



THIS TRIO could succeed Yvan Courmoyer, Dave Keon and Bobby Orr in 1990. Right now it's just the beginning of a long career for Paul Marchant, Mark Emond and Jocko Garton. Hockey school instructor Jim James stands behind. —(Staff Photo)



BEGINNERS give it their best effort during their time on the ice. —(Staff Photo)

Hockey School draws record enrolment

A record enrollment of 103 youngsters has forced Acton Recreation Committee's hockey school into two nights, instead of one this year. Half the group now take instruction Thursday nights between 6 and 7 at the community centre. The other half takes to the ice Tuesday nights at the same time. Enrollment represents an increase of 33 over last year.

Jim Casburn, a former recreation director, got the school started in the early 60's. Present arena manager Harold Townsley, Acton Minor Hockey

head coach Jim James, figure skating teacher Glen Skuce and George Edmondson are instructors this year.

Instructors teach the tots skating fundamentals in order to prepare them for house league hockey. Beginners with no previous skating experience are allowed to push a chair around the ice first, until they are steady enough on their skates to use a hockey stick.

Five girls joined the school this year, which could be a sign of even bigger changes in hockey

than have been witnessed in the past few years. Three year old Gregory James, Jim's son, is the youngest tot enrolled.

Registration fee is \$3.50 or \$4.50 per family if there are two or more from the same family enrolled. Youngsters get a total of 23 hours ice time, which averages out to about 15 cents a night. The school is a non-profit venture. Money received simply pays for the ice time.

Next year Mr. Townsley hopes a schedule of instruction can be drawn up for the entire season.



YOUNGSTERS start out pushing a chair around the ice until they're steady enough to use a hockey stick. —(Staff Photo)

Notes and Quotes

from the world of sport

By Denis Gibbons



The Tri-County Minor Hockey League is trying out a new system of scheduling this year, one they hope will prove satisfactory. Purpose of the system is to keep teams, even those eliminated from O.M.H.A. playoffs, playing group hockey right up until the end of March.

Beginning this week, the league schedule will be interrupted for three weeks so that teams may participate in an O.M.H.A. qualifying round which will declare winners in each of three classifications "AAA", "AA", and "A" to advance to the O.M.H.A. playoffs. Since Acton is the only "B" town in the league, local teams receive a bye into the playoffs.

This year, teams eliminated from O.M.H.A. playoffs will return to league play immediately. Group games will continue until the week of school winter holidays, when play will cease again so that all teams can participate in tournaments. Following tournament week, Tri-County league playoffs will commence. Teams previously ousted from O.M.H.A. play will still have a crack at a Tri-County league trophy. Acton teams will take part in the second half of the schedule, but will not enter league playoffs since they are already "B" group champions.

In past years, a consolation series has been organized for teams unsuccessful in O.M.H.A. playoffs, but it has proved far from satisfactory. Participation has been on a voluntary basis and several teams refused to enter the series. Some of those that did enter failed to meet game commitments and a number of players treated the games as exhibition affairs and resorted to unnecessary roughhouse tactics.

Have option

Teams that keep winning in O.M.H.A. play of course will not be required to revert to group play until such time as they are eliminated. However, they will have the option of playing both series at the same time, providing they first meet their O.M.H.A. playoff commitments.

League officials have also adopted a very sensible system of scheduling for the second half of the season. The top seven teams in each age group will play against each other and the bottom four in each division will battle it out.

In most of the five groups from novice to juvenile a very noticeable division occurs between the seventh and eighth place teams. More often than not, four towns, Acton, Hespeler, Streetsville and Preston hold down the bottom four spots. Grouping teams of approximately the same calibre should make for close exciting contests.

The new system is being given a trial run this year. If it fails, league execs will have to go back to the drawing board, but if it succeeds as we think it will, interest in Tri-County minor hockey will continue until the end of the season and will not fade for teams ousted from O.M.H.A. play, as it has previously.

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Two area hockey teams who moved up a class in the O.H.A. this year are finding the competition very tough in their new leagues.

Georgetown Raiders are wallowing in the cellar of the Niagara District Intermediate "A" loop and are gathering very little fan support. Raiders competed in the Central O.H.A. Intermediate "B" league for the past two seasons.

Milton Merchants, who helped form the brand new Mid-Ontario Junior "B" league, after several successful seasons of junior "C" play, are currently holding down fourth place in the five team Western division of the league. Merchants have been drawing between 400 and 600 fans a game, which is not to be sneezed at but it doesn't match the huge gates games between Merchants and the now defunct Georgetown Junior Raiders used to produce a few years ago.

The two towns continue to produce some of the finest hockey talent in the province, nevertheless. Georgetown native Paul Popiel is having his best NHL season as a winger with Vancouver Canucks, while brother Jan is making headlines with Tulsa Oilers of the CPHL. Younger brothers Dick and Dean, both stars with Georgetown bantams are making fans wonder about the possibility of all four brothers playing in the NHL at some future time.

Pete McDuffe, a Milton boy, meanwhile has been helping keep Omaha Knights on top of the seven team CPHL with his brilliant goaltending. McDuffe is being groomed by the Rangers to replace Ed Giacomin, when he retires.

Several Georgetown and Milton minor hockey grads are making names for themselves with junior "A" and college hockey squads, we well. Among the Georgetown grads are Juri Kudrasovs, Kitchener Rangers, Ron Fogal Toronto Marlboros, Paul Fendley Branford Majors, Mike Cummins Laurentian University and Dave McVeeney Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy New York.

