

Orpen claims provincial bronze

By Steve LeBlanc
CANADIAN CHAMPION STAFF

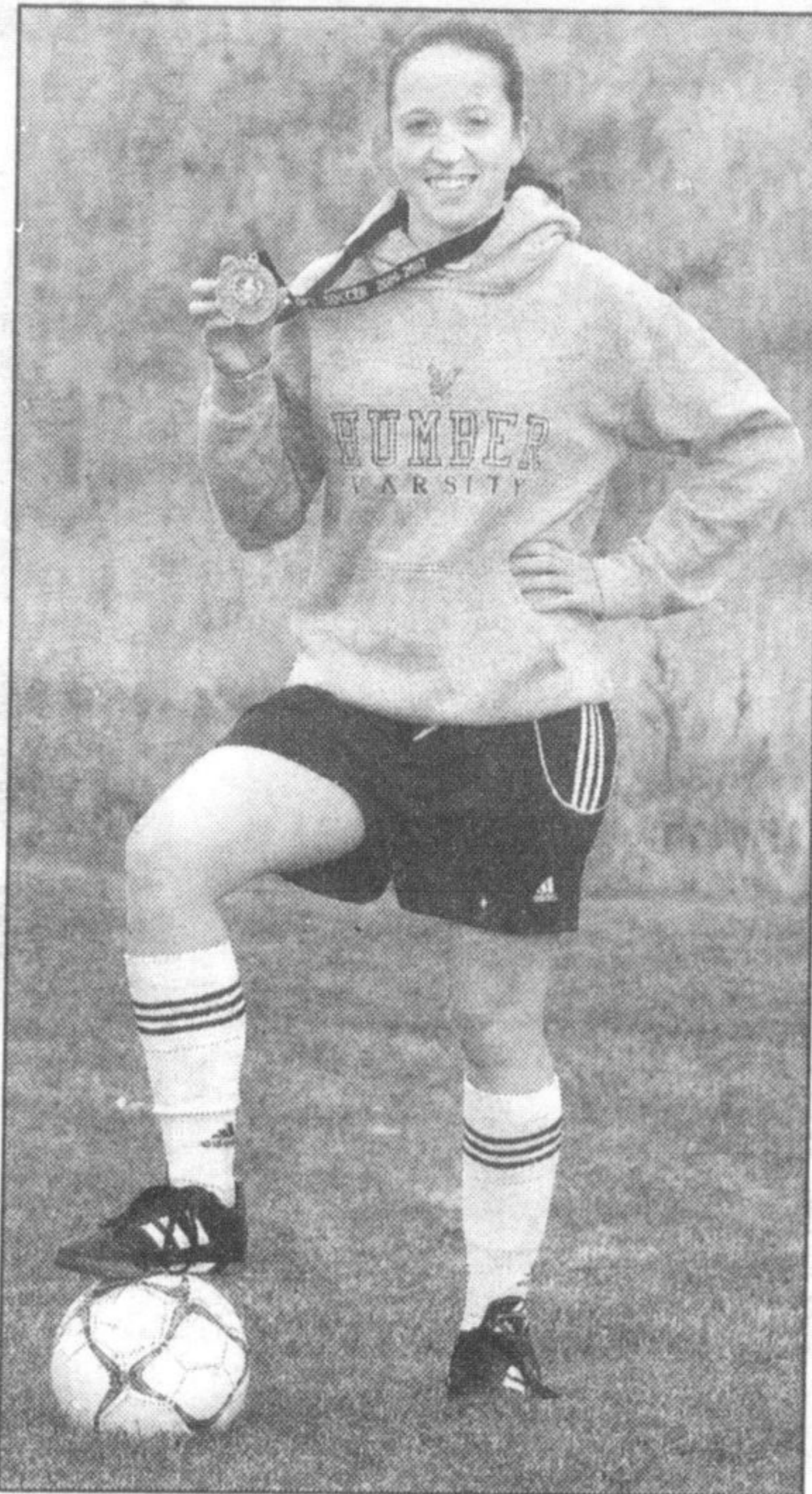
Kelsy Orpen can be excused for being less than serious in the classroom.

However, the Humber College comedy student is all business on the soccer field — and was all smiles in Mississauga Saturday afternoon.

Late in the second half against the Fanshawe Falcons with Ontario College Athletic Association bronze still up for grabs, the 20-year-old Miltonian burst in to snag a loose ball and bury it in the bottom left corner to cement the Hawks' 2-0 victory.

"It felt awesome to be able to finish (a big scoring opportunity) in a game with such high stakes," said the local midfielder, who was moved up to forward for the medal game and had to do a back flip over Fanshawe's goalkeeper to avoid a nasty collision after sinking the insurance goal.

