

# Hart Jr. makes pro boxing debut tonight

By STEVE LeBLANC  
The Champion

Call it a new beginning for Matt Hart Jr. Tonight the local pugilist will start proving himself all over again — doing so with his long-awaited professional debut in Edmonton.

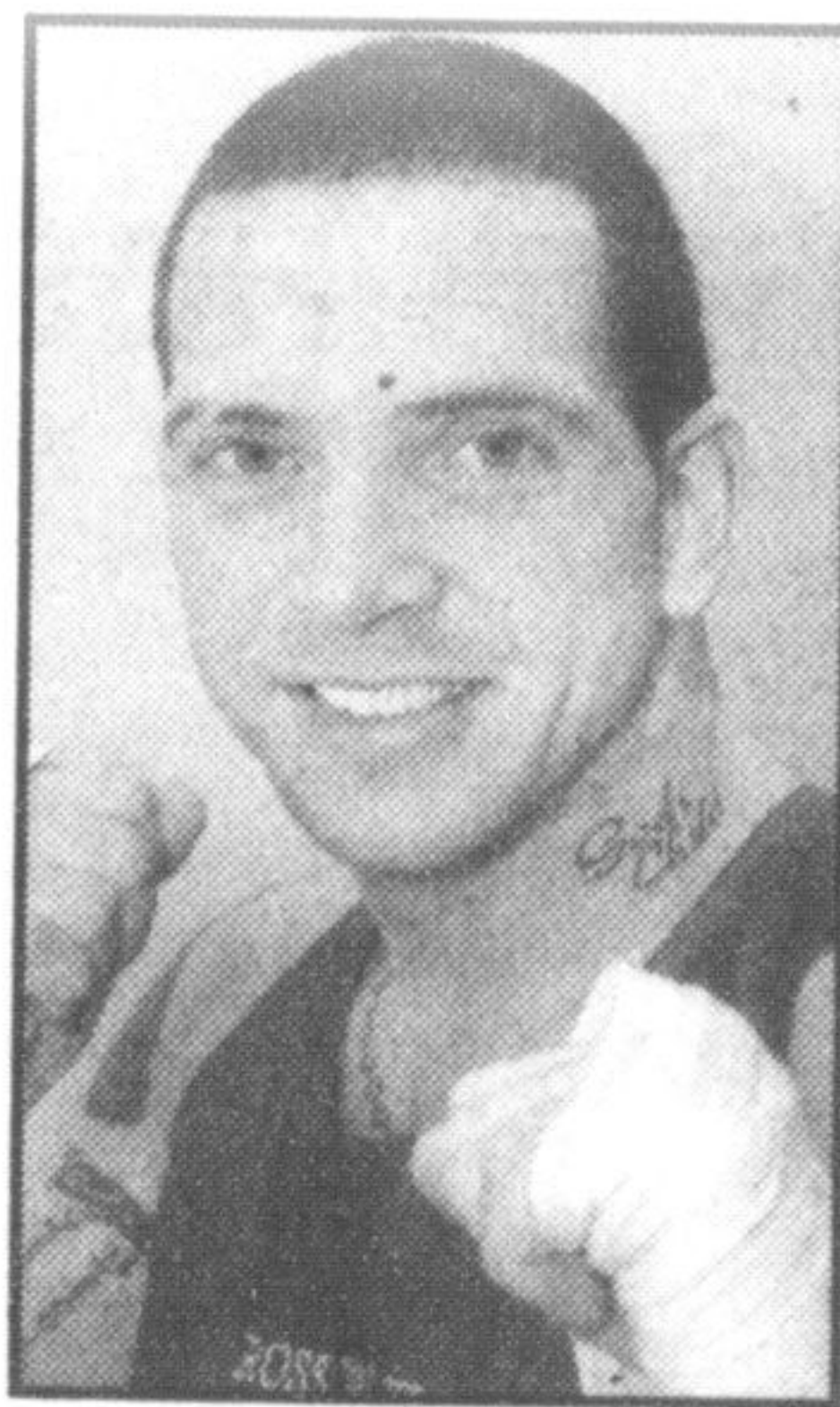
"I'm pretty excited and ready for the challenge," said the 27-year-old welterweight, who ended his amateur career ranked second provincially and with an overall record of 17-4.

Hart Jr.'s jump to the pros was expected to come a few months back, but fundamental differences with would-be manager John Melich of Brampton postponed the move.

Explained Milton's outspoken boxer, "Basically he wanted full control over me, so we parted ways. The only person who's going to have 100 per cent say about Matt Hart is Matt Hart."

Now dealing with a handful of different managers — including Hamilton's Dave Finch, who helped arrange his first pro encounter — the local fighter is set to take on Calgary's Anthony Lassard, who'll no doubt have the home crowd advantage.

