

Fredricks and Cougars fall just short of national medal

By Steve LeBlanc
CANADIAN CHAMPION STAFF

Sarah Fredricks had experienced heartbreak on the softball field before — just never with the stakes quite so high.

One win away from guaranteeing themselves at least a third-place finish at the recent Canadian midget championships in Edmonton, the 19-year-old Milton and her Chinguacousy Cougars fell 4-0 to Surrey, B.C.

Being denied a national medal was no doubt disappointing, but particularly so for Fredricks, since she's one of five players now done at the midget ranks.

"It was tough (to swallow) being my last year with the team," said the seasoned softballer, who primarily patrols first base. "We had our chances but just couldn't execute."

The shutout marked unwelcome déjà vu for the Cougars, who'd been whitewashed by Surrey two days earlier as well — then in a 2-0 final.

These losses were something of a departure for Chinguacousy — which thanks to exceptional fielding usually came out on top when the score was kept relatively low. Explained Fredricks, "Our team was all about defence."

That suited E.C. Drury High School's two-time Senior Female Athlete of the Year just fine.

With a knack for tagging out runners when throws to first aren't exactly on the money, the local teen played a pivotal role in the Cougars' 7-4 record out west.

That strong showing — due in no small part to her rock-solid fielding — included a 2-1 payback victory over Guelph, which had beat Chinguacousy 4-1 in last month's provincial championship finals in Whitby.

"That game got interrupted by a thunderstorm and we wound up winning in nine innings," recalled Fredricks, who two years ago participated in international play with a Team Canada squad in Holland and France. "It was pretty wild."



Sarah Fredricks

From there the Cougars put themselves in medal contention with a 5-2 decision over White Rock, B.C. — a victory in which their Milton infielder factored into one of two double plays.

An opening-round loss at the provincials offered a rather grim outlook for Chinguacousy's medal hopes.

But the Cougars would bounce back and take their last two pool games before stringing together three elimination victories to reach the finals.

Fredricks' sharp defence at first and third helped the would-be silver medalists to a pair of shutout wins and a 4-3 extra-innings triumph over defending champion Markham during their do-or-die playoff run.

While both high school and midget softball are now behind her, athletics certainly aren't. Tomorrow Fredricks departs for New York's Finger Lakes area to attend Keuka College, where on a partial scholarship she'll play volleyball and softball.

Spots still open for Trottier camp

It's not too late to sign up for some on-ice instruction with one of hockey's greatest all-time players.

Seven-time Stanley Cup champion Bryan Trottier will bring his hockey school to Milton Sports Centre next week.

Divided into four age groups and open to players five to 16 years of age, the week-long camp will also feature highly-decorated puck-stopping great Billy Smith — Trottier's teammate during the New York Islanders' four-year

Stanley Cup dynasty from 1980 to 1983 — and Jay Wells, a longtime NHLer who's now assistant coach of the American Hockey League's Portland Pirates.

The trio will be week-long instructors and not just one-day guests.

The camp costs \$450 plus GST per player and \$350 plus GST per goalie. To sign up or for more information, call Inside Edge Pro Sports on Mill Street at (905) 878-9917 or visit <http://www.ieprosports.ca>.

