

Dedication paying off with brand new building

Dedication is nice and a lot of people talk about it. But tangible evidence of dedication is rare and it was nice to see some evidence Saturday as Milton Springers gymnastic club officially unveiled a new facility on Alliance Road.

The tangible evidence of dedication was everywhere, from the large crowd through to the updated equipment. But perhaps the point that spoke most eloquently for Springers' determination was the floor. In gymnastics, a floor is a special thing, designed to yield and bounce as the athletes go through their movements. And the floor covering a large part of the new 6,000 square-foot facility was built by Springer volunteer parents to provide that buoyancy.

They did it by installing 3,000 automobile valve springs under the panelling. By hand.

"We must have worn out every Phillips screwdriver in Milton," one volunteer joked.

Federal Minister of Sports and Amateur Fitness Otto Jelinek cut the ribbon to formally inaugurate the new facility, and Milton mayor Gord Krantz, Parks and

Recreation director Larry Arbie and regional councillor Brad Clements attended the ceremony. The town donates some money to the Springer club, at present the only government level to give any.

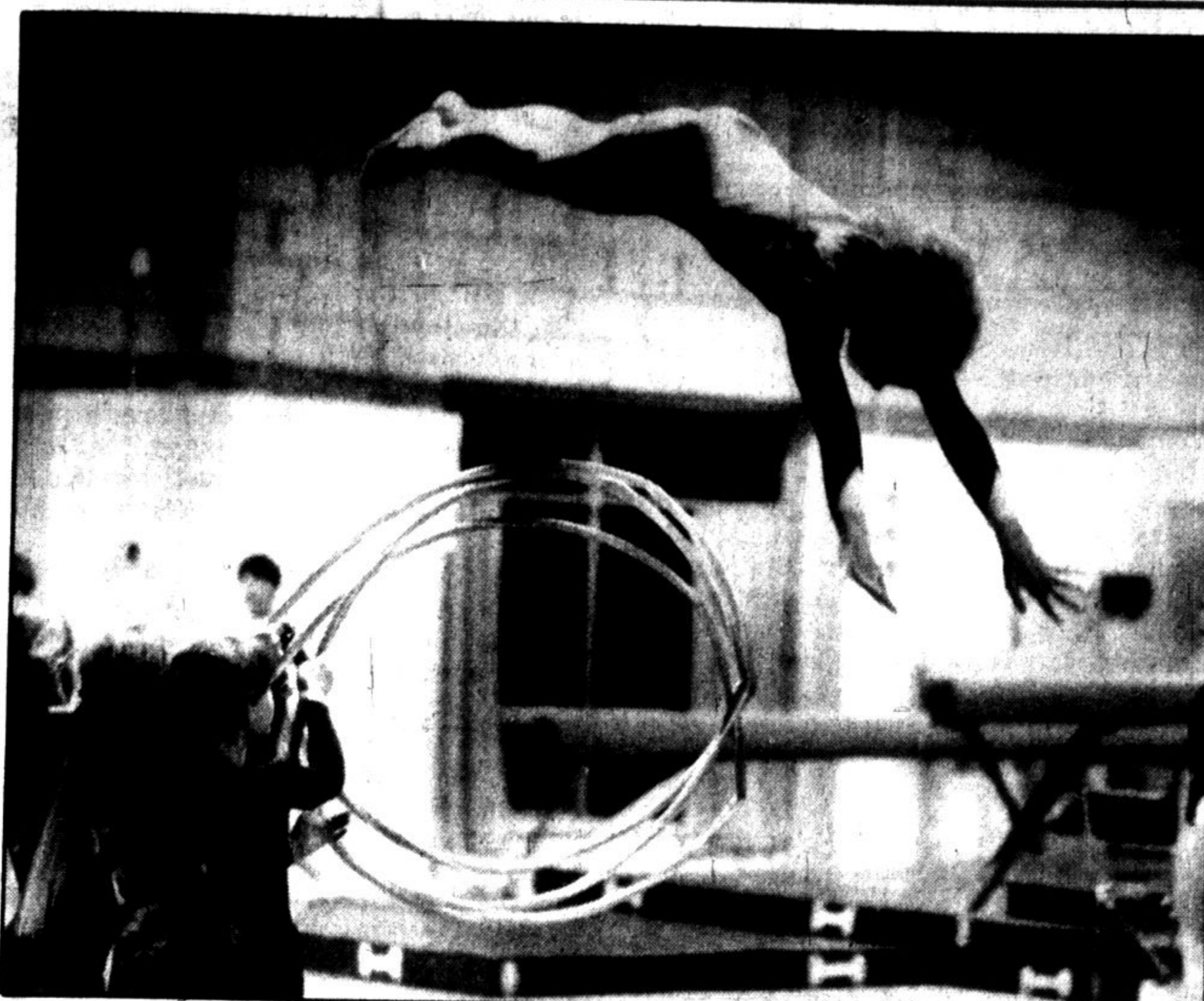
Springer president Carolyn Keyworth pointed out some of the advantages of the new facility.

