

2003 filled with sporting success and thrills

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Horsing around

Chris Christoforou won his second Standardbred Canada Driver of the Year title, while Real Desire — locally owned, and trained by fellow Miltonian Blair Burgess — picked up national Horse of the Year honours.

Stellar sister act

Synchronized skaters Alicia and Melissa Visconti helped their Brampton Gold Ice squad punctuate a sensational season with national gold — beating fellow favourites Burlington and Les Supreme of Quebec in decisive fashion.

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With superb defense and leadership from Milton's Mark Couture, Canada's Deaflympics hockey team kept itself stationed atop the world pecking order with a golden performance in Sweden. A 5-2 win over the U.S. in the finals capped Canada's title drive. Couture assisted on the championship game-winner.

Ferrier strikes again

Adding to his championship-rich wrestling career, Gary Ferrier became only the fifth E.C. Drury grappler to claim national cadet gold — doing so at the University of Calgary, where the 57-kilogram freestyler turned back all challengers and had only one stiff test on the way to victory.

Turning up the heat

Simply sizzling through a spring campaign in Texas, equestrian Erynn Ballard delivered a number of impressive efforts — including a jump-off victory with long-time partner Leacock in the \$30,000 Pine Oak Grand Prix.

Something to cheer about

The newly-established Milton Super Cheer cheerleading squad offered a dynamite debut at provincials — sweeping the junior and senior divisions at Kitchener Memorial Auditorium.

Dynamos dynamite

The traditionally-successful Dynamo wrestlers enjoyed unparalleled prosperity, with hefty hardware hauls at both the provincials and Canada-East championships — where they captured four medals, including a gold for Zac Greenawalt.

Reid on the rise

Campbellville's Elgin Reid became the first local player in recent memory to go in the first round of the OHL Entry Draft, and capped a memorable year by being selected to Team Ontario for the Under-17 World Challenge. Milton's Kevin Parker fell just short of making the provincial squad, after reaching the final Under-17 camp with a strong run.

Roller coaster ride

Bishop Reding's girls softballers experienced both ecstasy and agony in their play-off drive — reaching the finals with a monumental 12-9 comeback win over powerhouse Georgetown in the semis, and then falling 11-6 to Burlington's Notre Dame in the title showdown.

Sweeping changes

Milton's Jr. A hockey club underwent a major makeover — with the long-time Merchants moniker being replaced by the IceHawks, and George Dupont coming in as the new general manager and head coach.

Smooth transition

Matt DeCaire made the jump to Jr. A lacrosse and held his own with the Orangeville Northmen — playing the majority of games and contributing at both ends of the floor.

Golden boy

Only two years after taking up motorcycle observed trials, 17-year-old Alex Barrie captured the junior Canadian title with a dominating two-weekend performance in Haliburton and Quebec.

Pan Am-azing

Squash star Alisha Turner persevered through oven-like conditions in El Salvador to help Team Canada's girls win Pan American junior gold. This followed other impressive efforts by the local teen, including a silver-medal performance at the Canada Winter Games.

Making waves

Paul Macdonald won the final two events to clinch overall men's gold at the Canadian Barefoot Water-skiing Championships in Edmonton. It was his first national title since 1998.

The dominator

Capping a thoroughly-dominating season on the track, BMXer Tim DaSilva delivered a clean sweep at the Grand Nationals in Kentucky — winning everything from his initial moto to the main event in his 18 to 20-year-old novice class.

Going the distance — Part 1

Members of the Milton Runners took the high endurance test at various Ironman (3.8km swim, 180km bike, 42.2km run) events. In November alone, 10 club members completed Ironman Florida.

Going the distance — Part 2

Golfer Mandy DeFabrizio won both sets of women's provincial long drive events within a two-week span in her first year on the circuit.

A real knockout

Up-and-coming pugilist Matt Hart Jr. continued his drive toward a pro boxing career with victories over a number of the top amateur middleweights. His in-ring prowess included provincial bronze.

A piece of the rock

Following a strong finish with the Jr. B Mavericks, lacrosse goalie Josh Arnold was an eighth-round draft pick of the defending NLL champion Toronto Rock.

