

**Shooter has best season yet**Paul Bury, Bk  
11/11/89 MN**Aiming to make a name for himself**By STEPHANIE INNES  
Sports Reporter

Proving himself to be right on target as a national marksman this summer was Mississauga's own Gary Bowman.

Bowman, 32, completed his best-ever season of fullbore target rifle shooting at last month's national championships. The 16-year shooting veteran won first-place in the City of Ottawa match with a score of 99 (out of a possible 100), earned fourth-place in the Governor General's match and was the top Canadian shooter on the week's 'Grand Aggregate' ranking.

"This was definitely my best year," said Bowman, whose Grand Aggregate score at the nationals was the third highest score recorded — placing ahead of Bowman were two British shooters.

"My aggregate placing allows me to compete at Bisley in England next summer."

Amongst marksmen, the British Target Rifle Championships at Bisley are considered the year's most elite event.

"This is the fourth time I have qualified for Bisley," said Bowman, adding that expenses and time have forced him to turn down his spot on the 18-man team two of those four times.

It was in 1973 that Bowman actually first competed at the British Nationals as a 16-year-old cadet. In 1977 he qualified for the senior team but at the time was enrolled at McMaster University and could not afford the cost.

"There used to be prize money involved in the sport, but that has disappeared," said Bowman, who says marksmen must buy their own equipment and foot their own costs to tournaments.

"Those of us on the national team do receive subsidies from the national association (Dominion of Canada Rifle Association), but it doesn't cover very much."

Eight years after qualifying for Bisley in 1977, Bowman made the team again in 1985.

"I just squeaked through that year," he said.

The Mississauga marksman actually placed 23rd at nationals that year and when a couple of people couldn't make the trip, Bowman earned a spot.

In 1988 he made the squad once again, but declined the trip in lieu of three weeks of matches in Australia last spring. In Australia he won the Captain James Cook match in the 1989 Bi-Centennial Fullbore Championships with a perfect score of 50.

He has decided to accept a berth on

bre rifle and do not usually shoot at ranges longer than 100-metres.

"The smallbore is more common, which is why it is an Olympic sport and fullbore is not," remarked Bowman, adding that he does not shoot smallbore seriously because it is too

time-consuming.

It's no wonder Bowman can't find the time for smallbore — when he's not shooting or working for Bell Cellular Inc. as a Systems Manager he is acting as Chairman of Council for the Ontario Rifle Association.

will enter as the third-ranked Canadian team member — considerably higher than his last appearance in 1985.

"I have been competing more and training more, which is why I am doing so much better this year," he said.

In addition to Bisley, Bowman shot well enough that he would have qualified for a place on the Commonwealth Games team going to Auckland, New Zealand this January. He did not declare himself in the Commonwealth Games team trial, favoring instead a position on the Bisley team.

While the season is over, Bowman will continue his weekly practices at either the Department of National Defense in Winona, or at Camp Borden until the winter months when he will keep up his aim with smallbore target practice.

While fullbore is shot with a .308 rifle at distances of up to 1,000 yards, smallbore marksmen use a .22 cali-