



SPORTS

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

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Ferrier wins national cadet championship

Milton Dynamo wrestler dominant out west

Gary Ferrier strikes again!

Adding to his already championship-rich career last weekend at the University of Calgary, Milton Dynamo Club's highly-gifted grappler turned back all challengers to capture national cadet gold.

The 57-kilogram freestyler moved up two spots from last year's finish with what he described simply as "smarter wrestling". Whether it was this or the confidence enjoyed from an overall strong season — previously highlighted by a fifth-place effort at OFSAA — Ferrier was nothing short of spectacular throughout the weekend.

Joining standouts Thomas Jensen, Chris Denich, Kevin Heffron and John McCart in the national champions fraternity, the E.C. Drury 10th grader won five consecutive matches — three in grand superiority fashion.

Among those was a 10-0 white-wash of Alberta's Wes Barnet in the finals. Recalled Ferrier, "I took control right away and pretty much

walked through him. It wasn't much of a match."

A four time Canada-East champ before entering high school, he also pinned a New Brunswick opponent and engineered 11-1 and 10-0 victories in Calgary.

Ferrier's only stiff challenge came in the quarterfinals when he escaped a potential pinning situation to outdistance Saskatchewan's Thomas Romanowski 10-7.

Besides claiming gold, he was one of 10 Canadian champs who earned a scholarship to attend this summer's highly-regarded Rocky Mountain Wrestling Camp in Jasper, Alberta.

As well, the national title win puts him in contention to compete at the July's Pan-American Championships in Venezuela.

If that wasn't enough, Ferrier finished the season with 10 gold medals — which puts him in a second-place tie on E.C. Drury's all-time list.

Milton enjoyed three other top-seven finishes in Calgary, two by

Jesse Ronan.

Despite moving up a weight class from OFSAA — where he struck silver — the E.C. Drury senior delivered an inspired opening-day performance in the freestyle division with a 11-1 win, pin-fall victory and 10-2 decision. In the semifinals, however, he was pinned by a Saskatchewan opponent and couldn't get his momentum back — eventually settling for sixth.

In Sunday's Greco championships, Ronan won three matches to again place sixth. He began and ended things with losses to British Columbia's Glen MacDonald.

His top-six showings make him the first Milton wrestler to place at the Ontarios, OFSAA and both Canadian freestyle and Greco championships in a single season.

Meanwhile, Carl Chan finished seventh in Ferrier's freestyle weight class with a 3-2 record. He dropped a narrow 3-2 decision to the eventual silver medalist after leading early on.

Hart Jr. drops split decision to two-time national champ

By **STEVE LeBLANC**

The Champion

Surrendering a tournament title is usually difficult to accept.

But doing so against a two-time national boxing champ with a great deal more experience makes it a little easier to swallow. At least that was the case for Matt Hart Jr. Sunday afternoon at the Ray McGibbon Gloves Tournament in St. Catharines.

Milton's 25-year-old light middleweight had reigned supreme at the showcase last year and came close to pulling off a golden repeat this time around, dropping a split decision to highly-decorated Allan Hutton of Hamilton in the finals.

Though not exactly fond of defeat, Hart Jr. stressed that he wasn't at all dejected by the narrow loss — since he held his own against arguably his stiffest competition to date.

Hutton held a huge advantage in terms of experience, having begun boxing when he was just 12 years old and been involved in more than 100 previous fights compared to Hart Jr's 19.

When it came to sheer skill, however, there was little separating the two pugilists — at least not during last weekend's epic encounter.

"Our fight was actually judged the best one of the weekend," said the up-and-coming light middleweight, who's recently sparred with such well-known fighters as Canadian middleweight champion Brian Mackie. "It was non-stop action. If he hit me with a combination, I'd come right back and hit him with a combination.



Matt Hart Jr.

"I'm not disappointed (about losing). I fought a great fight and made some new fans."

While he and Hutton traded blows with equal frequency, it was a much different story en route to the finals. Hungry to return to the championship picture, Hart Jr. thoroughly upstaged Toronto's Conroy Mullens in semifinal battle Saturday evening — after receiving a bye — and knocked him out early in the third round.

It marked the fifth knockout victory in just over a year for Hart Jr.

Recalled Milton's light middleweight of early third-round action, "He tried to bully me into the corner and went for an overhand right, but I caught him with a left hook and spun out of the corner."

From there an explosive right hook, left uppercut, right jab flurry sent his big-city opponent crumbling to the canvas. Added Hart Jr., "I rocked him pretty good. It was lights out."

Hart Jr. said his semifinal victim telegraphed his punches a little too much, and that severely hindered his attack. "Looking at the tape, I'd say he only landed four or five punches, and nothing overly punishing."

With the weekend split, Milton's only known active boxer is now 10-2 under the tutelage of Bramalea Boxing Club's Billie Martin.

Hart Jr. is hoping to secure a rematch with Hutton for sometime next month, but before that he's expected to compete at a meet at Mississauga's Port Credit Secondary School May 3.

