

Legion hockey workers maintain interest and dedication to cause

by Denis Gibbons
It's been a day or two since lifesavers like Vic Masters and Gordie James put their backs into heavy snow-laden steel scrapers and circled the Acton arena ice surface soaking up the half foot of water temporarily separating anxious youngsters from their beloved game of hockey.

More than 20 years and 4000 games later, the problems of operating a minor hockey program are slightly different, but the interest and dedication shown by the Acton Legion Minor Hockey Association in contributing towards this important part of the town's recreation has not changed.

What started out as a conversation around once an old wood stove has developed into Acton's largest single recreational organization, supplying hockey for 300 boys on 22 teams. There were 10 teams from the novice to bantam age brackets and about

150 boys when the organization was first formed in 1952. Legion minor hockey now occupies 10 hours of ice time every Saturday morning beginning at 7 and another hour on Sunday. Atom and midget age groups were added to the program five years ago and last year was the first that any group had as many as six teams.

Cooperation
"We actually have a very loosely-operated organization," says Gordie James, one of the founders. "We don't even have minutes of meetings, but it works. We've been able to get the help and cooperation of many groups and individuals whenever we needed it."

The local Branch 197 and the Legion Ladies Auxiliary have been particularly faithful in providing facilities for fundraising dances and registrations and catering for banquets and tournament lunches.

Kerwin McPhail now chairs the minor hockey committee, which has been made up of countless volunteers over the 20 year period.

Herb Woods, Herb Cook, Mike Bennett, Vic and Lorne Masters and George "Shorty" Hollinger were members of the original committee. Bill Buchanan, Gord Cunningham, Dude Lindsay, Ted Pope and George Cooper and the ever popular Charlie Thomson served in later years.

On the present committee along with Kerwin are, Bob Loutet, Gord McCutcheon, Ivan Kilby, Alan Hall, Ab Irwin and John Toebes.

Fixture
John Toebes has become a Saturday morning fixture at the arena, the same as Charlie Thomson was before his death last year. John makes sure games are started on time, referees are available and statistical reports of games get to

the Free Press office.

"Without John we could be in real trouble on a Saturday morning," chairman Kerwin McPhail admits.

A plaque donated by the group in Charlie's memory now goes annually to persons making outstanding recreational contributions in town.

Also assisting as convenors for the first time this year were Clarence Hill (novice), Bruce Sears (peewee), Harry Ensing (bantam) and Gary McEachern (midget). Mrs. Dave McKnight and Ellie Toebes helped compile statistics and Ron McKnight showed up faithfully to look after time-keeping duties.

President McPhail cites the cooperation of the local parks and recreation committee, who he says have been very fair in setting ice time rates as one major reason the Legion organization has been able to keep registration fees at such a reasonable level. For a grand total of \$3 this year each boy got 20 weeks of hockey, a sweater, crest and refreshments on the Day of Champions.

Rural lads
The comparatively low fees have attracted several district families, who previously took their boys to Milton, Georgetown or Guelph to play minor hockey. Registration figures this year showed that 40 percent of the 330 boys signed were from outside the town of Acton.

A monthly lottery conducted the local Branch, dances and the annual peewee house league tournament are the association's major sources of revenue. The group's operating costs last year were close to \$7000.

The tournament, which was staged on the final weekend of February for the fourth consecutive year recently is one of the few in Ontario that offer house league players a chance to play out of town for a day. It has become one of the highlights of Acton's winter sports program.

4-town journey
The 4-town tournament, which has been running annually since the early '50s has also been an important sidelight of Legion minor hockey. Select teams from

the novice, peewee, bantam and midget house leagues compete once a year against their counterparts from Georgetown, Streetsville and Orangeville. This year's tournament will take place in Orangeville's brand new community centre, Saturday, April 7.

In the organization's infant years the popular "Booster Nights", held annually in the arena were the sole source of revenue. Complete with minor hockey games, figure skating, comical broomball contests between local service clubs and clowns, "Booster Nights" were an entertainment bargain.

Standard Products spiel at Acton curling club

By Bob MacArthur
Saturday was "Standard Products Day" at Acton Curling Club.

The sizeable plant in Georgetown makes suot parts and is just one of the Canadian branches. Other plants are at Stratford and Windsor. The Stratford and Georgetown plant took part in the bonspiel.

A full 16 teams lined up for the two games with some teams from each plant and other teams as combinations of both plants.

The winning team was skipped by Les Cook with his wife Jean. They come from Stratford. The other part of the winning combination was from

Georgetown, Bill and Norma Weir.

Walter Najarsen, president of the Canadian operations, took part and presented the trophy.

The Stratford players chartered a bus for the ride to Acton. Supper was served the curlers and all partook of the dance that followed.

Orangeville ousts A-Bs
Orangeville bounced back to score twice in the second period and once in the third.

"It was won of our better efforts against Orangeville. We outshot them, but couldn't connect on enough changes," manager Del Cook reported.

Orangeville won the first two games of the series 6-0 and 3-0.



SORTING out tickets for the peewee McPhail, Ab Irwin, Ivan Kilby and Gordie tournament are l. to r., Chairman Kerwin James. (D. Gibbons photo)



JOHN Toebes checks dressing room designations. (D. Gibbons photo)

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Bants bow to Bay Ridges

Acton Firefighter bantams pulled a few surprises before bowing out of the Georgetown International bantam tournament in the "C" series semifinals Friday.

Firefighters battled Bay Ridges to a 2-2 tie in the morning game, but dropped the second contest in the afternoon 6-1.

Ricky Holmes, one of the team's five "mighty mites" scored the first Acton goal in Friday morning's game. Steve Buchanan netted the second on a pass from John McCutcheon.

Acton led 2-0 going into the third period, before Chris Papatheodoran and Terry White scored for Bay Ridges. Robin Insoce was outstanding in the Acton nets throughout the game.

Another "mighty mite", Freddie Allen alertly guided a pass past the Bay Ridges goalie

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