



SPORTS

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

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Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Leader of the pack

Local BMXer Bob Rowley (right) clears a jump on the way to finishing first in the men's pro class during provincial qualifying competition at Milton's Track 2000 Saturday afternoon. The 24-year-old racer is one of about a dozen local riders who'll compete at the Ontario championships in Kingston in mid-September.

Barnes wins age class at triathlon nationals

By STEVE LeBLANC

The Champion

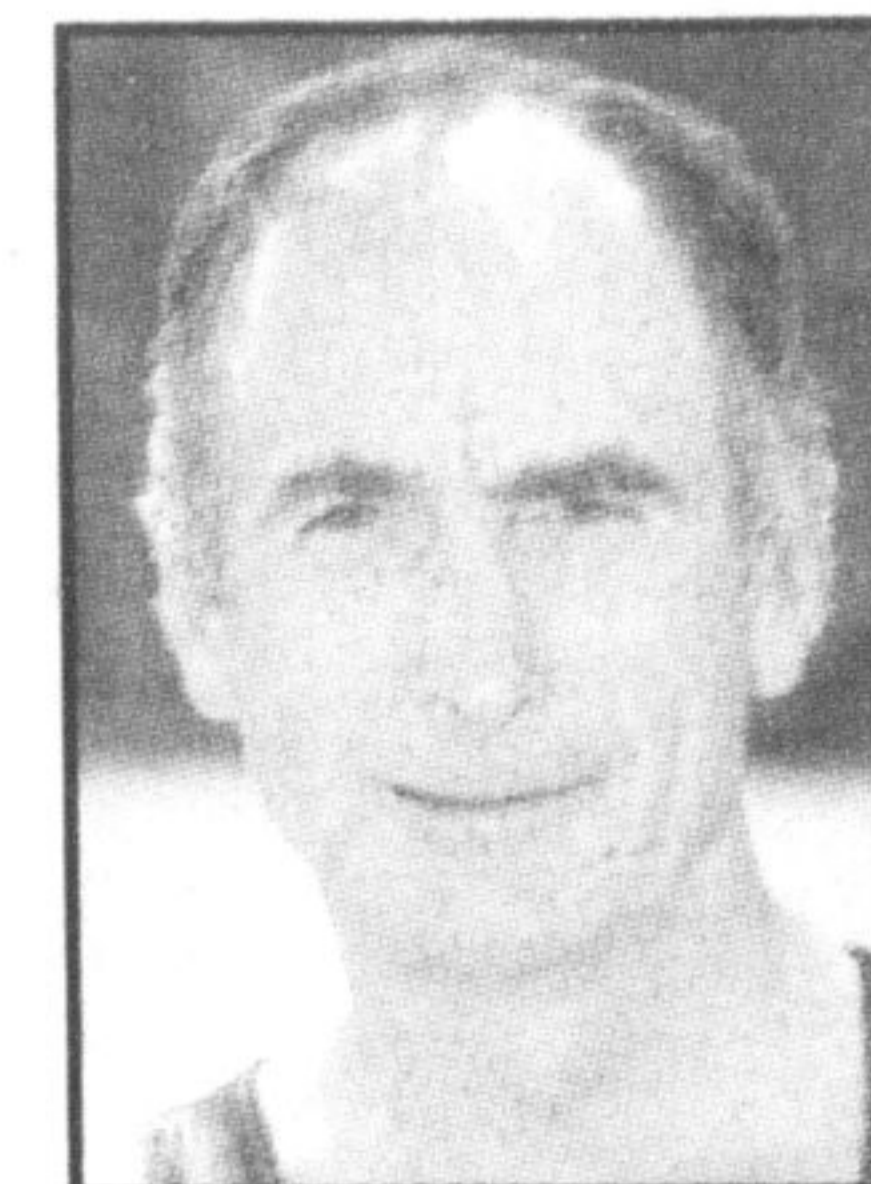
Harry Barnes' perfect season remains intact following a golden performance in Edmonton, Alberta Sunday.

