

Transfer to W-W league had beneficial effects

By Denis Gibbons

Acton's first season in the Waterloo-Wellington Minor Hockey League may have produced an extra workload and more headaches for minor hockey executives, but local teams showed more life, then they have in years. Spirit among the players was high, because of the more even competition the smaller league offered.

Composite record of Acton's five teams against Waterloo-Wellington clubs in regular season and playoff games was only a game under the .500 percentage mark, 64 wins, 65 losses and 15 ties. Last year in the Tri-County league, Acton teams won only 18 of 116 games.

These statistics should not be looked upon as a sign it will become progressively easier for Acton teams to win games in the future. Indeed, the fact the composite Acton record is still below the .500 mark indicates that Waterloo-Wellington teams are no "easy pickins."

Rather, they should provide a measure of satisfaction for local players and executives, who for the first time in 10 years realize they have a 50-50 chance of winning each game. That's a luxury they rarely knew in the Tri-County league, with half its teams drawing players from populations 10 times greater than Acton's.

All Acton ever asked for in the Tri-County league was a schedule, which would exempt them from play against Triple "A" teams.

The executive's refusal to allow Acton relief was hardly justified. Nowhere else in Ontario do towns of under 5,000 compete even close to favorably with Triple "A" teams. In the huge North York league, which includes centres from seven different population classifications from "AA" right down to "E", convenors have had enough common sense to split the league into three categories for scheduling purposes.

As recently as the first week of this month, O.M.H.A. 3rd vice-president

Bill Burell confided there may never have been a need for the Waterloo-Wellington league, if the Tri-County executive had seen fit to divide the 12 team league into two sections, five years ago. At that time Acton, Elmira, Orangeville and Fergus were all County members. One by one they broke away, unable to contend with the unbalanced competition situation.

Acton's move to the Waterloo-Wellington league also had a beneficial

side effect. Players with average ability, who had played nothing but house league hockey all their lives, became interested in O.M.H.A. play, knowing they would be matched against teams of approximately the same calibre.

This was most noticeable in the juvenile age bracket, where coach Ken Hearn and manager Carl Timbers were surprised to find themselves with a complete lineup of 16 eager, if not so

talented players. In a year when seven of the town's best juveniles understandably decided to turn junior. The juveniles were no world beaters, but 16 players, who might have otherwise sat on the sidelines, played hockey. There probably isn't another town in Ontario of comparable size, which could boast a 16 player juvenile team, as well as a junior team with an additional seven juvenile age players.

Beneficial effects of the league

switch overshadowed deficiencies in the new league's executive ranks, which caused some questionable decisions to be handed down.

Acton representatives were never sure about the dates of meetings, which changed like the wind. Some convenors, overburdened with work failed to compile league statistics, which resulted in a guessing game about who was ahead of who, when it came to O.M.H.A. playoff time.

Schedulers, lacking guidance in their job, draw up a schedule that was cut off, before it was completed. The cutoff cost Acton Firefighter bantams the right to the odd game in their series with New Hamburg.

League playoffs in some age groups were complicated by lack of communication between participating towns and convenors.

In any case, the organizational problems that arose are all capable of being rectified. The unbalanced competition factor Acton was faced with in the Tri-County league is something that necessitated a change in leagues. Acton minor hockey officials are glad they made it.

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Second Section

Photos by Bill Stuckey



A-B SUPERMARKET NOVICES placed first in the Waterloo-Wellington league, won the league play-off championship and the grand championship of the Port Colborne tournament. Front row l. to r. are, Wade Vickery, Chris Swetman, Scott Malcolm, Derrick Neeley, Bert Post. Second row l. to r.

are, manager Gus Holmes, assistant manager Don Van Fleet, Ricky Gibson, Bruce McPhail, George Brown, Shane Withers, Peter Muselius, coach Barry Incoe. Back row l. to r. are, Tom Rosenbersky, Lee-John Bonnell, Todd McIntyre, Dave McGilloway, Randy Van Fleet, Steve Van Der Eyken. —



FIREFIGHTER BANTAMS placed second in the Waterloo-Wellington league and were the only Acton team to make the second round of the O.M.H.A. playoffs. Front row l. to r. are, Byron Timbers, Mike Luty, Russ Van Fleet, Robin Incoe, Jeff Townsley. Second row l. to r. are, coach Harold Townsley, Steve

Papillon, Kent Kentner, John McAdam, manager Steve Townsley. Back row l. to r. are, Steve Brunelle, John Hansen, Joe Kentner, Wayne Allan, Steve Buchanan. Absent when photo was taken were, B. J. Legate, Danny Turner and Terry Slaven. —



Y'S MEN'S PEE WEES reached the Waterloo-Wellington league semi-finals, before being eliminated by Elora. Front row l. to r. are, Jamie Vickery, Russell Lee, Joe Gardin, Mark Morrison, Brad Buchanan. Second row l. to r. are, manager Paul Brown, Billy Manes,

Rick Van Fleet, coach Del Cook. Back row l. to r. are, Marvin McNabb, Barry McKerracher, Fred Allen, Steve McKnight, Randy Upton. Absent when photo was taken, were Ricky Holmes, Jeff Shields and assistant manager Charlie Harrison.



CFAW MIDGETS placed fourth in the Waterloo-Wellington league and lost to Orangeville in the quarter-finals. Front row l. to r. are, Jim McNabb, Ken Hurren, Rick Bonnette, Wade Knight, Charlie McRae. Second row l. to r. are, coach Jim James, Bill McGilloway,

Gary Fisher, Ken Withers, manager Ken Marshall. Back row l. to r. are, Steve Marshall, Russ Coultrup, Henry Toebes, Dave Lee, George Artem. Absent when photo was taken were, Terry Holmes, Dave Allan, Steve McIntyre and Tim McIntyre.



LIONS JUVENILES bowed out to Orangeville in the Waterloo-Wellington league semi-finals. Front row l. to r. are, Dan McGilloway, Bob Gray, Charlie Kuiken, Ted Hagen, Jeff Cooper. Second row l. to r. are, manager Carl Timbers, Ron Waltes, Mike Field, Harry

Lawson, Ted Muehlbacher, coach Ken Hearn. Back row l. to r. are, Tom Parkinson, Bren Irwin, Gord Williams, Bruce Cooksley, Jim Hobson. Absent when photo was taken was Gord Murray.

Dear Sirs:

As a mother of three hockey playing boys in your Legion house league, I have watched three games every weekend, since last November.

I think many of your coaches should ask themselves "Am I trying to win games or bolster my own ego?" Do I say "I won eight games", or "My boys won eight games". Which is most important?

Here are some suggestions that every coach associated with a minor hockey team should ask himself.

Am I trying to give kids a chance to play hockey?

Am I working to keep kids off the streets?

Am I really interested in boys?

Am I really trying to develop better citizens?

Do I know and am I teaching my boys the fundamentals of good sportsmanship?

AM I GIVING EVERY BOY AN EQUAL CHANCE TO PLAY HOCKEY?

Am I trying to see that the boys have fun playing hockey?

REMEMBER — enjoying the game is more important than the soon forgotten championships.

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—R. Smits,
P.O. Box 301

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