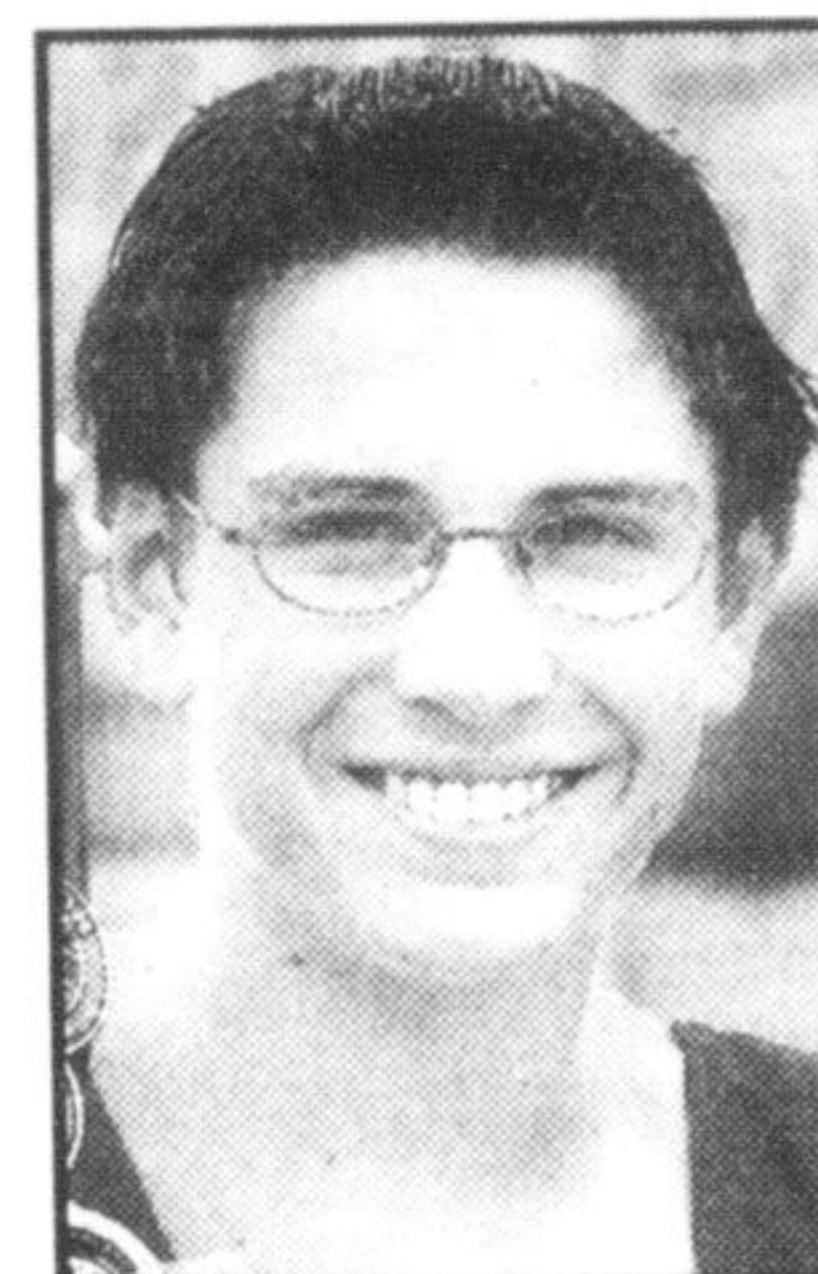
highlighted with an unofficial record-breaking performance during the South Regionals at Hamilton's McMaster University Wednesday.

Decimating the midget boys 400-metre competition, he bested the OFSAA benchmark by nearly three quarters of a second — finishing in 49.26s. OFSAA records, though, can be broken only at the OFSAA championships.

"It was pretty amazing," said the soft-spoken 15-year-old, who claimed provincial silver as a first-year midget in 2001. "I actually didn't have that great of a start, but over the last 200 metres everything I'd been taught, opening up my strides and finishing strong, just went to work."

Butcher's 400m finish wasn't just tops within the midget ranks, but among all racers at South Regionals. He heads into OFSAA as the gold-medal favourite and has already beaten the number two seeds — Chris Taylor of Clarkson, who also raced at McMaster Wednesday.

Quipped Morrison, "Maybe they should have



Ian Butcher

just brought the OFSAA medals to Hamilton."

BR's 400m ace did admit to being a little nervous about heading into the provincial championships shouldering such high expectations — but no more so than last year, when he went in as a legitimate medal contender.

"It's a bit scary, but so was last year. I really wanted to break 50 (seconds) and I think I can do it again."

The 400m will be one of three races for Butcher at the OFSAA championships in Belleville this weekend.

He ran a personally disappointing 2:09.41 in the 800m but still snuck into the fourth and final qualifying spot — due to a scratch — and helped

the Royals 4x100m midget boys relay team take second in a combined 46.98s. Rounding out the silver-medal squad were Darren Izumi, Mike McGill and anchor Mike Rubino.

Meanwhile, BR has a genuine shot at a provincial medal in the field as well. Chris Kargel — a returning transfer student — turned back all South Regional challengers in the senior boys high jump, clearing 1.86m, and threw the javelin 51.33m for second-place honours.

Rubino narrowly missed qualifying individually with a fifth-place effort in the midget boys 100m, clocking in at 12.13s. Matching that in the midget girls long jump — with a 4.48m leap — was Julie Iantorno.

McGill took sixth in the midget boys 3,000m while also cracking the top 10 in the midget boys long jump and senior girls 800m respectively were Izumi and Michelle Doell — who fell short in her bid to reach OFSAA for a third time in four years.

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