Building on an extraordinary effort at the provincial championships late last month in Hamilton, Campbellville's star triathlete prevailed at the national level by upstaging all challengers in the men's 55-59 year age division.

A first-year competitor in this division, he delivered a thoroughly convincing win-beating hometown runner-up James Munroe by a full 10 minutes.

Barnes' 2:19.16 finish was a minute faster than the 50-54 year champ, and overall placed him 70th. It also gave the rural racer his third national age-class title in four years — after narrowly missing a three-peat in the 50-54 loop last summer.

"Winning the nationals again was definitely something I wanted to do," said a satisfied Barnes, whose campaign was supported by friend Susan Pitman and the Milton Physiotherapy and Sports Injuries



Harry Barnes

Clinic. "Everything worked out exactly like I wanted it to."

This last comment refers to stronger finishes on the 40-kilometre bike and 10km run compared to last year's national showcase. Barnes said he had a little more in the gas tank

for the late stages of both disciplines, and that was particularly evident during the run — which he completed in a sensational 40 minutes flat.

Said Campbellville's champion triathlete, "If you look at the other top (age class) finishers, it was really a good run."

Barnes was first out of the water — taming the 1.5km opening leg in 28:19 — and cushioned his lead on the second loop of the bike. He overtook 50-54 year contender Eric Piscopo during this stretch and left his own age-class rivals, as well as those from the next youngest division, in the proverbial dust. He completed the bike portion of the race in 1:39.17.

"Eric's someone who's beaten me before, so I knew if I caught him I'd have a good chance (of winning my own age loop)."

Now 3-for-3 on the year — with victories at the season-opening St. Anthony's Meet in Florida as well as provincial and national triumphs — Barnes will now turn his attention to preparing for November's World Championships in Cancun, Mexico.

With hot race conditions all but guaranteed for this year's global showcase, the rural racer is hoping for a late summer in southern Ontario, in order to train in a climate as close to Mexico's as possible.

Otherwise, Barnes appears quite confident about his chances for a strong showing — even though there's a much longer layoff between the nationals and world this year.

"That doesn't both me so much. I tend to do well at St. Anthony's and that's the first race of the year," he said.

Local equestrian takes second in Ottawa

By STEVE LeBLANC

The Champion

Ainsley Vince's blue streak continues.

For the third time in under a month, Milton's 25-year-old equestrian has claimed the second-place ribbon in grand prix competition.

Her latest efforts came in Ottawa's Big Ben Memorial Sunday. She and longtime partner Catch 22 — a 12-year-old Dutch Warmblood who's coming into his own this season — delivered a flawless preliminary round and then finished just half-a-second behind Victoria's Karen Cudmore and Conejo in a seven-rider jump off.

Her runner-up time was an impressive 35.14 seconds, slightly better than Schomberg's Eric Lamaze and Millcreek Raphael.

"I went first in the jump off. The second jump was a really tall vertical and I took an extra step

just to make sure we'd clear it, and that essentially was the difference," explained Vince, who took down a single rail and placed eighth with less seasoned nine-year-old Kafka. "She (Cudmore) was half-a-step ahead."

But Milton's star show jumper was quite pleased with last weekend's performance, particularly since the 17-obstacle course featured a number of especially tall jumps and tricky combinations.

Recalled Vince, "The ring looked fairly imposing when we walked it. I thought maybe there'd be one or two clean rides — not seven. But a lot of people just seemed to have good days."

That's becoming a growing trend this season for



Ainsley Vince

her and Catch 22. The duo rode to second-place honours twice last month at World Cup qualifying events in Bromont, Quebec and Quebec City. Cudmore also edged her out of top spot during the latter of these grand prix — securing the only clean round in a smaller jump off.

"I seem to be unlucky with my riding place. I've had to go first a few times, which isn't really favourable."

Nevertheless, two seconds and a sixth in World Cup qualifying competition — the last of these delivered in Blainville, Quebec — put Vince and Catch 22 in strong shape heading into the second half of the schedule, which begins next weekend at Palgrave.

Said Vince, "He's been great this year — brave, careful and fast. He's certainly not green anymore."



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