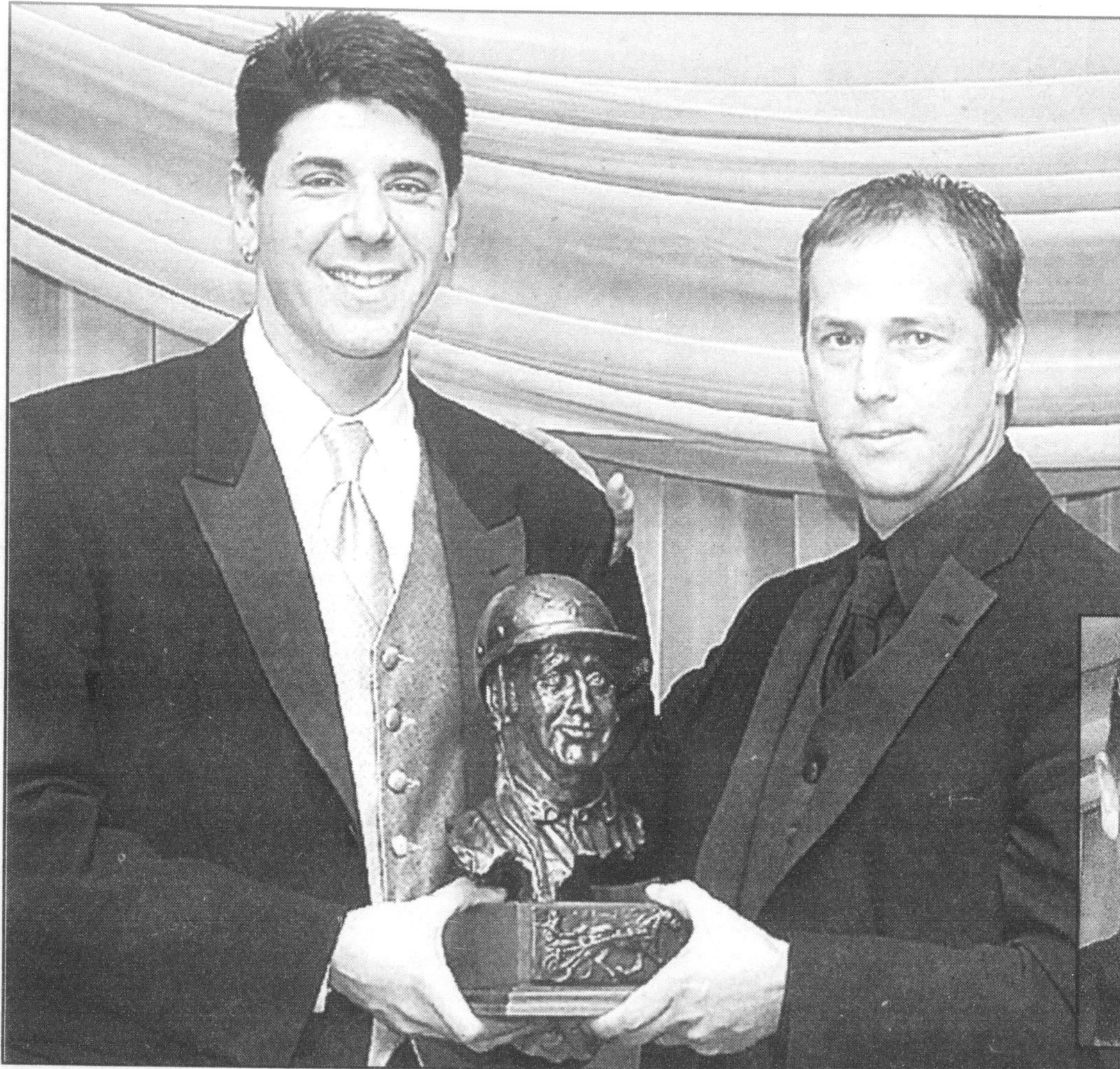


# Milton-area horsemen claim O'Brien awards



## Ouellette, Stutzman named Canada's top driver and trainer for 2004

Local horsemen delivered a one-two punch at Standardbred Canada's O'Brien Awards banquet Saturday.

Luc Ouellette and Joe Stutzman walked away with national driver and trainer of the year honours — the cherry on top of stellar 2004 campaigns.

A native of St.-Augustine and champion of the Meadowlands before moving to rural Milton in December 2003, Ouellette dominated the Woodbine circuit last year with 370 victories — to surpass the 7,000-win plateau — and \$9.1 million in earnings.

Also scooping up his first O'Brien

award, Campbellville's Stutzman led horses — including Spring Pacing — to 493 wins in 2004, as well as a collective bankroll of \$4.1 million.

He and Ouellette edged out father and son Carl and Jody Jamieson for their Standardbred Canada hardware.