But Hart Jr. points out that his upcoming opponent has just recently returned to the ring after a three-year absence. "That's a long time to be off, where as I was in there



Matt Hart Jr.

competing. I think that gives me an edge."

Without a points system at the pro level, Hart Jr. will now have to concentrate on punch quality rather than quantity.

"I'm not throwing seven or eight-punch combinations anymore," said the impending

pro fighter, who's still working with longtime trainer Billy Martin and sparring with such seasoned veterans as two-time national champ Brian Mackie. "I'm waiting on my punches more and trying to make them really count."

"My training has been going great. I know I've got to prove myself all over again, but I feel that I'm ready for it."

Hart Jr. expects to make roughly \$1,000 (his expenses are paid) for his four-round pro debut, and down the road is hoping to get on a card tentatively scheduled at Mississauga's Hershey Centre in September.

"Anything close to home I'll be all over," he stressed.

## Midget Sox exact revenge

Payback is always sweet — but especially so when it comes against a team that mercied you the last time out, and allows you to climb over .500 in the process.

Such was the case Sunday evening for the Midget Red Sox, who struck early and often to outduel Brampton's first entry team 8-6 at Brian Best Park.

Offensively, Marcas Gray and Nick Vipond each went 3-for-4 and scored a run, while the entire lineup executed the little plays necessary to topple the upper-echelon visitors.

Matt Thompson got the win with a sturdy six-inning effort, while picking up the save was Scott McTrach.

The victory pushed the midgets to 5-4 in league play.

Meanwhile, the Junior Red Sox gave up eight runs in the last inning and fell 12-9 to the Mississauga Tigers Tuesday night.

A handful of errors and grand slam homer spoiled what should have been Milton's first win in four games. Conan O'Brien and Liam Tennant hit back-to-back homers, but both struggled on the mound at crunch time.

Now 2-7-1 in league play, the local juniors will look to turn things around this weekend at the Byron Tournament.

See more local sports on page 30.

## NEW Milton Summer Soccer Camps



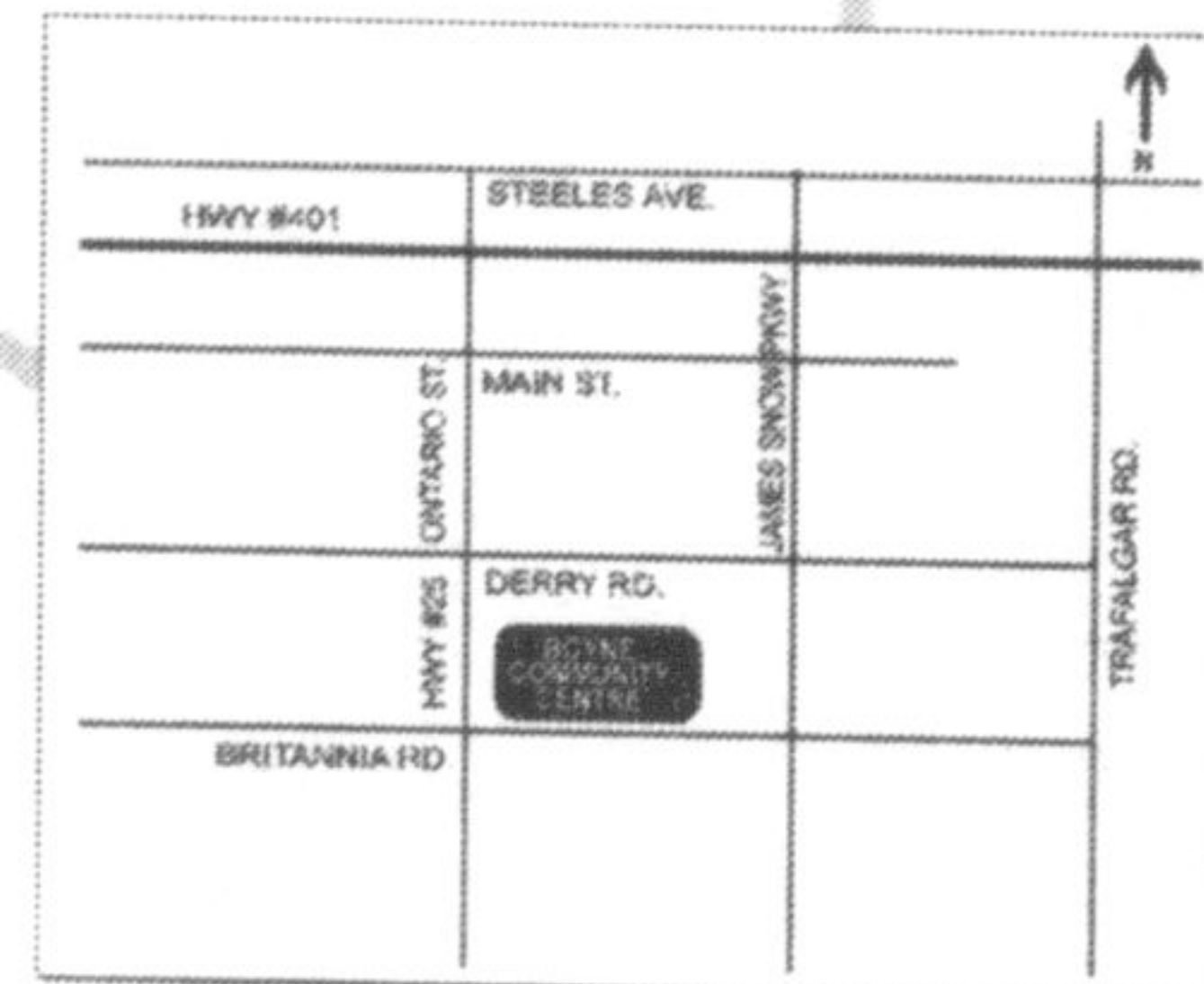
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## Sr. Sox hold their own at Newmarket tourney

