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Star Weekly Honors Labine Tells Story Of Loquacious Leo

Haileybury's Leo Labine rated a full page story and a four color picture in a recent copy of the Star Weekly.

The Star says: "He may not score a goal. He may make a blunder. But at least, when he skates out on the ice, you know SOMETHING is going to happen."

Leo Henry Labine, the story says, is also known as Leo the Lion, Loquacious Leo, and Leo the Leprechaun. Dazzled by his frequent goals, his flamboyant style of play and an avalanche of words and wisecracks, the fans had no choice but to succumb. They took Leo to their hearts, and if he wasn't Ted Williams of the Bruins, he was at least a reasonable facsimile.

Labine is an irrepresible character in a game that produces few such individuals, according to the Star. The majority of hockey players are taciturn types with little off-the-ice color. Perhaps it is by contrast that Labine in three seasons has earned a star rating as a hockey comedian.

The only people left cold by his humor are Boston's NHL opponents. To them, there is nothing funny about Leo the Lion. No player who can total 40 goals in his first two complete NHL seasons, and be rated among the leagues top half dozen right winger can be considered a joke.

Labine's sense of humor was pushed to the limit during the first 40 games of the current season. His knack of making the best of a bad situation was savely taxed. He had declined alarmingly from his 1954-55 form, which was undeniably of all-star calibre, and was coming in for widespread criticism from observers who noted that his play lacked the fire and zest of the previous campaign. Without his leadership the Bruins, rated highly in pre-season reckoning remained in the grip of a fearsome slump and dropped right into last place.

Combination Split, Reunited

The background was enlightening. Labine was not, for one thing in peak physical shape and hockey is a sport where condition is all-important. He was skating on a pair of injured

knees that normally would have sidelined him. But the Bruins had such a host of more serious injured among their personnel that Leo was forced to keep going, even though it had to be at half speed. One of those knee injuries was incurred in typically unorthodox LaBine fashion. Attempting to make a spectacular leap from the penalty box at Toronto's Maple Leaf Gardens, he lost his balance and sprawled on the ice, twisting his knee as he fell. The damage prevented him from hurtling about at his customary breakneck speed and his production fell away off.

Another factor was that his favorite goal-scoring victim had been taken away from him. Seven of his 24 goals in the 1954-55 season were scored against Terry Sawchuk of the Detroit Red Wings, three of them coming in a single game, in which he also had three assists for a Boston team record of six points. But Sawchuk went to Boston for the present campaign the result of an off-season trade, and LaBine had to be content with beating Terry in practice.

The third and possibly most important factor contributing to the LaBine decline was the absence of his sidekick, Real Chevrefils who had been his buddy since junior hockey days back in Barrie, Ont. They had moved up together through the Boston organization and were as well-suited a twosome as Martin and Lewis. In 1954-55 they joined centre Don McKenney also a Barrie product although of later vintage to form one of the NHL's highest scoring lines. Labine scored 24 goals; McKenney, 22, and Chevrefils, 18.

But Chevy was included in the summer trade for Sawchuk, breaking up the Chevrefils-LaBine act, and neither player was the same thereafter. It didn't take long for the Boston management to realize it had made a mistake. Labine's slump in Boston was rivalled only by the doldrums Chevrefils experienced in Detroit. The fact that the two players belong together just as Detroit's Gordie Howe and Ted Lindsay function best as a team was acknowledged in mid-January when the Bruins retrieved Chevrefils from Det-

roit in a four-man trade. Both Leo and Chevy were expected to improve upon being reunited.

And yet, although Labine was undeniably far below par, he still appeared well on his way to a respectable 20-goal season. Although he was little more than mediocre during the first half of the schedule, he still received consideration for the all-star right-wing berth when the half-way balloting was done. It was something of a testimony to his stature as a hockey player that he could score so frequently and still be referred to as playing badly.

Lively Talker On Ice

Rated by observers among the best rightwingers in hockey today he'd been considered a cinch to score 30 goals or more. They said to him that, if last season had been an average one he would have been an all-star at his position. But it is his misfortune to be playing at a time when the NHL has such outstanding right-wingers as Maurice Richard and Howe.

"No player in the league is more valuable to his team than Labine is to us", was the appraisal given last fall by Milt Schmidt, now the Boston coach. The Bruins proceeded to illustrate what Schmidt meant by having a slump corresponding to Labine's personal collapse.

