

Mother Nature not kind to Macri

Weather conditions played havoc with drivers at Long Beach

Mother Nature did not do Jonathan Macri any favors when he took to the streets of Long Beach, California last weekend in the second stop of the Cart Toyota Atlantic Grand Prix event.

With thick fog blanketing the 1.968-mile temporary street circuit in Long Beach, California, for the 32-lap Cart Toyota Atlantic Grand Prix of Long Beach, an extensive entanglement of cars ensued on the first turn right after the green flag went down to start the race.

Piloting his new P-1 Racing-NTN Bearings/Miller Genuine Draft Swift 014a, the Gormley resident found himself right in the thick of the melee.

The pile-up began after Joey Hand, Ryan Hunter-Reay, and Jon Fogarty made contact as they raced three abreast into the first corner, eventually ending up alongside the tire barrier on the outside corner of the first turn. The rest of the field geared down into avoidance mode, as a result, Macri's vehicle was pushed from behind, and in turn made contact with a car driven by Ryan Dalziel, who subsequently went airborne and landed on Luis Diaz's vehicle.

Macri spun out as a result of the incident and made his way to the pit area for repairs and re-entered the race over one minute, and one full lap behind race leader Alex Gurney.

Macri ended his day in 19th spot. "We were looking for some good results here at Long Beach," Macri said. "The car ran fairly well in practice, and we were pretty close to getting the set-up dead on. We managed to qualify seventh and I was hoping to push hard for a podium finish. Unfortunately, I was caught in the first corner pile-up and that basically ended our chances."

Praising the work of his team in putting the car back in order after the incident, Macri said he lost too much time in an effort to make a comeback. "Almost half the race was run under yellow and there weren't a lot of passing opportunities. It's unfortunate, but that's racing. Sometimes, there isn't much you can do to avoid getting hit or hitting someone else."

If there was any consolation to Macri's misfortune it was the fact that he turned the third fastest time during the race.

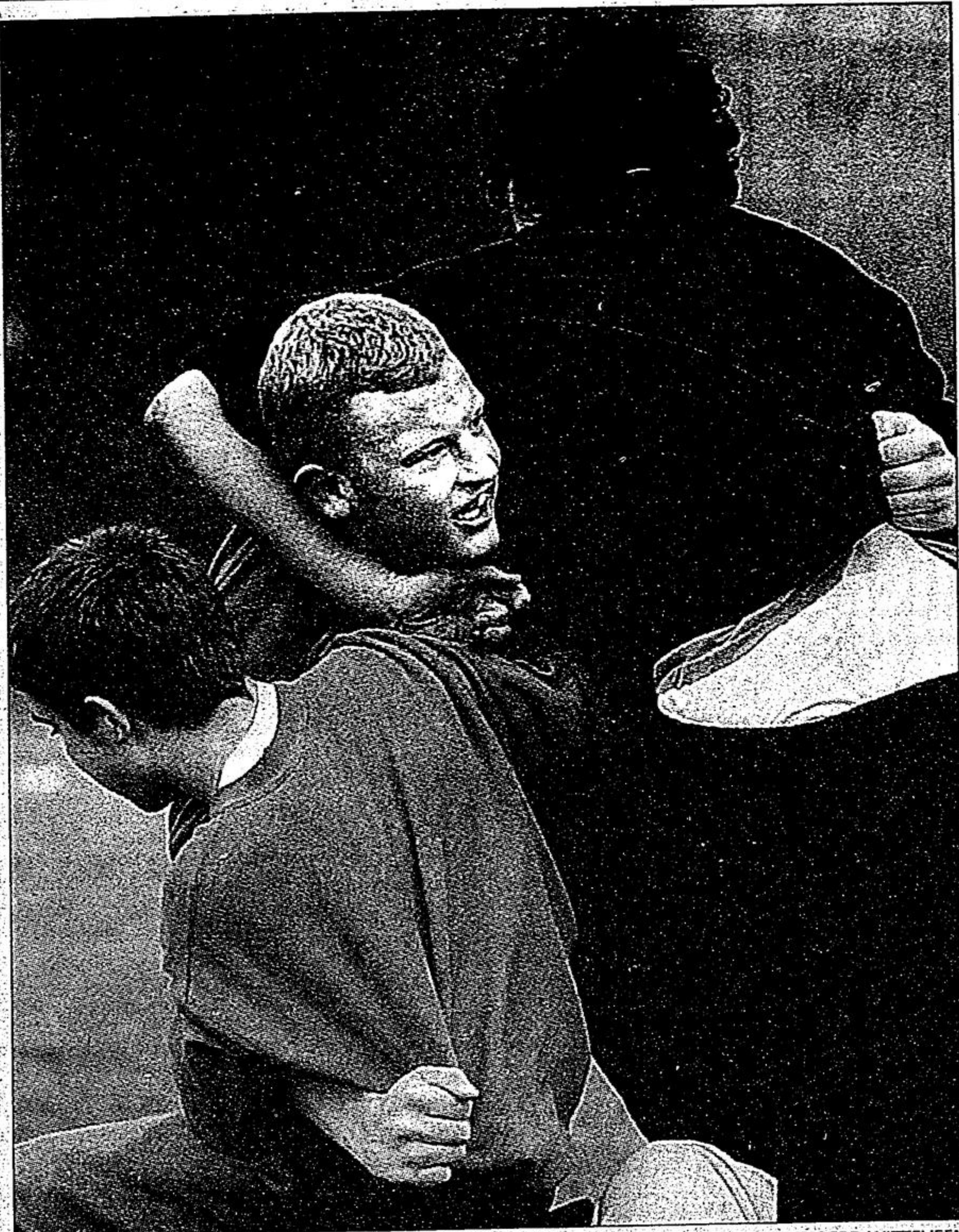
Michael Valiante took the checkered flag for his first career Atlantic victory.

