

A look back at the

LINDSAY MIDGETS

Intermediate O.H.A. champions 1909

14 OCT 1964



The convincing challenge of champions, the battle of the Midgets, between the blue and white team from Stratford and the blue and white team from Lindsay is related by the picture above the Lindsay Midgets and Executive.

Two of the greatest play off series in hockey history took place in 1908 and in 1909 between the Midgets of Lindsay and the Midgets of Stratford. Following a gruelling series of district play-downs Lindsay Midgets emerged as challengers in the final home game against Stratford Midgets, a team which cleaned up in Western Ontario. Both teams were called Midgets, both wore blue and white uniforms and both were evenly balanced in every department.

Because of weather conditions and the lack of artificial ice the Ontario Hockey Association followed the rule of home and home games in the play-offs with goals to count, compared with the ruling in recent years of deciding winners in a series of seven games

with games counting.

In the great 1908 series Lindsay won the opening game on home ice but lost the return game in Stratford by a decisive count.

In the following season (1909) both teams struggled through Eastern and Western Ontario to play downs and both by a strange coincidence clashed again as battling giants in the Intermediate division.

Both teams were intact with the same line-up in both series, except for a couple of changes.

In the 1909 battle the Midgets scored a sweet revenge when they defeated the Midgets from the city on the Avon and won the Intermediate championship and all the honours.

Both teams were backed to the hilt and to the last ditch by frenzied fans. For both finals in 1908 and 1909, the little old band box on Lindsay Street South was jammed to capacity. Standing room was overflowed and youngsters hung on to the wide rafters. Glass front waiting rooms were packed two deep and spectators lined up four and five rows deep behind the east nets. The bleachers at the west end of the rink were completely packed. Indeed the sides of the old and historic rink literally bulged at the joints and seams.

Hockey greats on the blue and white line on the Lindsay team included: Bas Newton in goal; Sullivan at point and

the great Leon Koyle, a big and lanky boy at cover point; Bill Stoddart played the rover position and was flanked by Frank Cote; Pacer McDougall, Ken Randell and Reg. Bloomfield, with Fred (Goosie) Taylor at playing coach.

The big guns for Stratford included: Rankin in goal, Dunbar at point and big Ramsey Rankin, the performing image of Koyle at cover point. The line included Frank Rankin as Rover, and another small player Simpson and a third Rankin on the forward line.

A thumb nail sketch of the Midgets reveals the following: Leon Koyle was for a time with the Bank of Montréal in Guelph and was granted returnable leave by the Ontario Hockey Association. He is at present a resident of Saskatoon where he was for many years engaged in real estate.

Basil Newton is a resident of British Columbia. For a time he played hockey in North Bay before joining the Midgets. He is Lindsay born.

Cliff Sullivan came to Lindsay from Markham. He was

employed by the Maunder Milling Company in Lindsay.

Bill Stoddart was a native son of Fenelon Falls before moving to Lindsay as a boy. He married Miss Olive Mitchell of Lindsay.

"Pacer" McDougall was born in Fenelon Falls, the home of many good hockey players. He attended the Lindsay Collegiate Institute.

Frank Cote was a Lindsay boy, one of two or three fine hockey players in the Cote family.

Ken Randell came to Lindsay from Smith's Falls and learned to skate and play hockey in Lindsay. He went on to join the ranks of the National Hockey League, playing with New York. He was a relative of the late Mr. and Mrs. Conley of Lindsay.

Reg. Bloomfield was a banker who was transferred from Lakefield to Lindsay. He was also one of the finest canoeists in Ontario.

Fred Taylor, coach was interested in the restaurant of Taylor and Martin, now the Star cafe. He played on many a team and was a successful coach.

Arthur Harry "Cob" Abercrombie, the trainer was also a rhymster and a popular member of the championship group.

Much credit was attributed to the backing of members of the executive. These well known sportsmen at the time included: Manager Arthur (Cap) Simpson of the Hotel Simpson; Arthur Parkin the coach; Howard Clemes, management committee; Leigh R.

Knight, management committee. Dr. W.J. Brown, management committee; C.M. Squirrel secretary - treasurer; A. L. Campbell, president; and A. H. Abercrombie, trainer.

The series in both years created considerable glory for the town of Lindsay and much advertising. It can be truly said for clean, high class hockey, speed, skill, courage and endurance, few if any games can be compared to the Lindsay-Stratford series.