"We've doubled our square footage," she said, "and as a whole the building is much safer. In our old building (the Main street firehall) the concrete floor was giving the children stress fractures, and we didn't have the height we needed for the new moves now being seen in international competition."

Springers have done well in provincial level competition. Last year they had 10 entrants at that level and they earned awards, with Joanne Keyworth capping it by winning a silver medal.

"But we aren't really oriented towards competition," said Springer coach Janet Campbell.

"Our goal is to turn children into responsible and self-disciplined individuals and in that we are successful."



Members of Milton Springers are going head over heels in celebrating the official opening of their new facility on Alliance Rd. The new facility went into service in September but was officially opened Saturday by federal sports minister and Halton MP Otto Jelinek.

MHL highlights

Battling Bulls make history with 1st win

By ROB KELLY

West End Meat Market Bulls made Milton Hockey League history Sunday night by winning their first game ever in the league. It took 27 tries before they found the formula for success.

Bulls defeated Superchoice Country Market 4-2 in front of a small but amazed crowd of fans and other league players, and afterward it was as if they had won the Super Bowl.

Bulls dominated throughout the contest and fended off Superchoice's later charges as the incredulous losers struggled in the vain attempt not to become the first team in the league's history to lose to Bulls.

As the final seconds of the game ticked away players from other teams lined the rink counting off the seconds aloud while Bulls held on to win.

"Bulls' players stood up on their bench and crowded, rubbing salt into the Superchoice wound: 'Can't even beat the Bulls,' they taunted before adjourning to their dressing room for a noisy celebration. 'We're number one,' they chanted, totally inaccurately but enthusiastically.

No illusions

Bulls' coach Dale Harnden was enthusiastic but not under any false impressions after the win. He basked in the rare tonic the victory had provided and he heaped praise on his players, but didn't overdo it.

"We're the underdogs, and it's going to take us a couple of years, but we're going to build a team up," Harnden vowed. And he said he knew his team was due for a win.

"We're usually out because of the third period. We've come into the third winning a lot of times, but then we've blown it. We've got twice as good a team as last year but it's going to take a while."

Bulls were in command throughout the game and appeared to gain momentum throughout as the possibility of victory evolved into reality. Ed Gaeton paced the winners with two goals and netminder Gerry Dean came up with key saves to give his club an insurance policy.

Bulls opened the game with two quick goals and Superchoice never really recovered. The winners' offence looked sharp on both markers as they set up good passing plays in the attacking zone to earn both early goals.

Gaeton cashed the first marker at 7:45 of the first period following a three-way passing play. Dave Harnden, the former Jr. B luminary, and Brad Finn assisted.

Forty seconds later, Gaeton did it again with a backhand as Bulls continued to move the puck well in the opposing zone. Again Harnden assisted.

Superchoice tried for a comeback late in the first period with several good offensive thrusts but were denied. As the period wound down the squad piled into the Bulls' slot like a rush-hour crowd coming off the subway but Dean smothered the scoring drives.