Houston-owned Rainbow Blue was named both horse of the year and top three-year-old filly pacer, while harness racing's richest pacing mare of all time — the now retired Eternal Camnation — claimed an unprecedented fifth O'Brien award as Canada's older pacing mare of the year.

## Juvenile 'Hawks bow out quietly

By STEVE LeBLANC

The Champion

No sense of urgency equalled no survival for the juvenile Winterhawks Saturday night.

Facing do-or-die implications in front of a sizable crowd at Memorial Arena, Milton didn't really shift out of neutral until the third period. And the pair of goals scored then just wasn't enough to stave off elimination, as the opposing St. Catharines Warriors prevailed 5-2 and took the best-of-seven OMHA first round in a rather efficient five games.

"We just didn't want it. You can't wait until the third period and except a couple of goals to save you," said dejected head coach Jim Kosmalski, just moments after the series clincher.

The Winterhawks were placed on the proverbial chopping block two nights earlier on the road, where despite severely out-chancing St. Catharines they were blanked 3-0.

It was a much different story back at home Saturday, as a lack of spark in high traffic areas and brutal powerplay set-up through the first two periods afforded the hosts just a dozen shots before finally breaking the shutout three-and-a-half minutes into the final frame.

Thomas Patrick did the honours with a close-range deflection, while Julian Ricci buried a rebound six minutes later to draw within one. But the Warriors would quickly restore their three-goal cushion with deposits just 29 seconds apart and hung on to ground the Winterhawks.

Saturday's loss came without the services of reliable sniper Kyle Burrell, who began serving a three-game suspension sustained in St. Catharines Thursday.

The juveniles now wait to see who they'll face in Niagara District playoff action later this month.

In other Winterhawk OMHA competition, the AA minor atoms evened their best-of-five second round series with Flamborough Saturday night at Milton Sports Centre.

Drew McMillen assisted on a second-period equalizer by Colin Maltby and then struck with just 57 seconds remaining to give his team a 2-1 victory and erase a 1-0 deficit. Setting him up was Taylor McVey.

Returning from a recent illness, J.J. Schaap stood tall between the pipes.

Game three goes tonight in Flamborough.



Chris Christoforou, Standardbred Canada's 2003 Driver of the Year, presents the 2004 O'Brien award to fellow Miltonian Luc Ouellette. Above inset, Campbellville's Joe Stutzman was all smiles after being named Trainer of the Year.

Photos by TODD HOBLEY

## Rep teams do their best Cinderella impressions — at least for a while

By MURRAY TOWNSEND

Special to The Champion

Once upon a time in a land very close there lived a group of nice hockey players. They worked very hard, but their evil stepbrothers in the Tri-County League would pick on them and beat them.

But then it was time for the grand ball, otherwise known as the playoffs, and guess who showed up? Here's a tale of three teams The Champion tracked into the second round of the playoffs.

### Minor Midget AA

The minor midgets finished second last in the Tri-County standings, so it appeared the only thing that could help them against 17-10-1 Orangeville in the first round of the playoffs was a clone of coach John Nadalin, one of the most talented local players to come down the pipe in recent years.

Not so fast. The Winterhawks eliminated Orangeville in five games, after losing the first two.

Their next opponent was Burlington, a team with a better record than Orangeville, and Milton lost the opener 7-0.

In game two Thursday night, Milton lost, but showed signs of a revival. Down just 2-0 with just over a minute to go they pulled goalie Joey DeAthe, and Mike Hannah — who'd hit a crossbar earlier in the period — fired one by the Burlington goaltender. With the Winterhawks applying pressure to tie it up, a Burlington player shot it the length of the ice for an empty-netter. It still wasn't over though, as Hannah found the mark yet again, although the net had suspiciously come off its moorings just as he was shooting, so it didn't count.

The minor midgets have some momen-

tum going into the third game tonight at 7:45 p.m. at Milton Sports Centre. They know now they can play with Burlington. However, they're going to have to find a way to use their size advantage, bury their chances and get more players to the net when the puck is there.

### Bantam AA

One thing about an Arnie Parcels-coached team is that they're going to improve as a season goes on. So, despite finishing ninth of 11 teams during the regular season, they came out and upset Ancaster (18-9-1) in the first round of the playoffs.

After tying the first game and losing the second, the Winterhawks won three straight 3-2 games, the last of which was sealed with an overtime marker by Brayden Abraham.

In the second round, they were up against the first place Burlington Eagles, and got smothered 11-0 in the first game. In game two in Milton Friday night, the Winterhawks were downed 10-1.

Sometimes you have to give credit where it's due, and Burlington is just an outstanding team. There's a reason why they were 22-3-3 during the regular season, and they showed it.

