

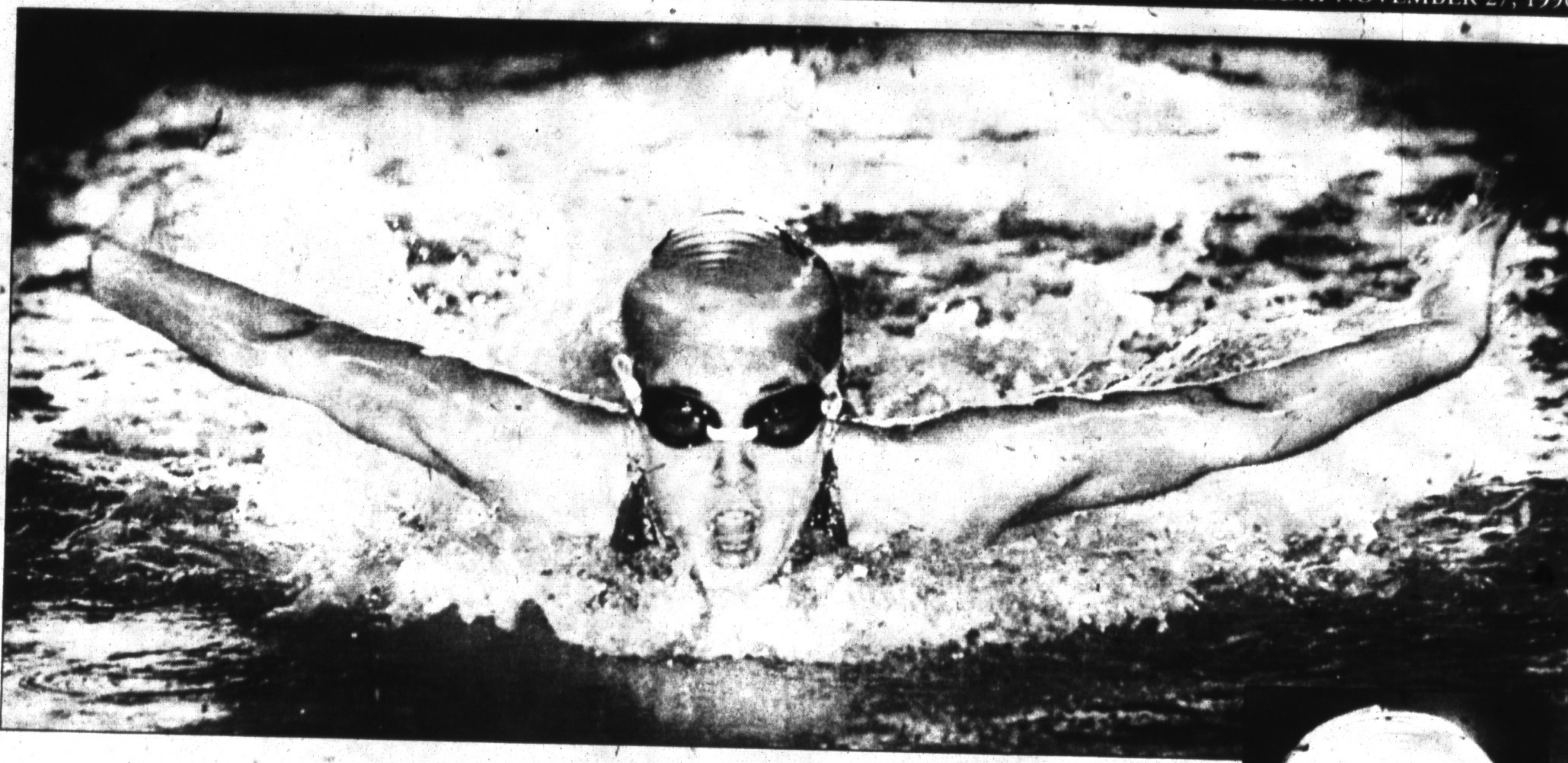


SPORTS

THE CANADIAN CHAMPION

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Could be silver lining for bantams

The major bantam AA Winterhawks couldn't quite claim the gold at the recent Clarington Silver Stick Qualifying Tournament in Bowmanville, although their efforts may still hold a silver lining.