"Labine is certainly the best player on our team and one of the best in the league. He's a coming star of the game," were the words of manager Lynn Patrick early this season. Patrick went on: "Leo's a character too, one of the few in hockey, and that's a valuable thing on a team. What he does for our morals and spirit is almost as important as what he does on the ice."

It was Labine who made a green-as-grass rookie feel at home with the Bruins last fall. He was El Panagabko, who had come almost unnoticed from a lowly minor league and won a job with the big leaguers. He was mighty lonesome until Labine, who isn't far removed from the freshman class himself, turned his almost unpronounceable name to 'Can O'Tobacco,' a nickname that caught on immediately.

Opposing players say Labine keeps up an incessant stream of chatter while on the ice. To an enemy who has drawn a penalty, he'll jeer: "You should watch that stuff. You could get in trouble that way." To a goaltender he'll just beaten he'll say "How did you like that kid? even though the netminder might be a vetran several years his senior. He generally greets the great Rocket Richard with Comment ca va ce soir, mon vieux" which means roughly, "How are you tonight, old fellow?"

Labine's reputation in hockey was first established around Ontario when he played in the Ontario Hockey associations junior "A" series first with St. Michael's and then with Barrie Flyers. That was in 1949, '50 and '51.

(Continued on Page 3)

Kids & Parents Have Fun At Ski Club

Spectator interest was high at the Northern Ski Club on Sunday. Tri-town visitors enjoyed the spectacle of dozens of children skiing, skating and, flying saucering. Executive and members are delighted to welcome visitors at any time and were especially pleased to have so many on the special Parent's and Childrens Day.

The next activity is the Recreational Weekend March 3 and 4. Skiers come from centers all over Northern Ontario and join in the fun.

The Northern Snow Queen will be chosen as the highlight of the weekend. Saturday night the popular torch light ski parade will be staged by our senior club members and visiting skiers.

Among them noticed at the club on Sunday were Miss E. Maher, Misses Conte Mrs. Jack Koza, Mr. and Mrs. B. Burton, Mr. and Mrs. C. Camsell, Mr and Mrs. R. Morrisette, Mrs. Jack White, Valentine family Mr. and Mrs. Geo Lemay, Mr. and Mrs. Ted Brookfield, The McKnight family, Mr. George Morgan, Mrs. Don McKelvey, Mr. and Mrs. B. Trott, Mr and Mrs C. Kelly, Father Brunette, Father Landreau, Mr. and Mrs. Ernie Cosmack, Mr. Len McNeil

PARACHUTISTS

Private J. J. Grignon and Private A. W. Eckensviller both of Haileybury, were among 52 recent graduates at the parachute training school of the Joint Air Training Center at Rivers, Manitoba. Private Grignon is currently at home in Haileybury, recovering from a heel injury incurred in a jump.

Including soldiers of many ranks and from various districts in Canada they had taken a month's intensive instructions, concluded by six qualifying jumps under varying conditions.

In the first three weeks instructions they went through a rigid physical training program, orientation and practice in landing. Jumps were made from the training towers at Rivers and Camp Shilo. In the final stage of training the jumpers went through day and night descents from aircraft with various equipment and weapons.

From all corps in the army, they are now entitled to wear the jumpers wings on their left breast and will draw an additional \$30 monthly risk allowance while actually engaged in jumping, on the strength of a unit assigned to parachutist duties or stationed at CJATC. Another mark of distinction is wearing of the maroon beret while with a parachutist unit.

Monthly Meeting Rebekah Lodge

The regular monthly meeting of Northern Light Rebekah Lodge was held on Wednesday evening February 15th, in the Masonic Hall with the Noble Sister L. Burton presiding.

There was a good turn out of members and several important items of business dealt with.

The draw for the Electric Percolater for which tickets are now being sold is to be held in March.

After the meeting a social time was spent in playing cards and the prize winners were - Cribbage, 1st prize Mrs. Hallworth. Consolation, Mrs. Richardson. Bridge 1st prize, Mrs. M. Glazier. Consolation, Mrs. D. Berry. Euchre 1st prize, Mrs. D. Hargrave.