In preparation for the Milwaukee Mile on June 2, which is the third leg of the Series, Macri and Team P-1 Racing-NTN Bearings/Miller Genuine Draft Swift 014a team will be testing in Portland, Oregon, on May 1, and at Phoenix, Arizona, the following week.



JONATHAN MACRI

Was involved in pileup during first turn of race.



STAFF PHOTO/SJOERD WITTEVEEN

HAVING HIS HANDS FULL

With another high school rugby season approaching, members of the Stouffville District Secondary School Spartans boys' team have been logging some time on the pitch after school. One of the recent practice sessions saw, Ryan Jackson (centre) grab hold of Brad Craig (left) and Gavin Howe before sending them to the ground in a tackling drill. The Spartans' rugby team are scheduled to host an invitational tournament for junior and senior teams on May 10 starting at 8 a.m.

SAHL titles to be decided on Saturday at Stouffville Arena

SPORTS DIGEST

The Stouffville Amateur Hockey League will wind down its 2001-2002 campaign this Saturday when they conduct their annual championship day at the Stouffville Arena.

Championship games in the adult recreational league will be played as follows: Women's A final at 12:10 p.m.; Over 35 C final at 12:55 p.m.; Senior B final, 1:10 p.m.; Open C final, 1:55 p.m.; Senior A final, 2:10 p.m.; Open B final, 2:55 p.m.; Over 35 A final, 3:10 p.m.; Over 35 B final, 3:55 p.m. and Open A final, 4:10 p.m.

Bantam Stars consoled

The Markham-Stouffville bantam B Stars captured the consolation final in the North Metro Girls Hockey League with a 2-0 win over Leaside.

Tabitha Dudley and Amy Lawson each scored once for the Stars.

Dominique Gagnon and Jennifer Medland handled goaltending duties.



Senior Games seek participants

The York Region Ontario Senior Games are accepting applications from those who wish to participate in this year's games, which will run from May 27 to June 14.

The event, which is hosted by the York Region Senior Games Committee District No. 14, is open to all citizens 55 years of age or over.

Among events that will be played include: progressive euchre, carpet bowling, contract bridge, cribbage, five-pin bowling, 10-pin bowling, darts, bocci, floor shuffleboard, lawn bowling, indoor lawn bowling, snooker, duplicate bridge, table tennis, nine-ball pool, swimming, golf, tennis, horseshoes, bud euchre, six-handed euchre and prediction walk.

Registration forms or further information can be obtained by contacting the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville (905) 640-6527.

Boynton hopes to throw curves to opposing batters

Stouffville Mennos' fastball pitching staff bolstered with return of veteran off-speed hurler

BY JIM THOMAS
Correspondent

He's coming back.

Paul Boynton will again bolster the ranks of the Stouffville Mennos pitching staff when the team takes to the field this spring.

The off speed, curveballer will work with Byron Baranieski and Terry Reesor to form one of the most potent mound staffs in the Oshawa and District Fastball League.

The Mennos' home games will be played Wednesday nights in Stouffville.

At age 41, Boynton has enjoyed an illustrious sports career, first in volleyball, basketball and rugby and later fast-ball and hockey.

A native of Gormley, Boynton rode a merry-go-round of elementary schools before coming to Stouffville District Secondary School. Here, under the guidance of physical education instructor Jim Rehill, he hit his stride, receiving top awards in both volleyball and fastball. In 1981, he was named male athlete of the year. He was also elected co-president of the SDSS athletic council, sharing duties with fellow student Jill Langley.

The battery combination of Boynton and Steve Sayers carried the Gormley Missionary Church to a total of 10 championships in 12 years. In 1984, they lost out to Grace Church, Newmarket, following a brilliant pitching duel with Russ Downing, formerly of the World champion Richmond Hill Dynes.

Other teams to share Boynton's brilliance include: Richmond Hill, Markham and Stouffville. He was a member of the Betz Pools entry that won the Ontario Intermediate title in the late '80s. That year, he played mostly at first base with Jim Chilvers and John Annis handling the pitching chores.

Following graduation from Seneca College,

Boynton headed up a Toronto Christian men's volleyball league that included former SDSS students Bruce Rodin, Richard Reesor, Eugene Reesor, Rob Reesor, Dave Elliott, Ross Dube and Gary McGillivray.

With respect to fastball, Boynton says its been his good fortune to play with many outstanding teams including the Stouffville Mennos. He says pitching is still his position of choice, but readily admits he no longer relies as much on speed. He calls himself a "junk pitcher," concentrating now on curveballs and changeups.

Boynton has high praise for Mennos co-managers Howie and Art Burkholder.

"They've helped us become better men," he says. "We've all learned a lot from them."

It's a standing joke within the roster, he notes, that one must be a Burkholder or a Reesor to make the team. This isn't so, he says, despite the fact most players are inter-related. He describes the club as "a quality group of guys whose demeanor on and off the field tends to rub off on other teams."

Boynton says he's looking forward to the new season and again sharing pitching responsibilities.

"Pitching," he says, "is such a challenge and so much a part of the game; there's nothing quite like it."



PAUL BOYNTON Views pitching as a challenge and an integral part of winning fastball games.