

GOYER, Leo

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Although (Leo Goyer) was part of an artillery crew during the Second World War, he gave his own men nearly as big a pounding as he did the enemy.

The difference was, the latter beating came on the playing field, not the battle field.

Goyer had played junior and intermediate hockey and ball before the war but it was while stationed in England and later during lulls in the fighting on the continent that he began living up to the legendary Goyer name in Belleville sports.

"The way he talked," says son Gary, "he went into the war and did very little fighting and a heck of a lot of playing."

He played with pitcher 'Lum' Carson and catcher Walt Gerow Jr., coincidentally, all of them from the Belleville area. Goyer played centre field and

occasionally caught. Before leaving Canada the team won the Petawawa Softball League title and later, in England, beat the Canadian Active Service Force champions (having missed the play-downs).

Gary says that although his father had good eye-hand coordination, the greatest quality he brought to a game was an innate knowledge of sports. "He hit for both average and distance and again, he had a sense for ball. A very, very good understanding of the game."

After returning home, he joined former teammate Walter Gerow Jr., brother Vern, Al Meagher and Tim Williams on the Belleville Redmen intermediate OHA hockey team.

Again, Gary says his father had a keen ability to know

what play to make. "He had...hockey sense. That was a rarity."

Leo also played for the ANAF intermediate 'A' team and led the league in scoring. The front line trio of Goyer, Williams and Gerow became one of the most feared in the league. Williams recalls Goyer was not a particularly fast skater (having suffered a serious knee injury in the summer of '46), but he was a terrific stick-handler.

He left the OHA after the 1950-51 season but carried on in the Trent Valley League for several more years. In 1955 when he played with Williams and brother Gerry Goyer on the Point Anne Cementmen, the lineup led the league in scoring, often popping in eight-to 10 goals a game. The team took the All Ontario In-

termediate 'C' Championship that year.

Like most of the other Goyers, Leo never ventured too far from home. He and brother Vern went to play professionally in the Quebec league but returned to Belleville within a few weeks. Homesickness, says Gary, was a family trait.

Although Leo became known for his prowess on the diamond and rink, Gary says his father was also an excellent track and field athlete and won several medals while overseas.

Gary followed in his father's footsteps in sports and donned both skates and glove in appropriate seasons. About 1965 the Flying Fathers hockey team came to Belleville to raise money for charity. A local team was assembled to meet them on the ice and both Gary and Leo were part of it. Although

Leo hadn't been on skates in about 10 years, he bulged the twine once more.

He died in 1982.