



COMMENT



THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

Box 248, 191 Main St. E.,
Milton, Ont. L9T 4N9

(905) 878-2341

Editorial Fax: 905-878-4943

Advertising Fax: 905-876-2364

Classified: 905-875-3300

Circulation: 905-878-5947

Ian Oliver Publisher

Neil Oliver Associate Publisher

Jill Davis Editor-in-Chief

Karen Smith Editor

Wendy McNab Advertising Manager

Steve Crozier Circulation Manager

Teri Casas Office Manager

Tim Coles Production Manager

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The jury is still out

A society is often defined by its young and, by extension, how it treats its youthful offenders.

How to deal with young criminals has long been a contentious conversation in Canada. Even the title of young people who have committed crimes has undergone a steady transformation from 'juvenile delinquent' to 'young offender' to the latest version offered up in the new Youth Justice Criminal Act (YJCA), 'young person.'

The trouble often stems from the difficulty of matching an appropriate punishment with the possibility of rehabilitation. Young criminals are arguably less hardened than their adult counterparts and thus more open to efforts to transform them into productive members of society. The last thing these youths need, goes the thinking, is to learn more bad things in jail.

The YJCA is the latest attempt by Ottawa to resolve the conundrum and it has been met, predictably, with mild fireworks. Quebec would like the act weakened, but Ontario and Alberta staunchly oppose that. The new act attempts, once again, to focus on opportunities for rehabilitation, not punishment. It contains stricter rules on the public identification of youthful criminals. And while adult sentences are permissible under some extreme circumstances, all trials must take place in juvenile court. Previously, a serious crime could be tried in adult court.

The YJCA came into effect April 1, but its real value won't be known until cases start being processed under the new rules.

Until that time, the jury is still out.

Just some random thoughts on another rainy day

It's Tuesday afternoon and the downpour has begun — again.

Mother Nature sure can be a royal pain in the butt when you're a sports scribe just looking to cover the local spring-time beat.

And in places like Milton — where ball diamonds are unusable for up to 24 hours after any kind of sustained shower — it's twice as frustrating.

Maybe I shouldn't complain too much. After all, my livelihood isn't adversely affected by the rain like bar owners with outdoor patios, or the nice hot dog stand lady who operates outside the Country Depot on Bronte Road.

But when the skies open up on a weekly basis and throw the proverbial monkey wrench into your plans, it's still frustrating.

Since there's not much sports action going on at the moment, I'm left with time to gather my

thoughts on some other less pressing sports-related topics.

For instance, I've never been too wild about the Winterhawks name for our minor rep hockey teams, but I will admit I like their new logo and plans to do away with the awful green jerseys in favour of the Maple Leafs' blue and white.

In fact I can't see anyone missing the old look, so maybe my praise isn't even worth mentioning. Nevertheless, kudos should go out to Milton Minor Hockey for making this much-needed change.

Hopefully the Jr. A Merchants make similarly striking changes when they finally decide on a new name. And for anyone out there who thinks they have the inside scoop on what it is, think again. The hotly-rumoured new name for our local juniors — widely circulated on the QT through the second half of the season — isn't



OUR READERS WRITE

Reader asks person who broke into her car to please return the towrope made by father

Dear Editor:

This letter goes out to the individual or individuals who sometime between 7:30 p.m. May 12 and 7:15 a.m. May 13 came into our yard on Appleby Line and went through my GMC pick-up truck. This was the first and last time that the truck will be left unlocked and the alarm unset.

A couple of compact discs were taken (What, you don't appreciate Louis Armstrong or The Three Tenors?) as well as a soft-sided case that I used as a tool kit.

This case is a grey Apple Computer case from an old 1980s computer, so I believe you thought you were getting a laptop.

I can live without the few tools, booster cables, ratchet straps and bungee cords, but that towrope is the one that my father made for me.

My father will be 84 in October and won't be making me another.

If you wish to return this towrope you could leave it in my driveway or roll it up and place it in my mailbox. You understand that I would appreciate you not coming back on

to my property.

To parents out there who may see a new towrope, the one I'm missing is approximately 15 feet long and made from heavy white rope with a soft texture.

It has a loop on each end and the ends that form the loop are woven back into the main body of the rope. It had never been used and was in new condition. You may want to question where and when it was acquired.

Phyllis Ralph
Milton

E-mail your letters to the editor to miltomed@haltonsearch.com.



with STEVE LeBLANC

etched in stone yet.

Up
front

There's quite a bit of talk that the 2003/04 Merchants could be even younger than this past season — so this weekend could offer a sneak peak at some significant talent for next year. You never know if there'll be another Vic Oreskovich waiting in the wings.

About a year ago I publicized my hopes to establish a prominent trophy and sports memorabilia display at the new arena — something along the lines of the one currently gracing Georgetown's Gordon Alcott Memorial Arena.

I mentioned that we'd need a committee to get it off the ground and since then I've had a few nibbles of interest, but not enough to really move forward. So if anyone would like to get on board, give me a call at (905) 878-2341, or e-mail me at sleblanc@haltonsearch.com.