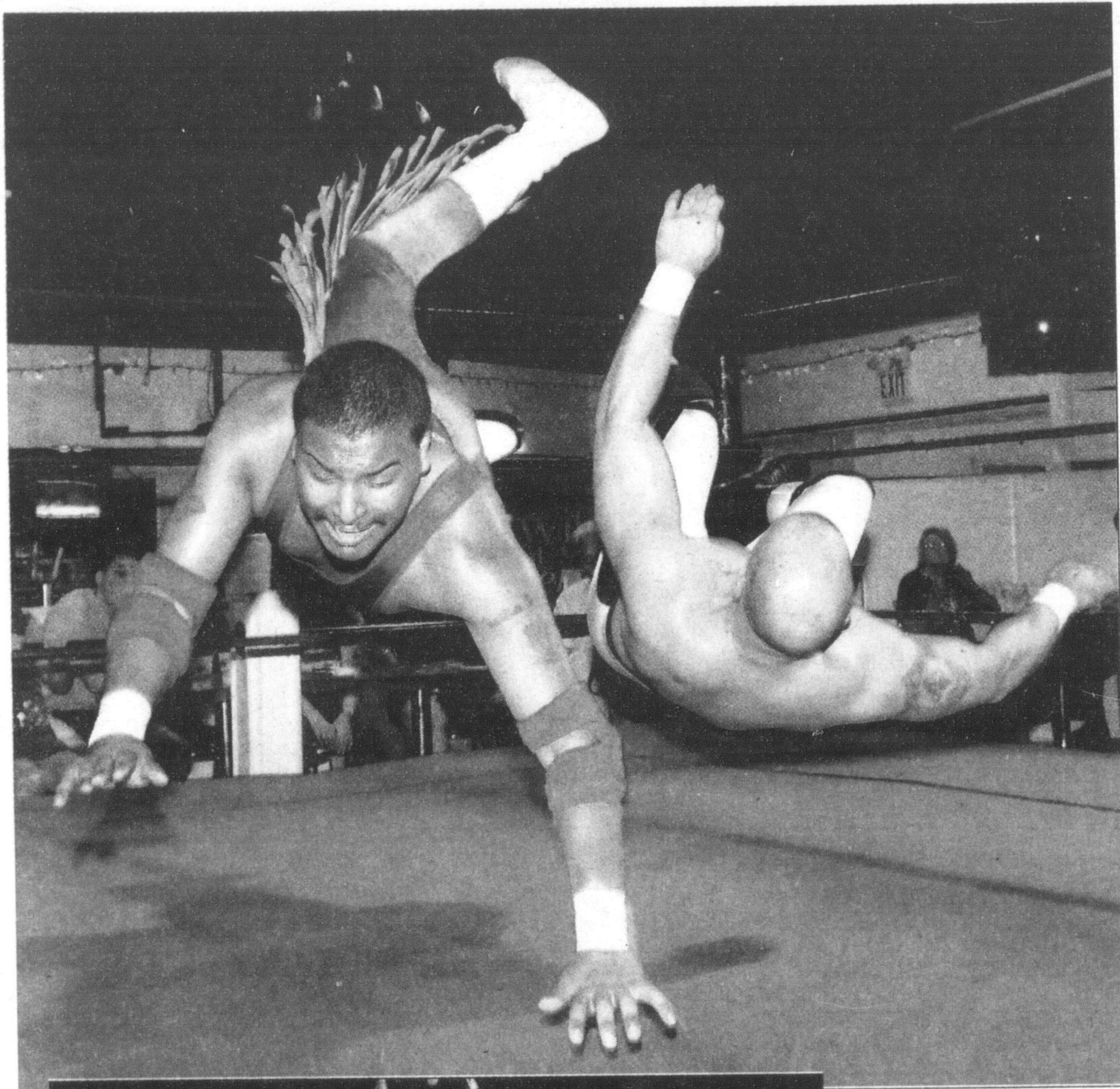


SPORTS

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Moffat pins down Cadet Pan-Am silver

By Steve LeBlanc
CANADIAN CHAMPION STAFF

Momentary heartbreak, overall satisfaction. That pretty much encapsulates Duncan Moffat's recent trip to El Salvador, where he delivered Milton's best-ever finish as part of the national wrestling program.

In another building block performance, considered one of the finest of his career, the 16-year-old Miltonian placed second at the Cadet Pan-Am Championships.

The 58-kilogram grappler can be excused for looking upon his silver medal with initial disappointment, however. After all, stating that he came close to gold would be a major understatement.

Up against a defensively-stellar Peruvian opponent in the final, Moffat dropped the opening round via a tie-breaking clinch, despite getting the coin-toss advantage. From there he was eclipsed 1-0, surrendering the lone point with just 10 seconds remaining on a counter.

"Those type of losses don't get any easier to swallow. Yeah at first I was kind of bitter," recalled the local grappler, who's had a number of narrow championship defeats over the past couple of years — including at OFSAA. "He (Peruvian) was so strong on defence that anytime I made a move, he'd step back and I'd end-up burning energy. I just couldn't get in on him."

But an impressive all-around showing in his first appearance on the national team would soon overshadow that stinging conclusion.

