

Soccer school gets rebranding

New name, same old focus.

While always committed to providing supplemental skill to Milton's youth, Omar Jbaihi says the original name for his soccer school — Mustangs Futbol Academy — gave some parents a different idea of what was in store.

"I guess when a lot of people heard the word academy the pretense was that there would be teams formed rather than being a school strictly for supplemental skill development," explained the school's technical director, who's also the head coach of the Peel-Halton Soccer League Premier Division's Milltown FC. "I recently got together with a friend of mine in marketing for a re-branding."

Now named the Mustang Soccer School of Excellence and relocated to the Milton Soccer Centre on Main Street after an inaugural year at Oakville's Appleby College, the program kicks off with a private session for



established players this weekend, with registration getting underway Saturday for its winter session start-up in March. With co-ed training at the Under-6 and Under-8 levels and split boys and girls sessions at the Under-10 ranks, the Mustang

school aims to offer a grassroots environment focusing on basic soccer technique and mentality.

"I find a lot of the younger players are over-coached," suggested Jbaihi, who runs the school alongside MFC assistants Roy Howell and Silviu Butnaru. "We take more of a free-style approach, allowing kids to get comfortable with the ball and be creative. The rights and wrongs of the game can come later."

"I think we're fairly unique in offering supplemental skill rather than a team-oriented program. Our catchphrase is 'A better breed of player.'"

To sign up or for more information about the program, visit mustangsoccer.ca.

Minor atoms begin OMHA playdowns with authority

Convincing victories follow dominant regular season

The Winterhawks have delivered a dominating one-two punch at the minor atom ranks all season long.

And yesterday's kick-off to the OMHA playdowns was no exception.

In command for all but the briefest of moments during an afternoon double-header within the friendly confines of Milton Sports Centre, the host AA and additional entry (AE) squads began the preliminary round with decisive victories.

Heading into to the International Silver Stick in Newmarket tonight — following an unbeaten championship run at the holiday qualifier in Stratford — Milton's AA minor atoms fortified their efforts after a second-period scare to dispatch the Halton Hills Thunder 7-2.

The two goals against came about a minute apart and cut the hosts' lead down to one. Jaden Lee would quickly stem the tide — scoring just 45 seconds after a timeout — while the Winterhawks would add three more down the stretch to reassert their authority.

Finishing atop the Bowen Division at 25-2-1, Milton's playoff-opening win was powered by three goals and an assist from Luke Johnston. Joshua Cacciola, Travis Harrison and Demetri Louizos had a goal and an assist each, while Mathieu Theoret was solid between the pipes and received ample defensive support.

Even more dominant in the later showdown, the AE Winterhawks — who went 23-3-2 to claim top spot in the Harrison Division — struck early and often to dump the Stoney Creek Jr. Warriors 7-0.

Thomas Jackson was steady but largely untested in the lopsided affair, thanks in part to a formidable defence, while his counterpart faced all kinds of pressure from a relentless attack and kept the floodgates from bursting completely open with at least a dozen big saves.

Cohen George enjoyed the biggest slice of the scoring pie with two goals and a pair of assists, while Jordon Turley had two goals and an assist and Michael

Amaro also tallied twice. Palmer Grice rounded out the scoring, with three and two-assist contributions made by Ryan Chisholm and Jason Trakas.

The AE minor atoms — who won the Motown Cup earlier this season — are back in action Saturday in Flamborough.



Pakmen v-ball arrives

One of Canada's largest youth volleyball has made its way to Milton.

Pakmen Volleyball Club — which offers a wide variety of programs and sports a dozen national championships since its 2002 inception —officially began operations this past weekend at E.C. Drury's sports building.

Regular programs will be held Saturdays. For more information, visit www.pakmen.com.

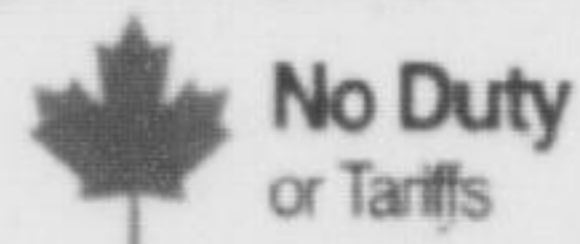
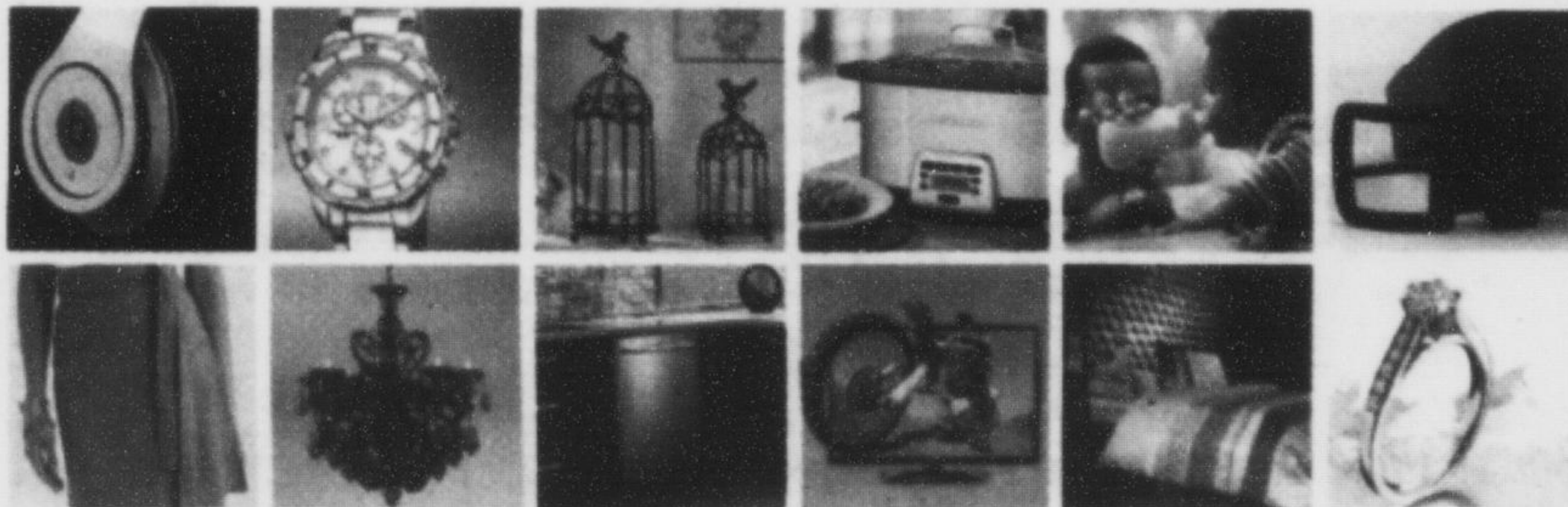
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