Milton golfer makes impressive jump to university ranks

By STEVE LeBLANC

The Champion

season.

Jeff Thomas has already tasted provincial gold once this year — and is now setting his sights on a second serving.

That opportunity will come Monday and Tuesday at the Ontario University Athletics (OUA) championships at Waterloo's Grey Silo Golf Club.

It was on these same greens that Milton's 18-yearold golfer — who captained the Junior Wilson Tour foursome to Ontario Miller Cup victory this past summer — fired rounds of 75 and 73 to finish first at an initial tryout for Wilfrid Laurier University.

Matching those efforts may not necessarily put him atop the provincial pecking order this coming week, but it should be enough for the Golden Hawks' freshman to rank highly and help his host team do likewise.

"I just want to play two solid rounds and stay within the hunt for rookie of the year honours," said

New members, regardless of experience,

twice this season."

Though still having to qualify to compete with Laurier this week — with Sunday's practice round determining which five from each school will get the nod and who will be relegated to alternate status - the local golfer feels confident he'll be hitting the links Monday.

Recent performances would suggest that as well.

Since cracking the Golden Hawks' squad, Thomas has been a model of consistency — with overall top-10 placings, among average fields of four dozen golfers, every time out. And a putter switch following last month's Queen's University Invitational has served only to strengthen his overall play. Third and fourth-place finishes overall at Waterloo and Guelph respectively are testament to that.

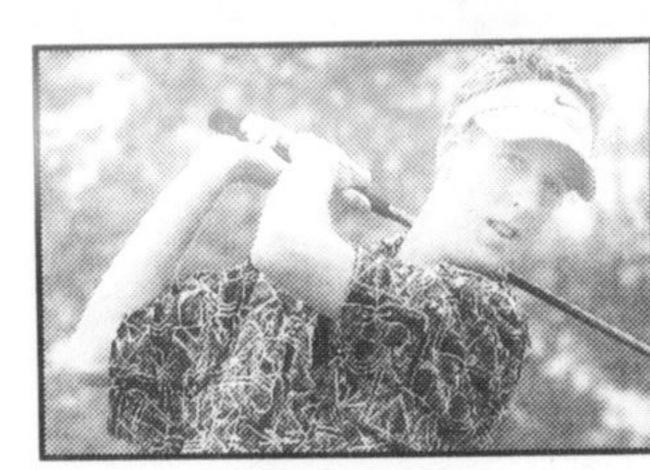
A strong short game in Guelph October 7 allowed him to recover from a lacklustre start and shoot an impressive 75 — aiding in Laurier's gold-medal win. Thomas birdied the eighth and ninth holes and then rebounded from straight bogeys on 10 and 11 to crack

It's Not Just

by the Book anymore

Not too shabby for a first-year university competitor who's now battling opponents up to four years his elder. But then Thomas is no stranger to stiff competition with successful stints on the Kiwi GolfScene and Junior Wilson tours this past two summers already putting him up against the best teens in Ontario.

"It's definitely a step up, but I wasn't really nervous. I saw it more as an opportunity," said Thomas.



Jeff Thomas

LEASING

Thomas. "I think we've got a good chance of winning. We're probably ranked second and we've beat the top-five for the second time in as many events. Western (top seed and defending provincial champs) Local skiers Milton **Public** are needed The Milton Heights racing club — which skis out of Glen Eden — is looking for Ontario Public Library Week skiers and snowboarders to round out its October 21 - 27, 2002various teams for the 2002/03 competitive season. Both junior and adult competitors are Ontario Public Libraries: needed. Teams travel to weekend races across southern Ontario throughout the

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