Having been eclipsed 1-0 by the Algonquin Thunder in semifinal play just 21 hours earlier, Orpen and her Humber teammates stepped things up versus the Falcons to make sure they didn't come away from the provincial final four empty-handed. "We didn't want to go home with nothing," said the former standout with both the Milton Youth Soccer Club and Bishop Reding Secondary School, whose Hawks edged Fleming Peterborough 1-0 in the quarterfinals October 21.



GRAHAM PAINE / CANADIAN CHAMPION
Kelsy Orpen proudly displays her OCAA bronze medal.

"We pulled together as a team and just got it done."

Last Friday's semifinal loss was the only one of the season for the Hawks, who went 6-0-2 in the regular season to finish second in Ontario's West Division, behind Fanshawe. It also marked just the second time Humber had been scored on all year.

Remarked Orpen, "They (Thunder) caught us off guard with a bad goal early on. We had our share of chances and could have easily won it, but we just couldn't finish."

While supposedly not quite as quick as she was before major reconstructive knee surgery two years ago, the newly-crowned provincial medalist still had enough speed and mobility to provide some credible playmaking for the Hawks' midfield and forward ranks this season.

That certainly didn't surprise local coach Louis Bonnici, who got a first-hand look at just what Orpen can do on the field this past summer when he helped lead Milton's Under-18 women's squad. "Kelsy has a lot of passion for the game and really encourages the other girls," he noted. "There's a lot of power behind her play."

While set to graduate this coming spring, Orpen is considering a return to Humber for another program next fall — which would allow her to help the Hawks maintain their status as one of Ontario's top teams.

"Well see," she said, non-committedly.

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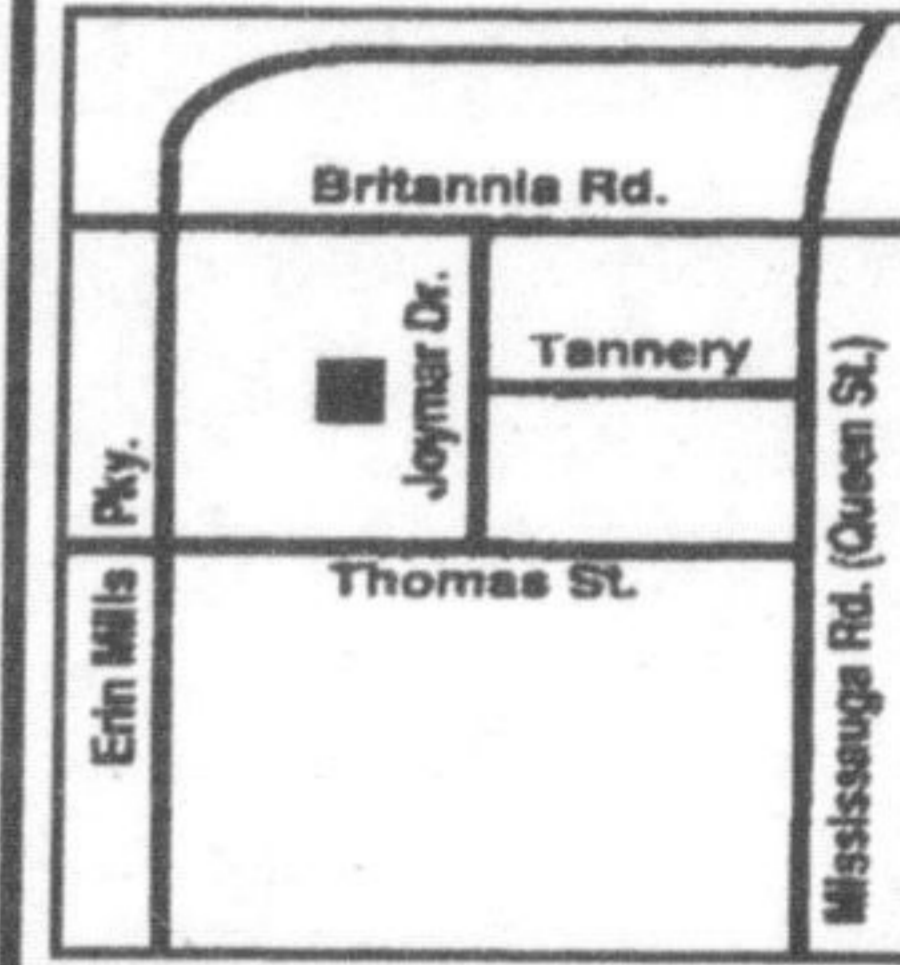


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