Fencers lose

Superchoice got one back in the second when Jamie Hume drove down the middle and backhanded one in on the short side. Tom Chuchmach assisted.

Finn gave Bulls a two-goal cushion midway through the third period when he fired a long hard slapshot into the Superchoice net. Two minutes later Superchoice got one back when Paul Church converted Hume's deflection. Superchoice pulled their goalie near the end of the game and Bill Goencz popped one in the empty net with seconds remaining. Doug Strath assisted.

Sandstone Transport handed league-leading Straight Line Fence a setback Sunday night when they doubled Straight Line 6-3. The win gives Sandstone four victories and puts them within striking distance of the league leaders Straight Line and Century 21.

Sandstone played a wide-open, free-wheeling type of hockey, gambling on taking the game to Straight Line. Sandstone coach Derek Griffiths said he felt he could exploit Straight Line shortcomings.

"We were breaking out real good and I think their defence is kind of weak," Griffiths said. "But they're very strong offensively. As long as we can keep our defence back and stop them from breaking out, we'll win."

Straight Line coach Al Jones was philosophical after the loss.

"I'm looking forward to playing them when we're at full strength," he said. "When they get everybody out and we get everybody out it should be good. We tied them (2-2) before. But tonight we got tired in the third period and we ran into some penalties."

Sandstone scored two power-play goals. They notched single goals in the first and second periods and then added four more in the final frame. Straight Line led 2-1 going into the final frame.

Hawks hold on

Ralph Serafini and Terry Ellwood scored for Straight Line in the first and Jim Newman got one back for Sandstone.

Eric Ellison, one of Fencers' big offensive guns, snuck one in the corner from around the net in the second frame. Richard Shannon replied later on a power play after consistent Sandstone pressure.

It was all Sandstone in the third period with four shooters sharing four goals. Mike Monahan tallied with a wrist shot, Joe Gaeton capitalized on a sharp passing play with assists to Dave Arbie and Ivo Zulfian. Arbie scored on a power play and Ron Armstrong notched an empty-net goal.

Century 21 Golden Hawks held on to edge Haggart Crane 5-4 in the other game. Hawks' coach Dave Dermo gave an audible sigh of relief when the final buzzer sounded. His team fended off the hard-charging Crane squad on heart more than stamina as the game drew to a close.

"That was tough to do with that few players," Dermo admitted. He was short five key men.

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He shoots, he scores

Stefan Mangotich had nothing but wide open space in front of him and he made good use of it. Mangotich scored the Pee Wee A rep's only goal as Ancaster shaded them 2-1 Sunday in

Milton. It was a tough weekend for Milton as they lost both their games. Story pg. B5.

Barrie gets revenge...

Steamers smoked in two losses

By ROB KELLY

Milton Steamers slumped badly last week and their opponents jumped at the chance to pound the local Jr. B team. Steamers turned in tepid performance Thursday night in Barrie and were no better (probably worse) in front of the hometown crowd Friday when they generously presented a mediocre Vaughan team with a rare and convincing win.

Barrie clobbered Steamers 9-3 and Vaughan, which one Steamer official called "a Junior C team", retired Milton on the short side of a 7-4 score.

Friday night Vaughan coach Joe Lanzillotta was elated.

"This was definitely a pleasant surprise," he understated. "All I wanted out of this game was one point (a tie)."

Barrie coach Mike McCann was undoubtedly happy to settle a score with Milton. In the previous meeting, Steamers had dominated Barrie 9-4.

After Thursday's road trip debacle Milton coach Gary Hudson was upset, but not too upset.

"I knew something like this was going to happen," he said. "We'd been winning lately because of individual performances, not team efforts."

At that time he tended to view the game as an isolated incident. He was optimistic about Friday. "Come out tomorrow and we'll show you something."

