

First male fall fair ambassador chosen

By **STEPHANIE THIESSEN**
The Champion

The sparkling tiara waiting to be placed ceremonially on the head of the new 2004 Milton Fair Ambassador Friday night stayed right where it was.

Instead, a black fedora was used to crown this year's winner — Vincenzo Carito, 18, Milton's first ever male ambassador.

"I hope I'll not only meet but exceed your expectations as the ambassador for the Milton Fall Fair," he said to the judges.

Mr. Carito was one of two contestants at the Halton Agricultural Society's 2004 Ambassador of The Fair Competition and Appreciation Night in which last year's winner, Serena Purdy, handed over her title.

It was the first time the ambassador competition has been held as part of the Milton Fall Fair, previously being held in advance.

Judges Patty Lasby, Mike Hancock and Jan Robertson made their decision after the contestants gave prepared speeches and each answered an impromptu question.

Moving forward

In his speech, Mr. Carito — bedecked in a black suit — spoke about the importance of the agriculture industry moving forward with the times.

"We cannot live in the past," he said, describing some of the changes that have come during the past few decades to farms, particularly the erosion of the family farm.

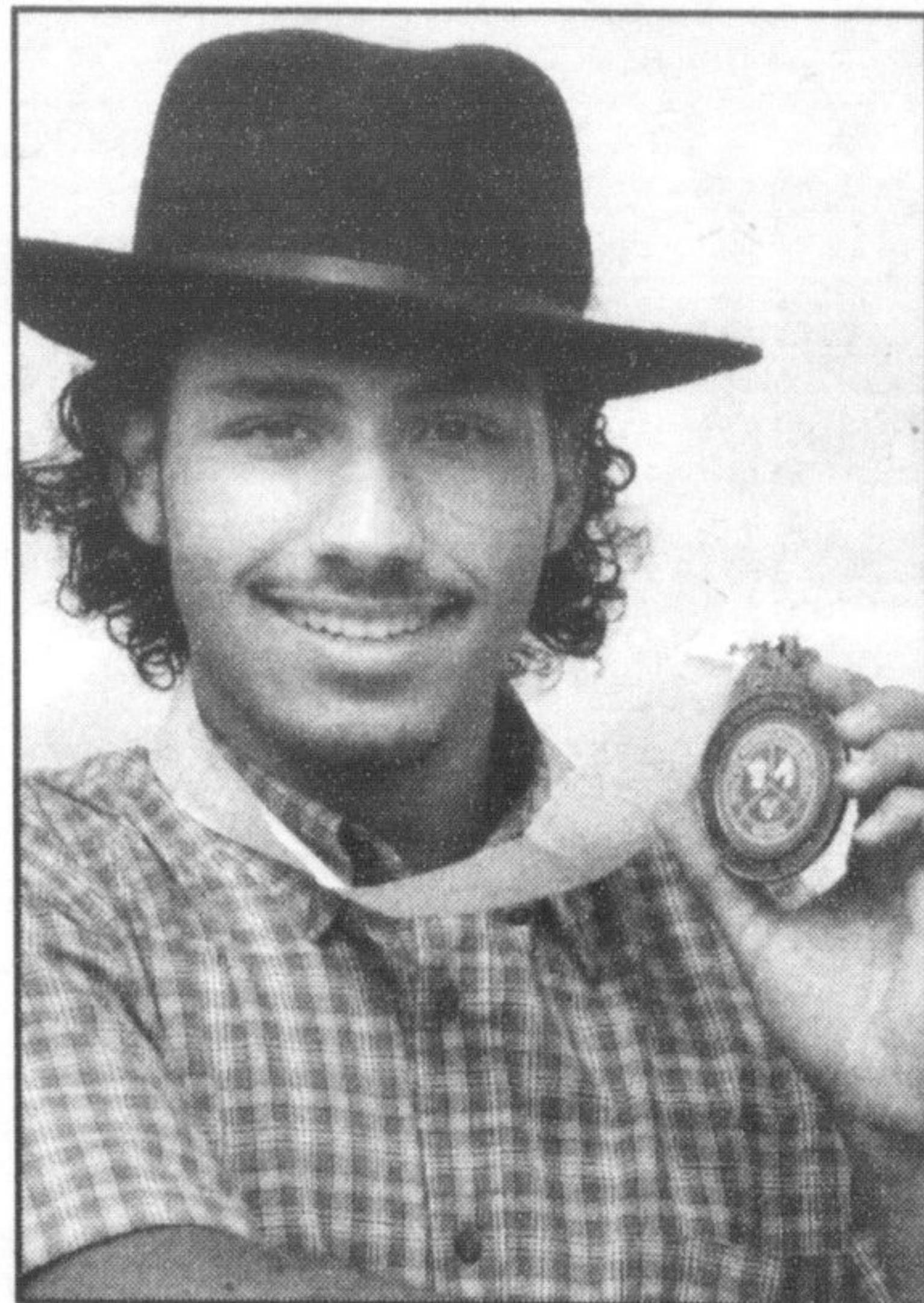
"We've seen the transition from family-run farms to corporations," said the Bishop Reding student, who grew up on a farm in Hornby.

His knowledge of farming will be put to good use, since one of his roles as ambassador is to increase awareness of agriculture.

For the impromptu question portion of the program, Mr. Carito was asked why the Milton Fall Fair is important to the town.

Focusing on the education aspect, Mr. Carito responded: "We have to educate our children for the future because they're going to end up feeding us."

In an interview after the competition, Mr.



Vincenzo Carito

Carito said he felt a bit strange but also excited being the first male ambassador.

"I hope to promote the competition to other males," he added.

Runner-up Angela Schrempf said competing is an experience more young people should try.

"This has been the opportunity of a lifetime," she said.

Although there were just 20 or so people watching the competition in the audience, emcee Ember Johnstone didn't seem fazed.

"Get your friends (to compete). We'll have this room filled in the next couple of years."

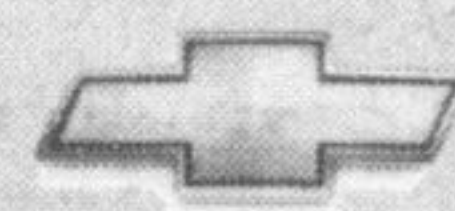
Ms Johnstone thanked Ms Purdy for a job well done. "Her passion, energy and enthusiasm made her an incredible ambassador," she said.

In her farewell speech, Ms Purdy said she was secretly hoping this day wouldn't come.

"Sadly, all good things must end," she said, adding she'll never forget how children's eyes light up when they see a fair ambassador.

Stephanie Thiessen can be reached at sthiessen@miltoncanadianchampion.com.

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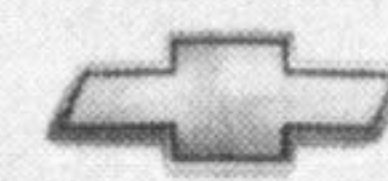
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