The Lions Club-sponsored team had managed to draw even with Markham in the second period of the tournament finals, but relinquished a third-period goal and fell 3-2. While only the winner of each qualifying tournament earns an automatic berth into the famed Silver Stick Tournament, to be played in Port Huron in January, a few of the runner-ups will be selected to compete as well. Milton came up on the other side of a 3-2 decision in the semifinals. They edged Peterborough, despite being out-shot 34-17.

In round-robin play, the 'Hawks bested Ajax and host Bowmanville and lost to Oshawa.

Daniel Bonham led Milton's offensive charge with four goals and four assists while Paul Pento notched five goals and one helper. Chris Bramwell and Kevin Heffron tallied three times and added four assists each.

Scoring two each were Jason Ford and Jon Sprenger, who also posted three assists as did Chad Merritt. He and Jeremy Robert turned in strong defensive efforts while Jamie Funnell and Trevor Saliba shared the wins and losses in net.

Brian Kerwin contributed with a goal, and Bryan Gent, Michael Leishman and David McFarlane recorded two assists a piece.

Making waves

Stephanie Slekens, 12, churns up the water in the girls 11-12 100 metre butterfly event at the Milton Marlins Swim Team Fall Invitational Meet, Sunday at the Leisure Centre. Look for results in Friday's paper.

Photos by
Graham Paine



Haydar – He's a little big man for Merchants

Scores OT winner to lead Milton over Mississauga 7-6

By STEVE LeBLANC
Special to The Champion

He may be known as "Mini" to teammates and friends, but Merchant rookie Darren Haydar stood 10 feet tall Friday at Memorial Arena when he fired the overtime winner past Mississauga goalie Bryan Pandovski for a 7-6 victory.

Now locked in a first-place tie with Travis Riffin in the team scoring race, "Mini" Haydar answered the call of opportunity around the 90 second mark of the extra frame. He began by undressing the Chargers' last remaining defender and ended with a top-shelf wrist shot that beat Pandovski on the glove side.

The local winger's efforts, which included a first period powerplay tally, preserved his team's undefeated home record, now at 10-0, and essentially kept them atop the West Conference this weekend.

While Milton skipper Marty Williamson cited big efforts from his forwards Friday night, his club has taken a significant step back defensively of

late, which is allowing teams to keep the final count much closer.

The Merchants suffered their fourth loss of the year Thursday in Brampton, with a 6-4 decision to the Capitals despite outshooting them 30-20. They managed a 5-4 triumph in Vaughan Sunday, but needed a big third period and late game winner by sniper Matt Van Arkel to beat the inferior Vipers.

Milton's record stood at 18-4-1 prior to last night's home game with Burlington.

Where "Mini" Haydar was the hero Friday, Van Arkel was the star with a pair of second-period markers and another late in the third.

Netminder John Lubera was shaky for much of the evening, allowing a couple of easy goals early in the first and two more in the final minute of the third that forced overtime. A lack of defensive assistance by Shawn Smith and Jeff McArthur didn't help matters.

Also scoring for the home side were Travis Riffin and Troy Walczak.

Fellow goalie Denver England was equally shaky the previous night in Brampton, allowing the Caps. to take 2-1 and 3-2 period leads and then pad their advantage with goals on their first two third period shots. Lubera got the call for the final 15 minutes of play and allowed one more at 16:37.

Captain Steve Clarke tallied twice, once while shorthanded, while Van Arkel and Steve French

contributed with singles. "Mini" Haydar set up their first and final goals. Earning the win over Milton with 30 saves was Caps netminder Jaime Vanek.

England suffered a second-period lapse Sunday with three goals against, but was strong overall in scoring his fifth win in a Merchant jersey. He allowed just one goal in the first and stoned the Vipers in the third.

Van Arkel's game-winner came with just 90 seconds remaining while Randy Stolec drew Milton even six minutes earlier. Clarke assisted on the winner, while French and "Mini" Haydar set up the equalizer. Supporting cast member Rich Williams put Milton on the scoreboard with his second tally this season. Riffin and Walczak once again counted singles.

Merchant notes: Sophomore winger Rich Reid was given his release early last week. While Milton's top special teams man last season, the 19-year-old had clearly lost his desire to play junior hockey. He is reported to have a baseball scholarship waiting in the wings.... The Merchants will be looking to defend their Newmarket Tournament title in just one month's time when they return for the holiday showcase, on December 27 to 30.... The Merchants play the home-half of their interlocking series with East Conference Collingwood Friday.



Darren "Mini" Haydar