There were some weak goals early in the game, but it wouldn't have mattered. To their credit, the Winterhawks showed their pride by battling to the end.

The end came on Sunday when they lost game three 11-1.

### Minor Pee wee AA

The minor peewees won two games all season. In the first round of the playoffs they won three, sweeping Ancaster.

The 2-25-1 team faced the 19-6-3 Guelph Storm in the second round and lost the first game 4-3.

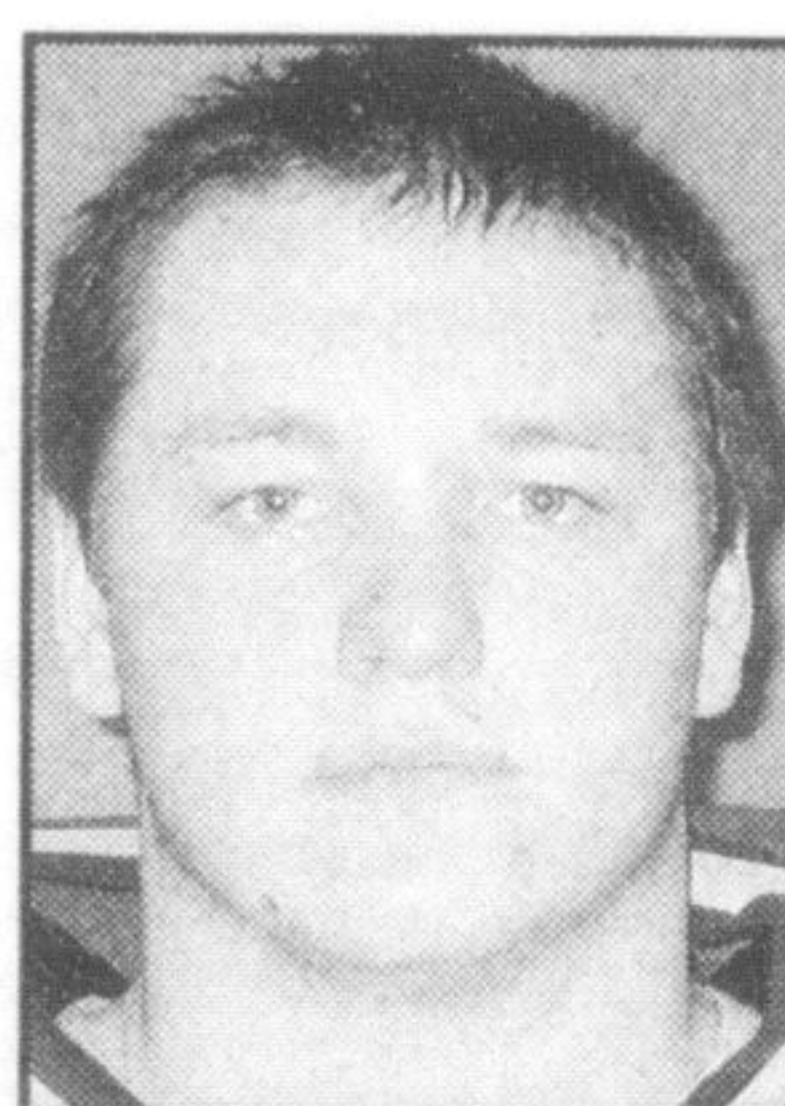
The second game of the series went Friday night in Milton, and if you didn't know their records, anybody watching the game would have thought the Winterhawks were the better team.

They stormed the Storm from the start — outworking them, out-chancing them, and outplaying them. James Hart and Sean McGovern could have each had a hat-trick in the first period alone if the puck had been bouncing their way.

Kevin Thomson opened the scoring in the second period and after Burlington tied it up, Hart gave the Winterhawks a third period lead. Tyler Jordan weathered the Storm as Guelph mounted an attack, but with seven minutes remaining Guelph tied it up and then went ahead on a great shot with four minutes left. The Storm put in two in the final minute to win 5-2.

The clock struck midnight in game three Sunday night with a final score of 5-0, knocking Milton out of the OMHA playoffs.

## Maccauley named top lineman



Zach Maccauley

The accolades continue to roll in for Zach Maccauley.

Recently completing a second straight 0-8 campaign with New Brunswick's Mount Allison football team, the 20-year-old Miltonian was named offensive lineman of the year at the Mounties' banquet late last month. The honour comes on the heels of his conference all-star selection at the end of the regular season.

"Zach is a very talented and athletic

player. He had another outstanding year and remains as one of the best in the league," said Mount Allison head coach Steve LaLonde, who recently replaced skipper Scott Fawcett in an effort to revitalize the ailing football club. "He has a real future in the league, and no doubt in professional football if he so chooses."

He's also excelled off the field, earning himself Academic All-Canadian status in 2003 as a mathematics major.