



SPORTS

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

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High school volleyball teams set for playoffs

By **STEVE LeBLANC**
Special to the Champion

Milton District and E.C. Drury girls volleyball teams are about to put the finishing touches on big regular season campaigns and should provide the community with strong representation when the Halton League playoffs get rolling next week.

In fact, with their current standings in the region's Richardson Division, the two local squads may well receive early byes and not even have to start until round two.

Currently sitting in first place are the Milton District juniors led by long-time volleyball coach Ulana Price. The Mustangs are now 7-2.

They wrap up regular season play Monday at E.C. Drury. The crew has already locked up a first-round bye and will have home-court advantage for the division semi-finals Monday, Feb. 19.

Led by captain Chrystal Johnston, the team is comprised almost entirely of first-year players from last season's Halton championship midget squad. Cindy Howard is the only veteran. Howard and Johnston join Carrie Johnston, Chrystal's sister, as well as Laura Slimmon, Laura Smith and Yvonne Robinson as the starting six.

Making up the rest of the roster are Janna Schouten, Megan Anderson, Shannon Ferris, Amber Block,

Carrie Meltzer, Kari Beal, Elly-Jo Dolan, Candice Wigglesworth and Shauna Hasselfeldt.

"This team has the ability to go all the way to the finals," said Price, who listed serving, blocking and overall offense as the team's key strengths.

In order to reach the finals, she added, the team will have to continue playing as a unit and step things up on defense.

Defense is one thing E.C. Drury coach Todd Thomson said he isn't worried about as he leads his seniors into playoff action.

The Spartans also hold a 7-2 record and are second. If successful in holding onto their top two position, they will also receive a bye in next week's preliminary round.

"They're a scrappy team, able to dig out a lot of big hits by their opposition," said Thomson, a first-year volleyball coach at Drury. He is assisted by Brett Lewis.

His starting six include co-captains Jayne Currie and Marfa Fredriksson, Kelly Ivens, Kim Friedrich, Wendy Nielsen and Kelly Pierson. Filling out the squad are Shannon Duke, Jennifer Eidt, Corinn Jeffery, Tiffany Kishita, Erin Lawrence, Rebecca Mills, Stephanie Taylor and Leslie Wells.

"I'd like to see the girls make it a couple of rounds into the playoffs but, we'll just have to wait and see," added Thomson.

