

Bantams have 'excellent' trip

By Pat Payton

A travel-weary St. Marys ANAF Bantam hockey team and family members arrived back in town on Sunday night at about 11:15 p.m.

The team played a total of 10 hockey games and a 'Bandy' match during their two-week trip to Sweden. Their final tally in the hockey games was: three wins, six losses and one tie.

The Bantams lost their first game 14-0 on Dec. 29 to Pinbackshallen in Marsta. St. Marys was out-shot 61-12 by this "elite" team, which is apparently a "training" team for the Swedish national club.

"It's a select team," manager Dennis Martin explained. "It's not like your normal club. An RA 73 club has boys who are all born in 1973 and

grow up in a specific area. These boys aren't. They're brought in from the surrounding area.

"(Co-coach) Walter Tkaczuk said that if he brought all these kids back they'd beat his (Jr. B) Lincolns."

The next stop was Gimo in northern Sweden, where the Bantams lost 2-0, tied 2-2 and won 2-0 in a day-long tournament on Dec. 30.

Scoring for St. Marys in the three games were Josh Lambourn with two, and Dean Sorensen and Mike McDonald. Most valuable players for the locals in the tourney were goalie John Teahen, Jason Moffatt and Billy Riordan.

'Bandy' match

On New Year's Day, the Bantams took part in a 'Bandy' match. The game was played on an ice surface

the size of a soccer field, surrounded by boards just four inches high.

The teams played with a small orange ball the size of a tennis ball and sticks similar to field hockey sticks. The nets are large, between the size of a hockey and soccer net. Each side used 10 players and a goaltender.

"The Swedes like to use this game to teach skating and hand-eye coordination," Martin noted.

"We lost 7-3 but our boys surprised us with their excellent skating and how fast they picked up the game and could handle the ball. It was good fun."

The ANAF Bantams' fifth game was a 4-0 loss to Djurgarden in Akersberga on Jan. 2.

"This was another strong game for St. Marys, even though we were out-shot 30-18. We had excellent scoring chances," Martin reported.

Renia Cup tourney

Last Thursday, Jan. 4, the Bantams headed to Taby for the Renia Cup tournament.

In their first game, strong goaltending and goals by Jaden Ropp and Bentley Murray lifted St. Marys to a 2-1 win over Vasby. The locals then lost their next two games, 2-0 to Traneberg and 4-0 to the host Taby club on Friday.

In their final game of the tourney on Friday, the ANAF squad turned in one of its "best efforts" and defeated

Sollentuna 4-1.

St. Marys marksmen were Billy Riordan, Josh Lambourn, Dave Torbet and Jaden Ropp. The blue and white out-shot Sollentuna 32-21.

The ANAF Bantams' third game of the day on Friday was played back in Akersberga. The locals dropped a 15-3 decision to the host club, IFK Osteraker.

Josh Lambourn, with a pair, and Ben Pook scored for St. Marys, which trailed 8-1 after the first period and 12-1 after two. Osteraker held a 51-13 margin in shots.

Manager Dennis Martin summed up that the 19 players, four management and 36 family members and friends enjoyed an "excellent" over-

seas trip.

"We had great accommodations, great hospitality," he said. "Our boys were perfect sportsman, I would say. I thought they represented the town of St. Marys, both on and off the ice, as well as anybody could expect. They went out and enjoyed themselves but still played good hockey.

"The host community (Akersberga) put on an excellent program. The parents saw quite a bit of hockey but they also participated in all the events and enjoyed themselves immensely.

"As for myself, I found it a once-in-a-lifetime thing and I sure don't regret it."



THE ST. MARYS and Osteraker Bantam players have some fun after the final game. The ANAF Bantams played 10 hockey games while overseas from Dec. 26 to Jan. 7.