

Alexander, David thrilled about opportunity

53 18-year-old Alexander is a 6-foot-9 power forward who's currently weighing offers from a number of NCAA D-1 schools.

Not too shabby for someone who only started playing competitively two years ago and is now ranked sixth nationally for this year's graduating class by North Pole Hoops (NPH).

"My dad came to me one day and said I wasn't using my height," quipped Alexander of his late start on the court.

His Orangeville Athlete Institute team played in numerous high-end tournaments on both sides of the border this past season and recently won the newly-established Ontario Scholastic Athletic Association championship. While he'll most likely be able to play in the national showcase next week, Alexander still has to get final clearance today (Thursday) for a recently-sustained fractured wrist. "I'm very appreciative of this opportunity (to be part of national game). To be one of

just 24 players in the country to be named for this game feels great."

A 6-foot-5 shooting guard, 16-year-old David is currently ranked number one for the Class of 2017 by NPH. He's held top spot for the better part of a year now, since delivering an MVP performance at the NPH Showcase in Toronto last June. The top offensive threat on a Bishop Reding squad that made it to Quad-A OFSAA this season also has several D-1 schools showing interest in him. His basketball resumé includes a victory at the prestigious LeBron James Tournament with the Under-16 Stags.

"It is truly a blessing to be selected to the first All-Canadian BioSteel game. This opportunity is very meaningful to me as I am given the chance to showcase my talent on a national stage and perform in front of many college scouts," said David. "This will also allow me to see where I can improve my game and where I stand against the top Canadian high school prospects."

Shock shine at provincials

The Shock punctuated the indoor track and field season with an impressive exclamation mark. The club amassed 11 medals at the recent Minor Track Association Indoor Provincial Championships at Toronto's York University — with seven secured by the tyke boys. Leading that contingent with golden performances in the 400m (1:11.82) and long jump (3.96m) was Brayden Jackson. He also combined with Korbin Dixon, Ben Baynton and Charles Winters to reign supreme in the 4x200m relay. The foursome clocked in at a combined 2:12.67.



Baynton and Winters each brought home a silver and bronze in individual competition. Winters raced to 60m silver and 200m bronze, while Baynton finished second in the 1,200m and third in shot-put.

Sisters Rayven and Samone Winters captured the Shock's other golds. Rayven was victorious in the senior girls' 800m (6:19.28) and Samone won the atom girls shot-put (7.07m).

Rounding out the medal haul with 800m silver and bronze respectively were mite boys racers Simon Baynton and Dylan Bailey.

Smith great addition: NEXXICE coach

53 work ethic. Synchronized skating is a passion for Victoria and it shows in her enthusiasm she infuses in practice and in performance. Persevering through a series of minor injuries this fall and winter — a somewhat inevitable result of a five-hour-a-week boost to their training regiment — NEXXICE's routines seem to be as polished as ever. The team's five alternates, added Smith, have also had more occasion to be worked into the routine this season in case their last-minute inclusion at worlds is required. So does NEXXICE have the goods to upgrade last year's silver and taste world championship supremacy like they did — for the first and only time — in 2009?

"We've got an amazing team. Fingers crossed," said Smith, whose team will no doubt face its biggest challenges from the Scandinavian countries, in particular Finland. "There's some great teams out there. It's a question of which ones can skate great that day."

While NEXXICE will make its case for synchronized skating's Olympic inclusion on the ice, Smith welcomed the chance to offer her thoughts on the matter.

"There's something magical about it... the unison in that way. I just hope we can ignite the same reaction in them (IOC)."

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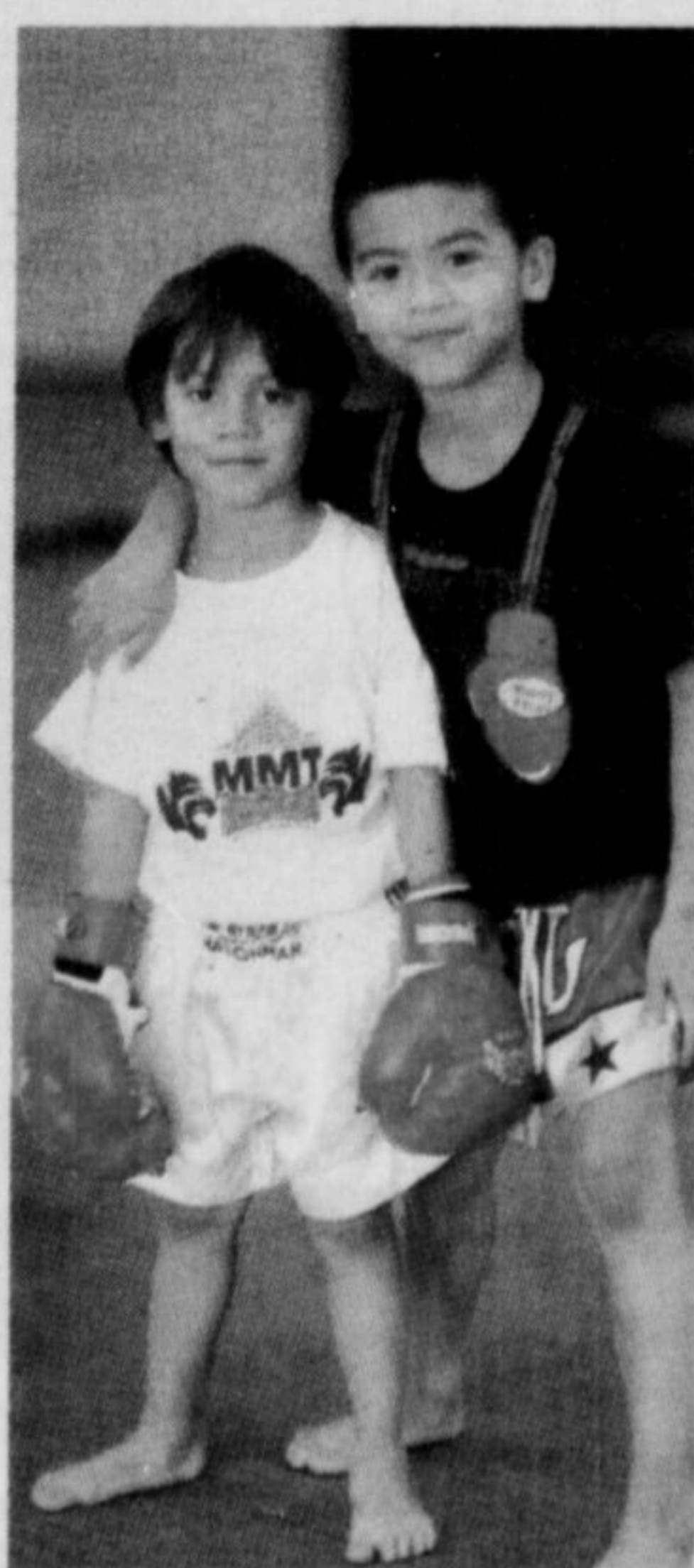
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