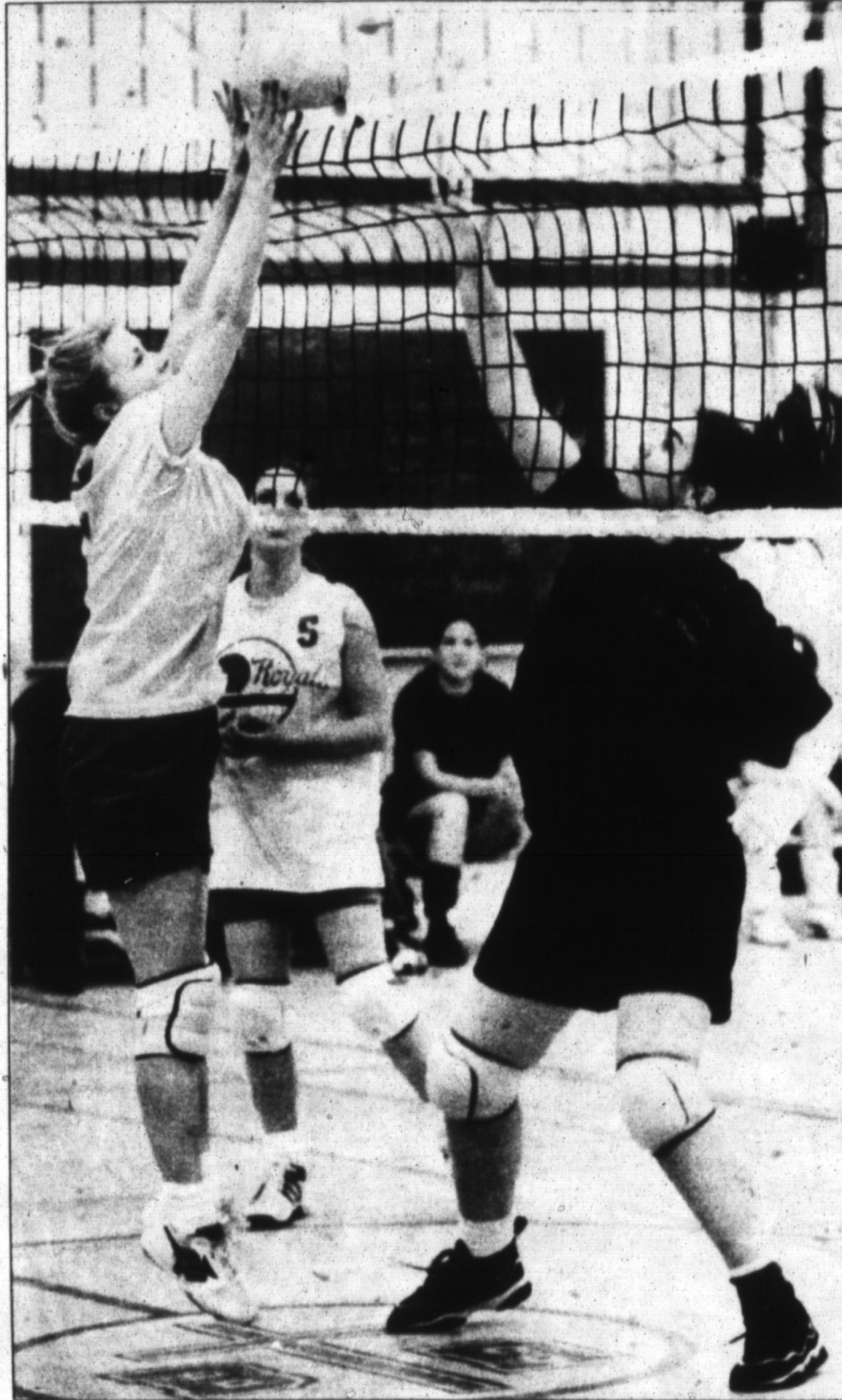


Photo by GRAHAM PAINE

Bishop Reding's Mariana Hrkac (right) looks to put one past a Nelson defender during senior girls volleyball action in Milton Monday afternoon. Despite home-court advantage, the senior Royals lost the match 2-1 with scores of 12-15, 15-10 and 8-15.

Drury wrestlers shine at junior championships at St. Catharines

E.C. Drury's wrestling team saw gold, silver and bronze last weekend after a quartet of locals grappled their way to medals at the Ontario Cadet and Junior Championships at Brock University in St. Catharines.

Three of the four medals were won during Saturday's under-17 Cadet competition. Drury wrestlers combined with a number of Guelph area schools under the banner of the Guelph Wrestling Club and placed second overall in team rankings behind the Oshawa Wrestling Club.

Leading the way for the Spartans in Cadet competition was Blair Beaulieu, who captured his first

provincial title with an undefeated record in the 115-pound weight class. In convincing fashion, he scored a 7-1 victory over Sturgeon Falls' Alan Wong in the finals to avenge a loss to his northern Ontario opponent just two weeks before.

Rookie Kevin Heffron captured the silver medal in the 97-pound class. A bantam silver medallist, he has now won two consecutive provincial medals.

Rounding out the medal parade in the Cadet division was bronze winner Brad Madden, who follows in the footsteps of brother Jamie. Jamie medaled at the provincials in the mid-1980s. Brad picked up his

medal in the 158-pound class.

Scoring a fourth place finish was John McCart.

The following day's Junior competition was highlighted by Chris Denich taking his second Ontario title with a perfect 5-0 showing, despite nursing an injured arm. He joins Thomas Jensen and Victor Sprenger as Milton's only Ontario Junior champions.

Also reaching the final round in the Junior division were Chris Mastro, Grant Heffron and John MacKinnon.

All four Drury medal winners have now qualified to join the Ontario team at April's National Championships in Saskatchewan.

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