Part of a highly-accomplished wrestling family, Moffat used his trade-

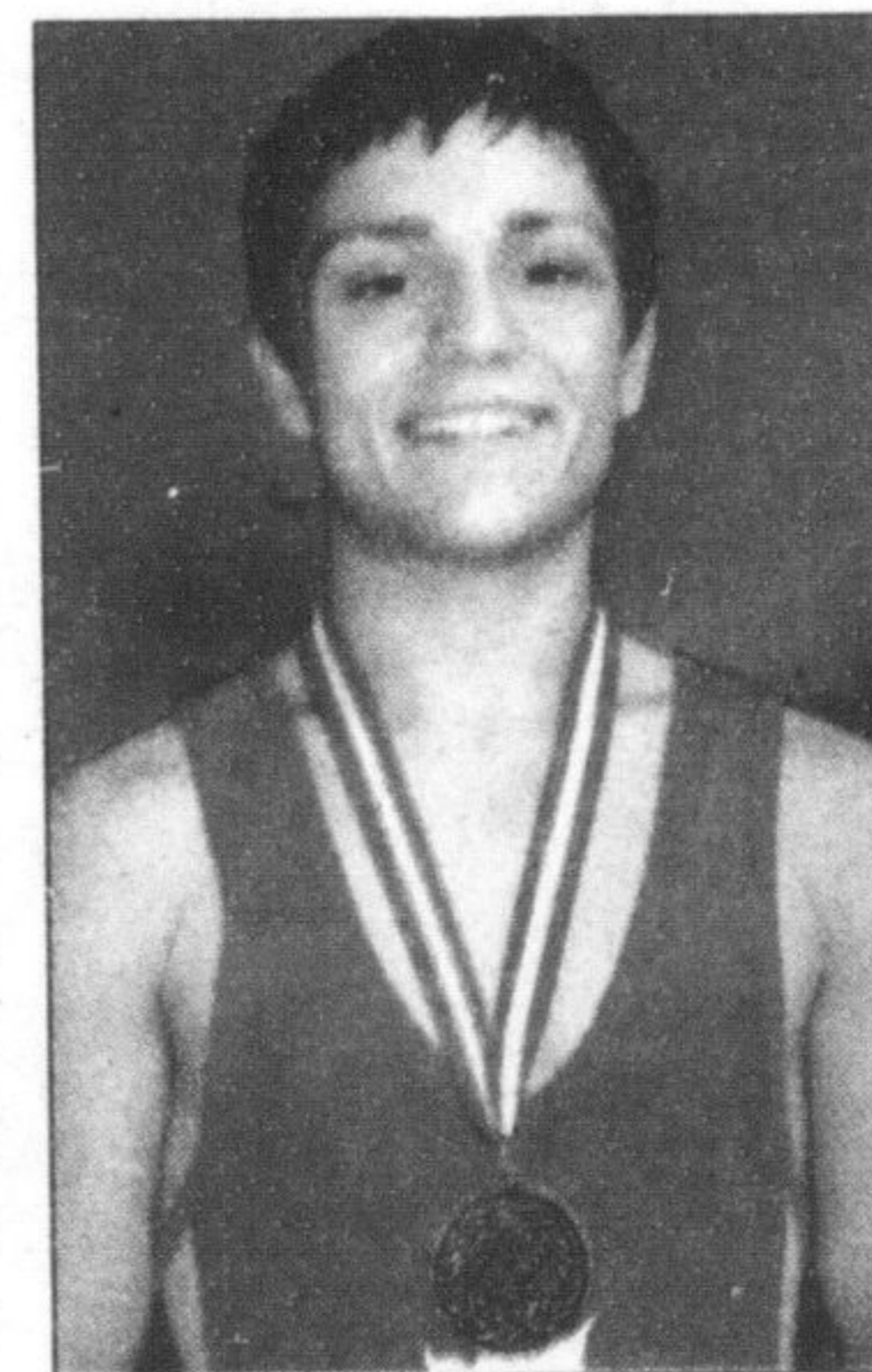
mark strong defence and a couple of well-executed firemans to turn back his first two opponents.

While coming out a bit tentative, he kicked off the day with a 2-1, 6-0 decision over a cadet from Honduras — scoring late in the first round before dominating the second.

He'd then advance to the final with an opening-round pin-fall victory against an Argentinian foe.

"My defence was pretty strong and I'd say it was one of my best performances ever," noted the silver medalist, who helped Canada's 17-member contingent to overall gold.

Added national cadet coach and fellow Miltonian Dave Mottram, "Duncan really wrestled well and held his own in the final. His technique's improving and if he keeps it up he's got more success ahead of him."



SILVER LINING: Duncan Moffat proudly displays his Cadet Pan-Am silver medal.

Securing Pan-Am hardware wasn't exactly a shock after Moffat's exceptional effort just one week earlier at the Canada Cup. Enjoying home-floor advantage of sorts — at the nearby University of Guelph — he reached the top of the podium with a 4-0 run.

Making his latest title win all the more rewarding was the fact that he got payback on three adversaries who'd beaten him in high-stakes competition over the past year — including Newtonbrook's Cruz Manning, who'd edged him out of OFSAA gold.

"That definitely gave me a lot of confidence for El Salvador," he said. "It got me past a hump and I went in (to Cadet Pan-Ams) on a high."

Moffat hopes to add another international medal in early October, when he heads to Pune, India for the Youth Commonwealth Games.



ARE YOU READY TO RUMBLE?:

Above, Alex Balboa (left) hits Ruffi Silverstein with a spinning heel kick during an independent wrestling event at Hardball Café Sunday afternoon. Silverstein won the match to retain his Pure Wrestling title. At left, Easy E puts Reggie 'Big Ticket' Marley in a headlock. Marley went on to win. The show went ahead despite some booking problems, which caused drama outside the ring as well as in it.

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