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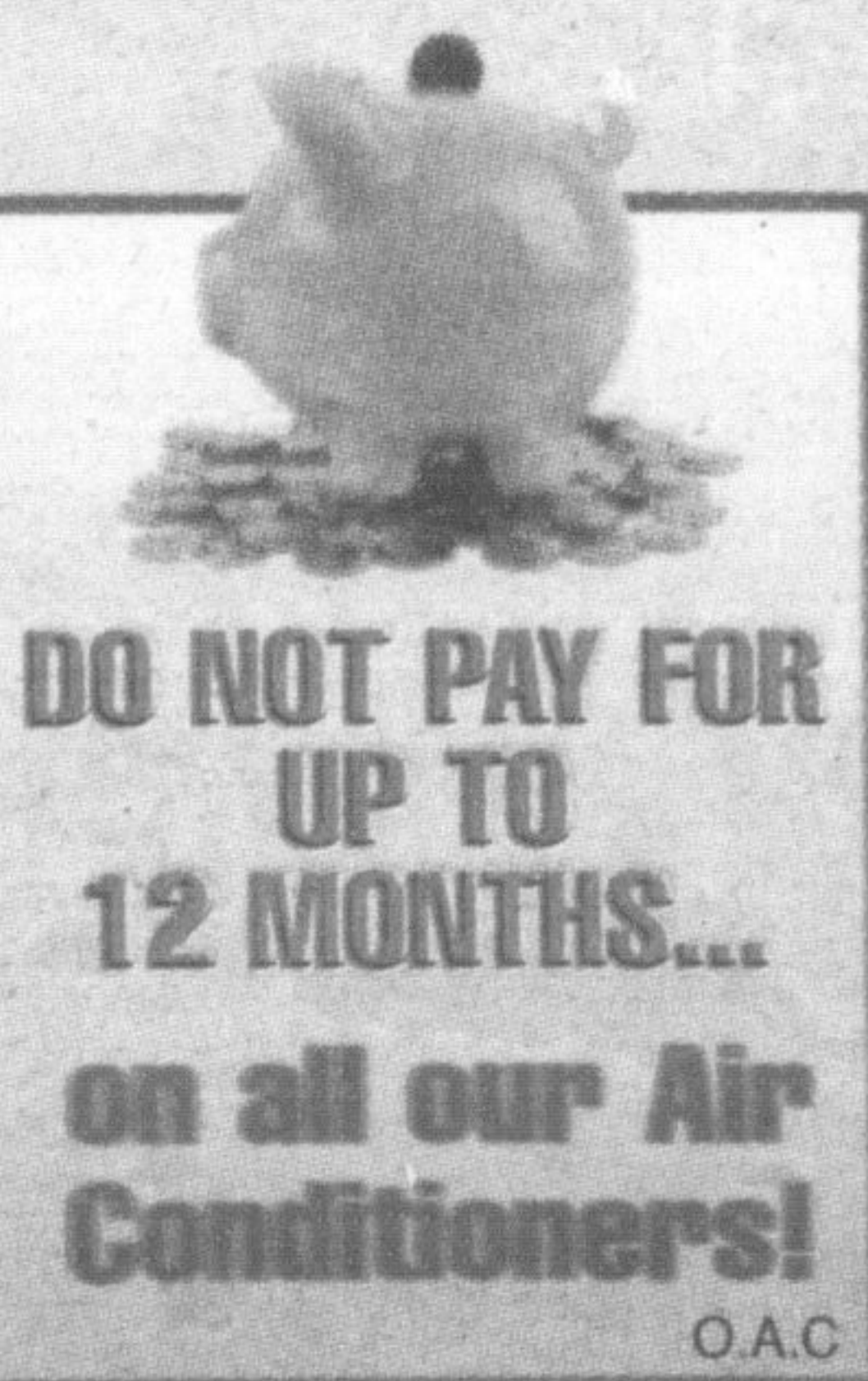
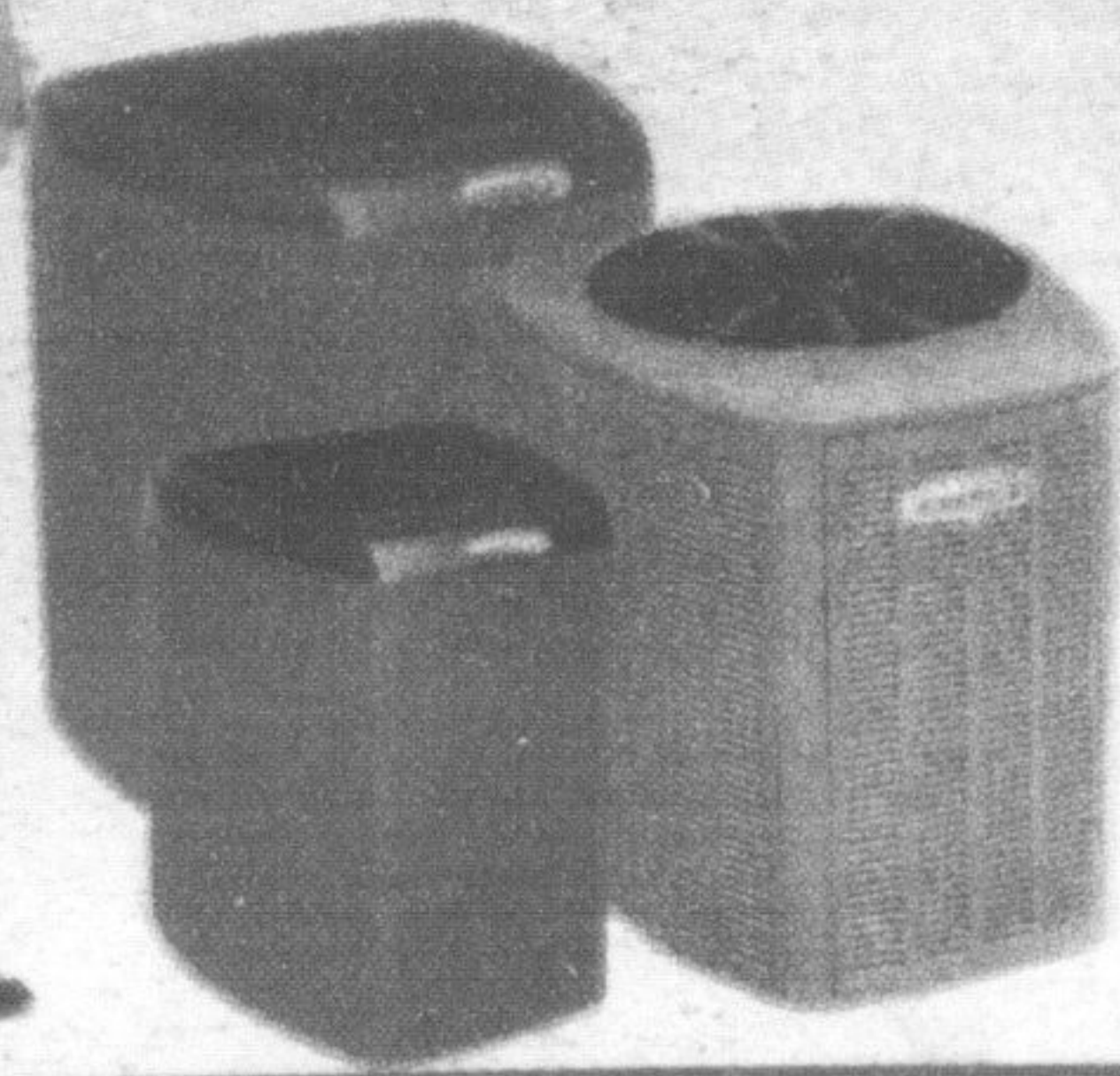