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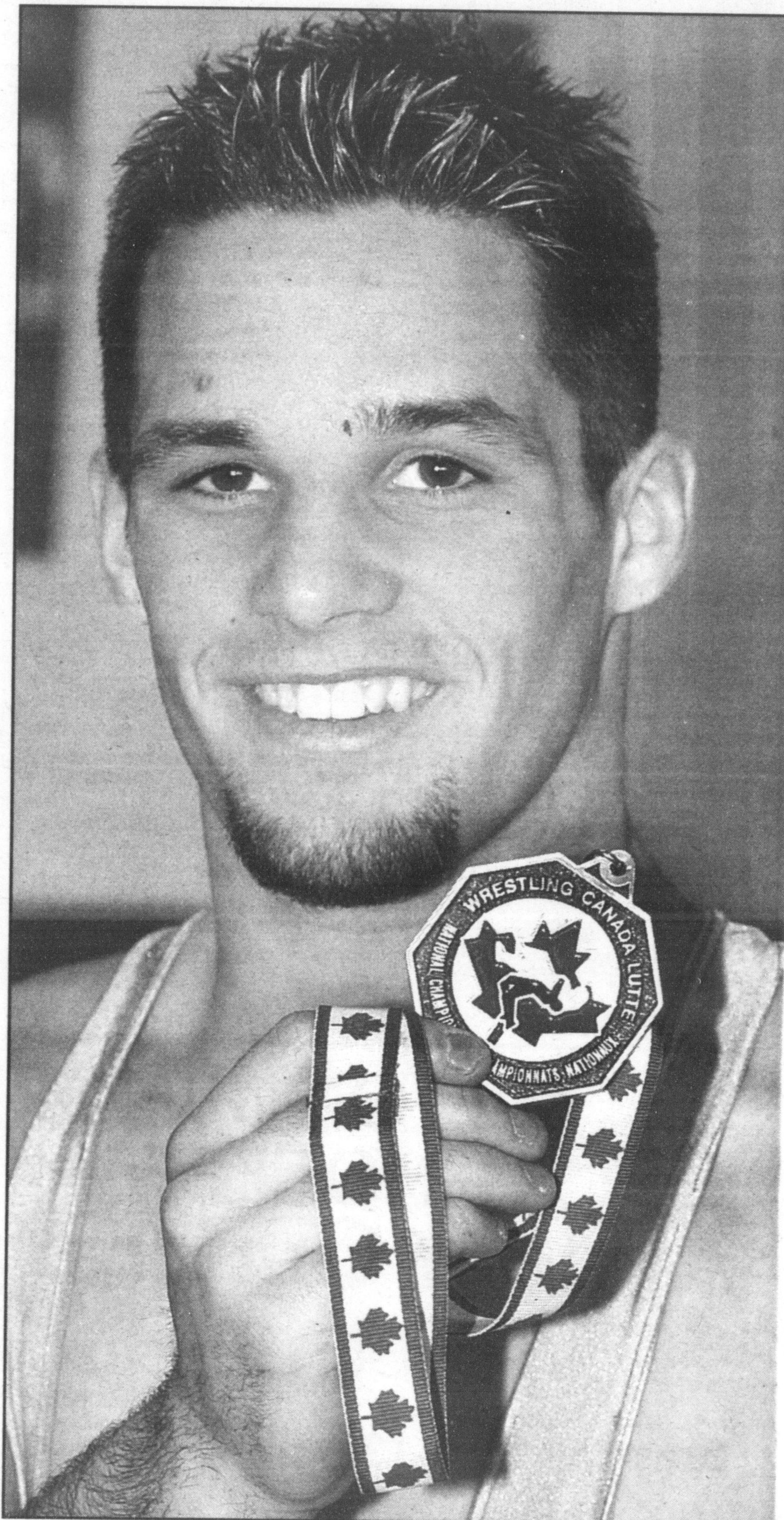


Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Gary Ferrier proudly displays the gold medal he captured at the national cadet/juvenile championships last weekend in Calgary.

Cops to clash this Sunday

There'll be an awful lot of police presence at Milton Memorial Arena Sunday.

But don't worry folks, it's not in anticipation of having to defuse any on-ice skirmishes. Instead, officers will be the ones lacing up the skates as Eddie Shack's Battle of the Badges is set to invade the local barn for a 4 p.m. showdown.

Halton's finest will square off against their peers from Toronto, with Shack — among the NHL's most personable alumni — donning the zebra stripes to oversee all

the action.

Assisting him as linemen will be former NHLers Jack Valiquette and Mark Napier both of whom enjoyed lengthy tenures in hockey's innermost sanctum.

Proceeds from the Sunday afternoon contest will benefit Halton Crime Stoppers.

Tickets cost \$12.50 each, or \$44 for a family of four. Tickets are available at Sports Traders on Thompson Road, or at the door on the day of the game.