What they showed was more of the same; if Thursday night illustrated the symptoms, Friday was the sickness in full stride. It was a series of blown opportunities characterized by offensive units that were lines in name only. The wingers and centres rarely co-operated on anything and consequently rarely accomplished anything.

After Friday's loss, Hudson's attitude hardened. Possessing a good hockey mind, he is practical and, in general, nobody's

fool. He sat in the club's office and intimated that if things didn't change quickly he would change them. Spelled out to the degree that he was willing to elaborate, that meant that soon he will go with his best players most of the time while everybody else can cool their skates on the bench for as long as it takes.

Hudson's options are somewhat limited

beyond that. Milton's import roster is set for the year and other changes will largely come through transfers to and from Milton minor hockey.

Given those restrictions, Hudson and his crew are largely stuck with one and other. At the moment this may seem bad for Hudson but it will undoubtedly be worse for his young charges. They are, by all

reports, a much better hockey club than they have cared to demonstrate last week. That means that they are not trying hard enough. It also means that until they start to improve, the practices Hudson runs will no doubt be as pleasant as a vacation in Afghanistan.

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Atoms and Midgets on to finals

Silver Stick

Steve Scannell gave McCuaig Ins. major midget Comets a goal when they needed it most to earn the team a berth in the International Silver Stick tournament.

In the regional playoff final, on the weekend in Owen Sound, Milton faced hometown Owen Sound for the tournament ticket, and the Comets earned it the hard way, in overtime.

It was the second overtime period and the team captain was on a roll, having scored twice already. But Comets were unable to dominate Owen Sound. They had led the game three times, but each time Owen Sound had battled back.

But Scannell's shot insured Milton of a place in the big show in Sarnia during February.

Mike Del Papa scored Milton's other goal. Geoff Pollen assisted on Scannell's winner. Tim Balckadar assisted on Scannell's other goals.

Comets eliminated Pickering and Preston en route to the final. They beat Pickering 5-1 but Preston was tougher and Milton had to stage a dramatic rally in order to win.

With four minutes remaining in the game Comets were trailing 3-1 but they notched three goals in 90 seconds to shade Preston 4-3.

Del Papa was the big gun in the rally, scoring twice and setting up Mike Doiron for another goal. Blackadar earned the other goal.

Both Lee Johnson and Kevin Gervais had pairs of goals against Pickering. Del Papa added a goal and two assists.

In league play, Comets moved back into first place by doubling Orangeville 8-4. Scannell had another hat trick in that contest. Chris Turner and Johnson had pairs and Del Papa added the other goal. Ed Morgan got two assists.

Comets are scheduled for a Christmas-week workout by participating in the Hespeler Little Olympics tournament.

Legion starts slowly then finds footing

Milton Legion major atoms started slowly in regional Silver Stick playoffs on the weekend, but they found their footing and forged to the final, edging Aurora 2-1 in overtime.

The big win plants Milton in the Sarnia

Silver Stick final to be held mid-February. Milton was looking for the comeback trial in the third period of the final game. Aurora led 1-0 until 6:24 remaining of the third period. Then Jamie Janjevich tied the score, with Jim O'Driscoll and Mike McPhail combining on the set-up.

Janjevich banged in the winner too, 41 seconds into overtime with McPhail and Ian Davidson assisting.

Against Toronto Aeros in an earlier game, Milton plugged two goals in the first two periods and then turned on the jets for three more in the final frame.

Davidson bagged two to spearhead the Legion offence. Dan Ewing, Jacques Maltais and Janjevich scored the other goals. McPhail, Janjevich and Morrison notched two assists apiece. Mark Elkins added one.

In their first tournament game, against host Owen Sound, Legionnaires battled to a 2-2 tie. Robert Dero and William Giles scored for Milton.

In recent league action Milton managed to squeak out a 1-0 win over Flamboro. Milton looked flat following the championship battle in the Valleytown tournament (a 2-1 loss to host team Dundas). Legionnaires got on track in the third frame when Ewing scored to break the deadlock. Bill Gillies and Giles assisted.