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7	HILLCREST	15	5	9	1	11
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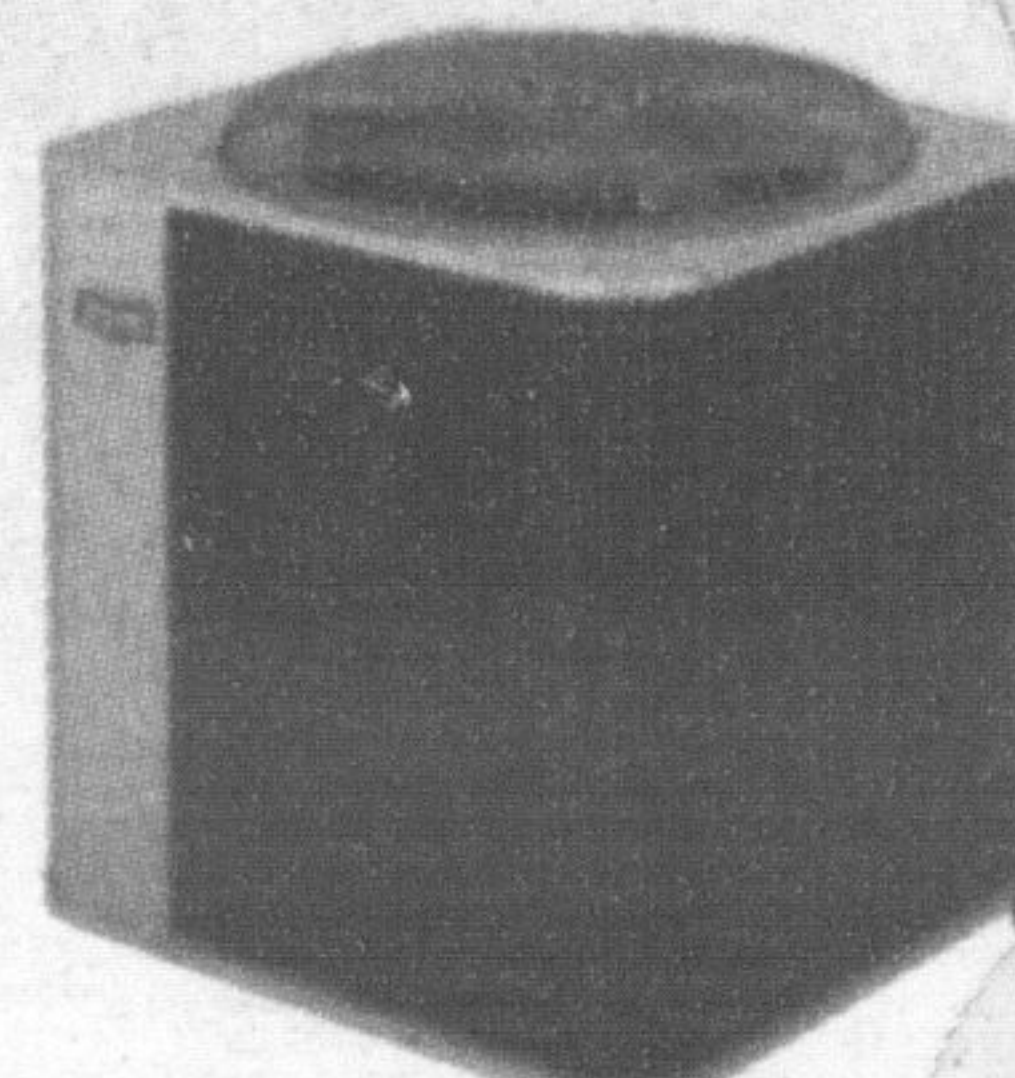