Back — with a bang

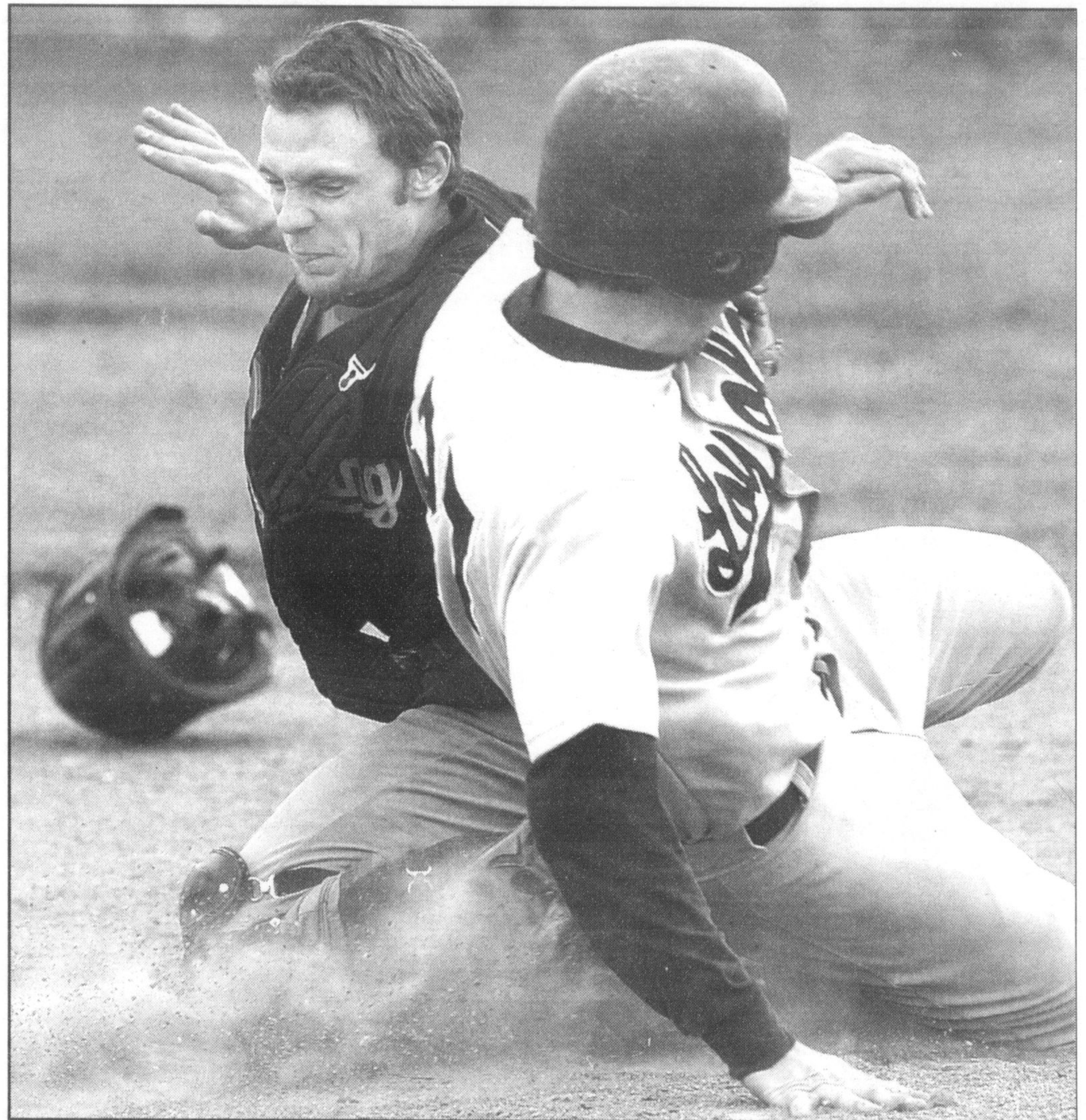
Equestrian Michael Grinyer returned to the grand prix circuit after a rather lengthy hiatus and showed strongly in doing so. He highlighted the year with an overall third-place finish with recently-acquired Alcatraz in the Canadian Show Jumping Championship.

Gridiron heartbreaker

Former Milton District football star Sean Postma came agonizingly close to reaching the national Vanier Cup, as his McMaster Marauders fell 36-32 to Quebec's Laval Rouge et Or in the semifinal Mitchell Bowl. This followed a provincial Yates Cup victory — the fourth in as many years for Postma and the Marauders.

Barnes' bronze age

Triathlete Harry Barnes earned his second straight world championship bronze in the men's 55-59 age division — doing so this time around with a stellar effort in New Zealand.



Catcher Tim Kirk of the Bishop Reding baseball team (above) guns down a Loyola baserunner at the plate during BR's Halton title victory, while E.C. Drury wrestlers (left) show off their unprecedented fourth straight OFSAA championship banner. The two high school teams offered some of the biggest success stories of 2003.

IceHawks suffer quarterfinal exit

For the third time in four years, Milton's juniors were denied access to final four at the Newmarket Showcase — getting vanquished in the quarterfinals Monday afternoon.

This time around it was Western Conference rival Mississauga that provided the heartbreak, rallying to shade the IceHawks 4-3. Milton scored three straight goals to grab the upper-hand down the stretch, but then surrendered three unanswered goals — including the game winner with under two minutes remaining.

Wes Clark tallied twice, while Nick Dzieduszycki stood out with three assists. Jonathan Ornelas chipped in with two helpers and potting goal number two was Jason Fortino.

In net was Kain Tisi. Shots on goal favoured Mississauga 34-27.

The IceHawks' quarterfinal exit followed an undefeated round-robin campaign in which they beat Sudbury 5-3, dumped Ajax 7-2 and tied Thornhill 2-2.

Milton resumes league play tonight against Streetsville and finishes out the weekend in Georgetown tomorrow. Both games start at 7:30 p.m.

MILTON
ICEHAWKS

TONIGHT'S
TICKET

IceHawks (22-14-0-1)
vs. Streetsville (12-18-6-1)

Game time: 7:30 p.m. at Memorial

Last meeting: Streetsville won 5-1.

Who to watch: Newly-acquired winger Cory Snyder will look to make an impact in his home-ice debut with the IceHawks.

The skinny: The steadily-improving Derbys have been a thorn in the side of many clubs this year, including Milton. A fundamentally-sound effort will be needed to knock them off. Expect the IceHawks to deliver just that in an important tune-up for Georgetown.

Champion's pick: Milton by two.