By STEVE LeBLANC  
The Champion

Heading into last weekend, there was some debate over the Senior Red Sox' worthiness to be included in the Newmarket Tournament.

Nobody's questioning that decision anymore.

The only non-A level entry at the 10-team showcase, Milton more than held its own — winning two of three round-robin games, the latter over the defending provincial champs.

Unfortunately that wasn't quite enough to advance, as the narrowest of run differentials knocked the local seniors out of title contention. But measuring up to the weekend opposition no doubt provided legitimate solace for George Moore and company.

"We definitely proved we belonged

there," said the Red Sox manager.

Milton's lone defeat came against Leaside Saturday morning, when a wind-assisted homer in the fourth inning broke a 1-1 stalemate and spoiled a complete game four-hitter by Adam Finkbeiner.

The Red Sox were flawless defensively, while Taylor Lawton tied things up on a Leaside error.

Sandwiching the round two setback were low-scoring decisions against the hosts and Markham, Ontario's 2003 gold medalists.

The latter win — by a 4-1 margin — was highlighted by stellar fielding and a complete-game gem from Adam Ahearn, who surrendered just six hits.

"The defense and pitching were fantastic all weekend and everything came together against Markham, including our bats," stressed Moore, whose charges had a dozen hits in the round-robin ending triumph Saturday afternoon.

Delivering multi-hit efforts and driving in one run apiece were Lawton, Chris Coughlin, Andrew Coe and Dwayne Johnson.

Debuting rookies Jordan Jeans and Jeff MacLeod — who are expected to give Milton some added speed and depth in the outfield — each had a hit in the building block victory.

Milton kicked off the weekend by edging Newmarket 3-2 Friday evening.

Initiating a complete-game tournament trend, Ian Zettle went the full seven innings and stayed strong down the stretch to allow the Red Sox to rally from a 2-0 deficit.

His five-hit performance was complemented by sharp defense, while at the plate Kurt Mitchell belted a single in the fourth to score both the tying and winning runs.

The seniors can push themselves over the .500 mark in league play tomorrow afternoon with a double-header sweep of Brampton. Game one starts at noon at Brian Best Park.

## IceHawks fall short

Oh, so close.

IceHawk hopefuls came within a few minutes of securing the consolation title at the annual OHA Referee's Tournament Tuesday evening against Huntsville. But two late goals less than half-a-minute apart — one on the powerplay — allowed the opposing Otters to squeak out a 6-5 decision, capping an explosive third period at the University of Guelph.

Milton battled back from an early deficit before being edged.

The IceHawks reached the consolation finals by winning two of three preliminary games — knocking off Cambridge 5-3 and dismantling Guelph 11-3.

## MILTON INTERCHURCH SOFTBALL LEAGUE

STANDINGS AS OF 23-JUNE-04

TEAMS	G	W	L	T	PTS
1 ST. GEORGES	6	6	0	0	12
2 KNOX	6	5	0	1	11
3 HOLY ROSARY	9	5	3	1	11
4 BOSTON	7	5	2	0	10
5 SOUTH SIDE	7	4	3	0	8
6 ST. PAULS	8	4	4	0	8
7 MILTON BIBLE	8	3	5	0	6
8 NEW LIFE "A"	8	3	5	0	6
9 NEW LIFE "B"	7	1	6	0	2
10 HILLCREST	8	0	8	0	0



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