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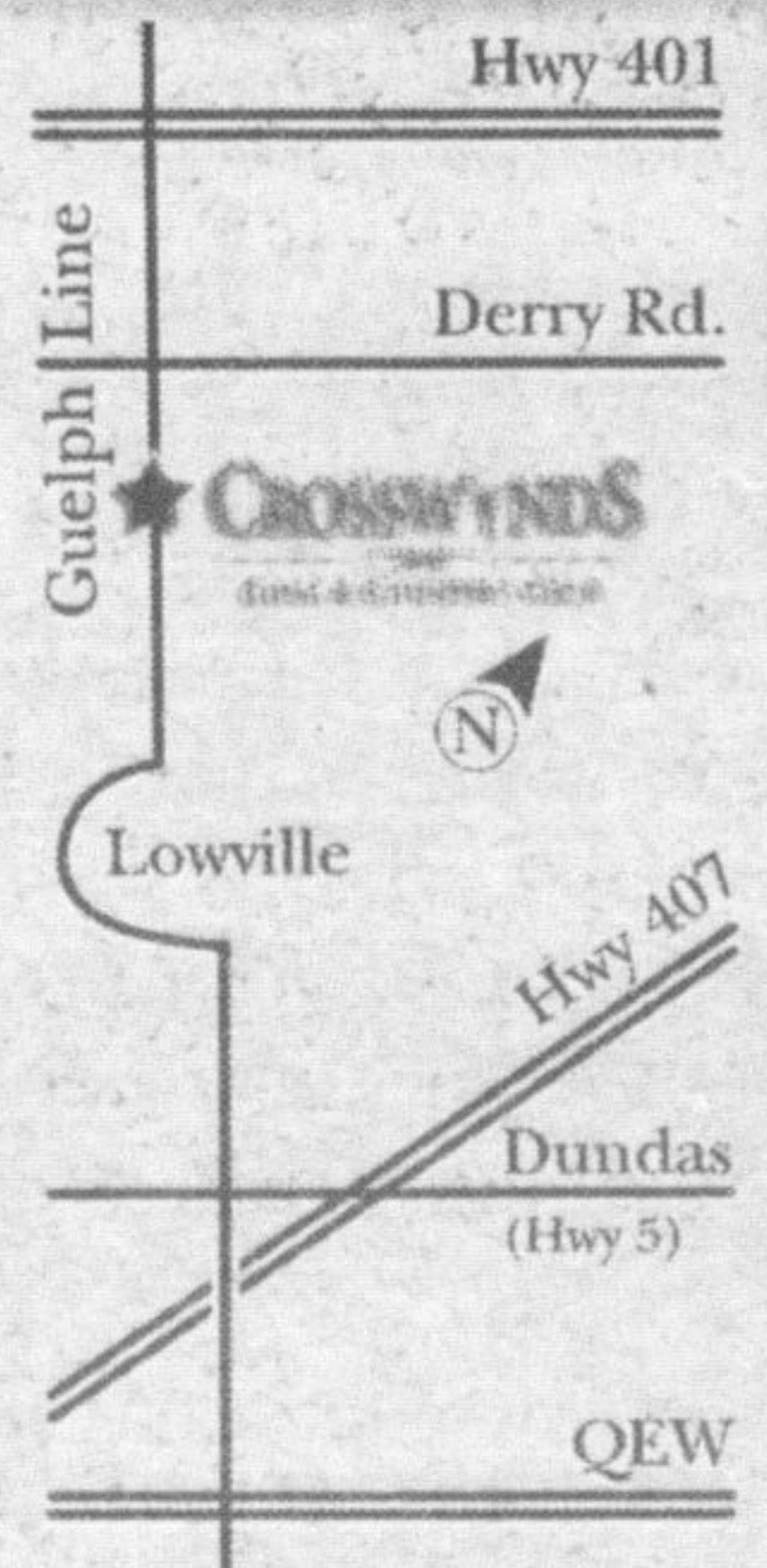
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