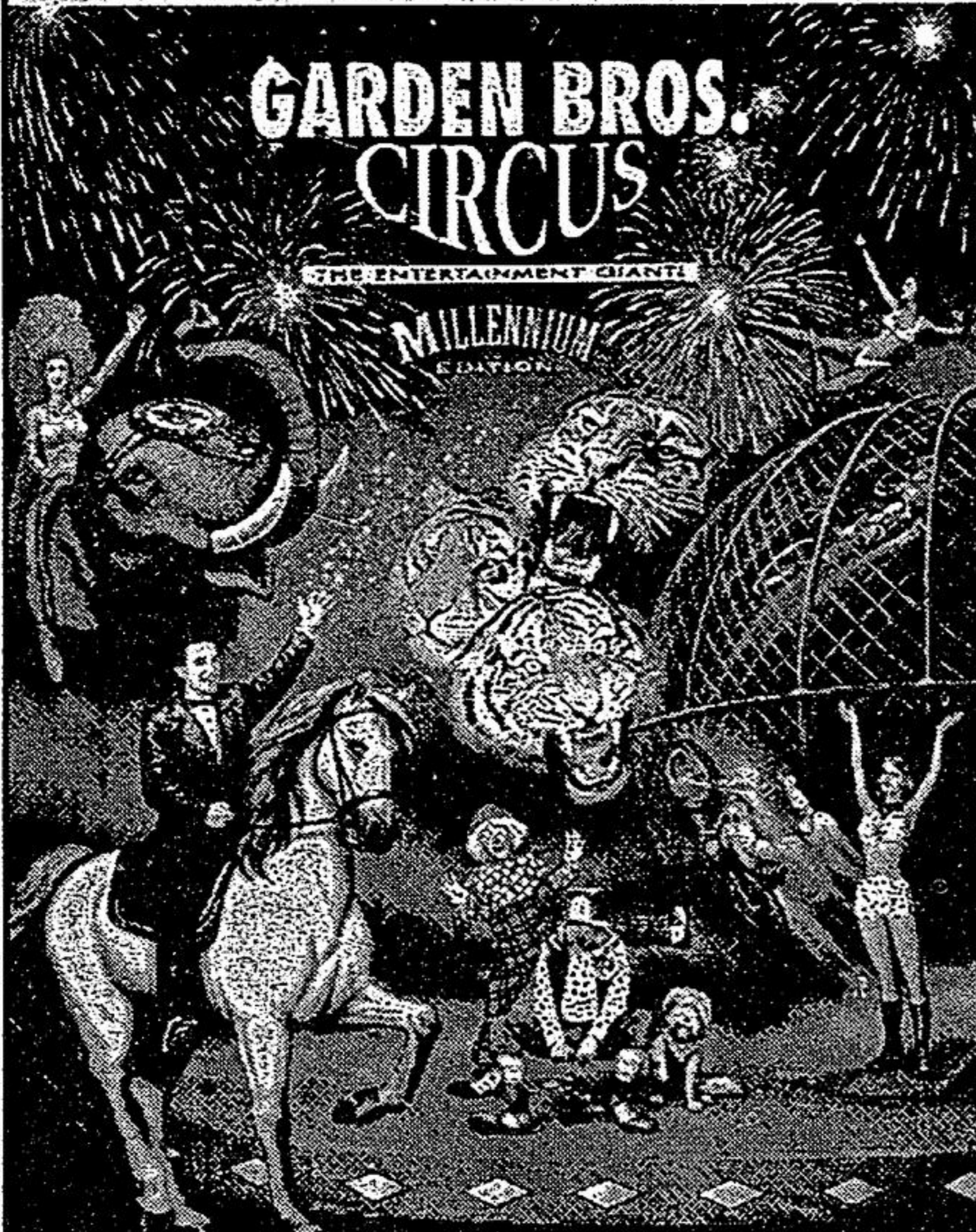


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Soccer club needs more playing sites

Growth in youth soccer means shortage of playing fields

BY BRUCE STAPLEY
Correspondent

The Whitchurch-Stouffville Soccer Club is experiencing growing pains. The WSSC, which has seen an annual increase in players of 10 per cent for each of the past eight seasons, says it has outgrown its allocated field space.

"The continued growth in numbers of players and expanding programs has placed a significant burden on fields," said WSSC president Victor Szabo.

"Some of this year's teams are looking at practices on patches of grass beside fields and on ball diamonds."

With the club's greatest growth happening in the lower age groups, the crunch will become even more severe in the next few years, Szabo contends.

"The demographics of player registration indicate the situation will only

get worse. The available fields are no longer sufficient."

Szabo says it's time for the town to come up with a solution to the shortage of playing fields.

The club is currently using fields behind the Novopharm plant in Stouffville's west end for its younger divisions, with the Board of Education providing four full-size fields at Stouffville District Secondary School and Whitchurch Highlands PS. for the older players.

"Very few comparable sized communities in Canada are without public soccer fields," said Szabo.

He said the town has been all talk when it comes to providing new fields.

"The town has held unrealized plans for soccer fields for at least 10 years. The trend continued this past year as possi-



WAYNE EMMERSON
New playing fields are in the works

ble fields in Ballantrae remained plans and money was allocated to a parking lot instead."

Mayor Wayne Emmerson said that at a meeting held last year with Community and Leisure Services Department officials, the club was assured it would have new fields within two years.

He said a soccer field is still scheduled for Ballantrae and that he was under the impression another field could be installed to the south of Memorial Park's diamond three if needed.

"They are not forgotten," he said of the club. "There are plans for soccer fields and we're moving toward that goal."

Emmerson suggested part of the problem is a lack of communication on the part of club officials.

"My door is always open. If the club's numbers have grown then let's talk and change the plan."

"We're prepared to do what we have to do for soccer. But they have to approach us and tell us what they're looking for."

Squirts consoled in Napanee tournament

The Stouffville Birkett-Hassard Insurance-Morrison-Hersfield Ltd.-Irwin Industrial Agencies-Kytech Machine Works squirt rep boys fastball team captured the consolation title at a recent tournament in Napanee after edging Stone Mills 6-4.

In reaching the consolation final, Stouffville defeated Newmarket 7-3 and tied Central Frontenac 5-5. The only loss

came against eventual tournament champion Napanee 8-7.

Team members contributing to the club's success included: Keith Hughes, Brandon Jupp, Damien Kudelski, Mathew Marteniello, Jesse Miller, Kyle Miller, Sam O'Farrel, Ryne Parsons, Nicholas Stratas, Jordan Underwood, Graham Wilson, Wes Wittenbols and Lenny Wood.

In league play, the squirts are off to a 4-3 start.

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