J. Whelan And J. J. McMahon Honored For Safe Driving

Two Haileybury men are among a group of Brewers' Warehouse Company employees who received safe driving awards at Kenogami last week.

J. J. McMahon of Haileybury received a one year award, and Jim Whelan received an eight year award for not being involved in any preventable accident. As drivers have to drive one year without an accident before they can enter for the awards, in fact it means that Mr. McMahon has driven two years for the company without an accident, and Mr. Whelan nine years.

The Haileybury branch of the company has a long safety-first record, without a single preventable accident being attributed to any one of its drivers for the past 21 years.

Speaking of Brewers' Warehousing Co. drivers from all of northern Ontario C. D. Muir, district manager, told them that

as drivers they were considered professionals and had to take their work seriously. He said that the drivers had an excellent safety record. 80 per cent of all the drivers employed by the Brewer's Warehousing Co. are eligible for Ontario Safety League medal awards and \$25 company bonus cheques for a preventable accident-free year, driving company vehicles in 1955.

"Drivers in the north have the advantage of not having to cope with congested roads," Mr. Muir said. On the other hand, he pointed out, winter driving conditions were more complicated in the north. Only through practicing highway courtesy could accidents be avoided, and the good record of the last year showed that the drivers had followed this rule. "We are proud of you," Mr. Muir said "and I congratulate you on your excellent record."

Two Nurses Receive Presents Leaving Hospital

A going away party was held at Misericordia Hospital in honour of Lou Albert and Jeannine Quinell, who have been on the staff for the past five years. Miss Albert was in the operating rooms, Miss Quinell in the obstetrical department.

Presentations were made by Nurse Marjorie Richards on behalf of Reverend Sister Ste. Alfred superintendent of nurses.

Both were presented with a table lamp, and Miss Quinell received a lighter, and Miss Albert received a musical powder box. Guests included the registered nurses and graduates of the nursing school.

CORRECTION

The Syllabus Committee of Temiskaming Festival of Music wishes to make the following changes in 1956 Syllabus:

The addition of class in Class "A" to read: A-5 High School Class Room Band

F-26 vocal duet 14 and under is changed to read: "Song to a Statuette" - P. 42 Choral Hour Gordon V. Thompson Limited.

Tickets are available for the Carnival at the New Liskeard on March 3rd from C. E. Grozelle, Phone 438.

MUSIC

The following is a list of successful candidates in examinations held recently by the Royal Conservatory of Music of Toronto in Haileybury. The names are arranged in order of merit.

- HAILEYBURY, ONT
- Grade 10 Piano.
- First Class Honours— Joanne J. Hanmer,
- Honours— Marilyn Rutherford
- Pass— Jeannine Ouillette
- Grade 9 Piano
- Honours— Joanna Stubinski
- Grade 8 Piano
- First Class Honours— Patricia O'Connor
- Honours— Jo-Ann Levesque
- Grade 7 Piano
- Honours— Anne Auger
- Pass— William Thomson
- Grade 5 Piano
- First Class Honours— Nancy Cockshutt
- Grade 4 Piano
- Honours— Lynne Brown; Irene Shartner; Jean-Charles Conlin
- Grade 3 Piano
- Honours— Jean Hawkins
- Grade 2 Piano
- Honours— Germaine Ayotte
- Grade 1 Piano
- First Class Honours— Cynthia Hawkins
- Grade 8 Singing
- First Class Honours— Celine Mino
- Grade 3 Violin
- Honours— Margaret Dunning
- Grade 2 Violin
- Honours— Evelyne Rivard

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BINGO!

HAILEYBURY CURLING CLUB LOUNGE

SAT., MAR. 3rd

8.15 p.m.

DOOR PRIZE \$100.00 BLACKOUT

Admission: 50c for 20 Games Additional Cards 25c

EVERYBODY WELCOME

Chartered bus provided by Curling Club leaving Cobalt at 7.30 p.m., North Cobalt at 7.40 p.m. and returning direct from Curling Rink at 10.30 p.m.

COBALT-HAILEYBURY CURLING CLUB

Bingo! Sponsored by Haileybury Legion Ladies' Auxiliary

at **LEGION HALL** **TUE., FEB. 28th**

20 Games for 50c 4 Special Games Door Prize: \$25.00 Blackout Starts at 8.30 p.m.

"OSCAR" \$40.00 on 14 Numbers