Milton grads include Craig Brush Cornell University, Doug Hearn, Maurice Miljour and Tom Gooding Rensselaer, Bob Lee Michigan Tech and Keith Higgs Sheridan College.

Lions look sharp

Acton Lions juveniles turned in a topnotch effort to tie the triple "A" Guelph Beef Kings 1-1 in a Tri-County thriller at the community centre, Thursday night.

Solid defensive play by both teams highlighted the contest. Willie Muehlbacher played a steady game in the Acton nets.

Score early

All the scoring in the game took place in the opening 55 seconds. Bill Field scored from Gord Williams at the 45 second mark and John Brubacher tied it up for Guelph 10 seconds later on a pass from Ron Robinson.

Saturday night in Hespeler, Lions suffered a 6-2 defeat. Bill Field and Gord Williams were the Acton marksmen. Lions lost the services of defenceman Charlie Gidden, who broke a finger in the game. Goalie Craig Weldon is already sidelined with torn shoulder muscles.

Workout

Coach Ken Hearn and manager Carl Timbers will have their squad working out this week in preparation for the O.M.H.A. playoffs. Lions gained only two wins and a tie in the first half of their Tri-County schedule, but lost five games by a margin of one goal.

Novices lose Jeff Shields

Acton A-B novices were to have played Oakville minor novices here Saturday afternoon, but the Oakville team failed to show for some reason.

Novices play Guelph's minor team in Guelph this Saturday and have an exhibition game against a team from South Peel, scheduled for the community centre Sunday afternoon at 12.40.

Coach Barry Insoe received some bad news this week when he learned Jeff Shields one of the team's top forwards underwent an appendectomy and is now a patient in Guelph General Hospital. Jeff unfortunately will probably miss the rest of the season. His teammates, coach, assistant coach Gus Holmes and manager Don Van Fleet wish him a speedy recovery.

Free Press Sports Page

Bruce Sears to guide 1971 junior boxla Rams

Acton Rams junior lacrosse club proudly announced this week the appointment of Bruce Sears as coach for the 1971 season.



BRUCE SEARS
New Ram Coach

Bruce learned and played all his lacrosse in the Long Branch area of Toronto, which has long been a lacrosse hot bed in Ontario. He ended a lengthy playing career in 1960 with the Port Credit Sailors when they won the Mann Cup, emblematic of the Canadian Senior Lacrosse championship.

Coached Monarchs

After retiring as a player, Bruce moved on to coaching and refereeing in both minor and junior lacrosse. From 1962 - 1968 he coached one Ontario championship team and went to the Ontario finals on two other occasions with minor teams from Long Branch. In 1967 he coached Long Branch Monarchs to a fourth place finish in the 11 team OLA Junior "A" league. From 1965 to 1970 he refereed in both the OMLA and the OLA.

Hockey coach Bruce and his wife moved to

Tidey Ave. in Acton one year ago. Besides lacrosse, Bruce is also involved in minor hockey in Acton. He coaches a team in the Legion town league.

In Bruce, with his wide and varied lacrosse background, the Rams' executive feel they have found the ideal coach to lead the Rams to the 1971 Ontario championship.

Lacrosse meet

Howard Dwyer, Alan Hall and Ron McKnight will represent Acton Rams at the annual meeting of the Ontario Lacrosse Association at the Seaway Hotel in Toronto, this weekend.

O.M.H.A. reclassifies Fergus and Elmira

Ontario Minor Hockey Association entries from Fergus and Elmira have been moved up to the "A" series for towns with a population of more than 5000 and less than 10,000. The two towns were previously classified "B", (more than 3000 and less than 5000).

Re-classification of the towns is of interest to Acton minor hockey fans, since Elmira and Fergus have provided most of the first round playoff opposition for Acton minor teams for the past four years. Acton remains in the O.M.H.A.'s "B" classification.

Elevate New Hamburg

Also of interest to local fans is the elevation of New Hamburg from "C" to "B", which has aroused speculation Acton teams might square off with New Hamburg in the first round of playoff this year. New Hamburg, Fergus and Elmira are all members of the nearby Waterloo-Wellington group. Acton teams play in the Tri-County group.

Hespeler Minor Hockey officials were pleased to learn Ajax has been moved from "A" up to "AA". Hespeler bantams forced Ajax to the sixth game of the best of seven series, before bowing out in the provincial finals last year.

Midgets host Ancaster

Acton Midgets will host Ancaster in an exhibition game, tomorrow (Thursday) night at 8. Midgets have completed the first half of their Tri-County league schedule and are now awaiting word of their first opponent in the O.M.H.A. playoffs.

The locals won only four games out of 20, but have improved considerably of late. Since December 22, they have knocked

off first place Brampton and shutout both Preston and Streetsville.

Coach Jim James and manager Bill Knight feel their lads are reaching their peak just at the right time.

Minor Hockey is a major community affair. Show your interest during Minor Hockey Week, Saturday January 23 to Saturday January 30.


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MEET THE TANNERS



FRANK ANTHONY

Frank Anthony has provided reliable back-up netminding for the Tanners for the past three seasons. An Acton Minor Hockey Association grad, Frank was named MVP in the Acton Industrial league last year. This year he is leading the Industrial league in goals against average. Frank and wife Marie live on the farm he works at R.R. 1 Limehouse.



ED HILLIER

Newfoundland native Ed Hillier never played organized hockey until he moved to Acton four years ago. In his first season as a Tanner last year, Ed tallied eight goals and three assists in 11 games. He was also Acton Industrial scoring champ last year. Ed is an employee of Dufferin Materials and Construction. He lives in town with his wife Brenda and their daughter Stacey.

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