

Merchants keep on winning edging St. Mike's, Georgetown

By **STEVE LeBLANC**
Special to the Champion

One was a good tune-up for the playoffs, the other a lack-lustre effort at best, but for the Milton Merchants, both weekend contests ended like most games have ended recently — in victory.

With the playoffs just around the corner, the Merchants picked up win numbers 24 and 25

with a 6-3 decision over the St. Michael's Buzzers Friday at Memorial arena, and a 3-1 victory in Georgetown Saturday against the last-place Raiders.

However, while the local Junior A contingent continues to win, so do the Mississauga Chargers. The two teams are battling for third place overall in the Provincial Junior A West Conference with just two weeks left in the regular season.

Milton 6, St. Mike's 3

The Merchants hold a one-point lead in the race right now, but the Chargers have a game in hand. The Chargers hold a 2-1-1 edge in their season-long series, but the Merchants have home-ice advantage for the teams' final confrontation this Friday. The winner will likely finish third for the season.

In a big pre-playoff test Friday night, the Merchants rebounded from a 3-2 loss the previous Sunday in Toronto and claimed their third win over St. Michael's this season.

With much more intensity compared with the previous weekend and a stronger defensive showing to boot, Milton did a great job protecting a one-goal lead through the final frame and managed to add a little insurance in the last three

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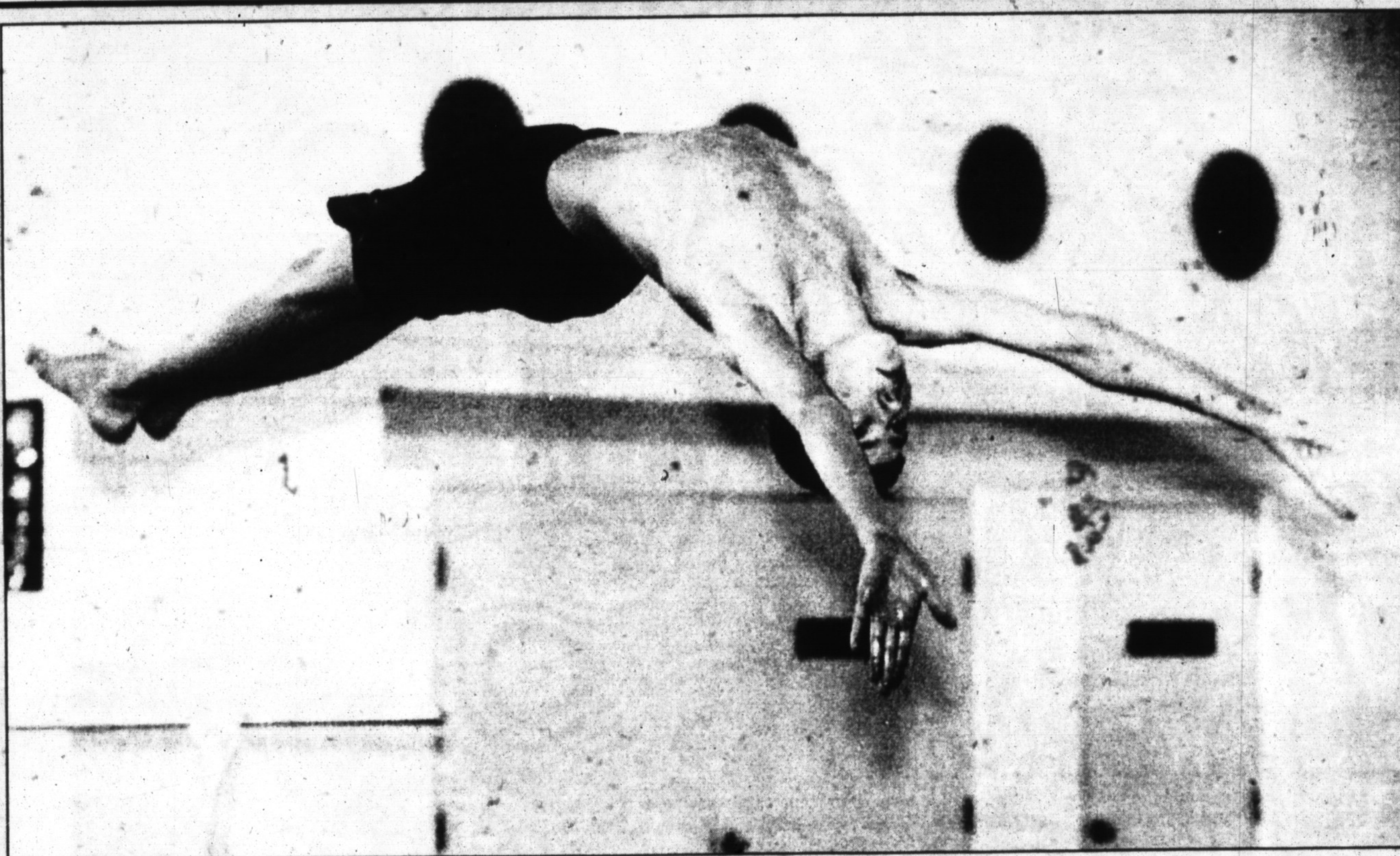


Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Rob Taylor demonstrates a textbook layout dive off the one metre springboard. He is one of several enthusiastic members of Milton's Learn to Dive program, taught year-round at the Milton Leisure Centre.

Diving at Milton Leisure Centre

Young and old take a dive — just for the fun of it

By **STEVE LeBLANC**
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Ever since the town opened its spacious, state-of-the-art leisure centre, swimming has become a popular recreational pastime for hundreds of Milton residents.

But for a smaller, yet equally spirited bunch, the fun begins before they even hit the water.

They're part of Learn to Dive, an on-going, year-round program designed to teach youngsters and adults alike the finer points of the sport of diving.

The program, currently in its nine-week winter session, is held Wednesday evenings from 7 to 9 p.m. and Sunday afternoons from 3 to 5 p.m. Each nine-week session costs \$58.

Learn to Dive currently boasts an enrollment

of 23 students divided into three separate classes and is taught by qualified instructors like Mary Ann Cormack.

"I started the program here when the leisure centre first opened and have been teaching the sport for a total of eight years now," said Cormack. "Learn to Dive is a standard program taught across Canada."

Along with teaching the Wednesday evening classes and overseeing the entire program, Cormack is also a regional and provincial diving judge. The sport runs in her family, as 22-year-old daughter Bobbie Ann MacPherson is a member of the Canadian National Diving Team. "She's why I got into the sport in the first place."

Cormack, and fellow instructors Cam Turner, Christie Roselle, Murray Henderson

and Tim Franklin, now instruct local enthusiasts on all the ins and outs of diving — everything from proper techniques for take-off to arm and leg position for entry.

"There are a lot of techniques involved in diving that many people don't know about. Proper techniques and safety are our main concerns," Cormack said.

The program is broken into two components, Levels 1 and 2.

Level 1 includes instructions in such areas as front jump, layout tuck and pipe position, back jump, one-step hurdles, front jump and front dive and front dive fall-in. Level 2, only admissible for Level 1 graduates, features more intense training including a back-dive layout, three-step hurdle and front dive pike.

Along the way, students can compete at Tier

3 diving meets throughout the season. Some promising young divers that are part of Milton's Learn to Dive program include 15-year-old Virginia Young and teenage brothers Rob and Chris Taylor, who have just finished their first full-year of sessions.

So what attracts students to Learn to Dive classes? "I think it's the aerial aspect of the sport. A lot of people who enjoy gymnastics and/or skiing would be drawn to diving. They like flying through the air," said Cormack.

Her youngest student in the current winter session, seven-year-old Nathan Lanstra agrees. "It's fun, I really like jumping in the air and into the water. My favourite is the front dive but I don't like the back dive so much."

Along with teaching proper techniques,

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