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Firefighters take consolation crown at New Hamburg Christmas Tourney

Acton Sabres coach Fred Buchanan was not behind the Sabres bench last Wednesday when his club toiled with the Georgetown Gemini. He was in the stands observing, trying to find ways to get his slumping Sabres back on the winning track.

In his absence Dave McKnight held the reins. McKnight coached the Sabres back when they were Junior 'C' and then in their first season of Junior 'B'.

Last season's All-Ontario Zone Champion, Major Atoms last week received rings to commemorate their victory in the final over Milton.

There was a small problem encountered in receiving the rings by mail and it wasn't until last week that the rings could be presented by Larry Taillefer of Telly's Upholstery.

When Acton Sabres and the Georgetown Gemini skated onto the ice at the community centre last Wednesday, people couldn't honestly believe the hockey they were about to witness was going to be close to hockey Streetsville Derbys and Burlington Cougars might supply but it did prove to be interesting.

The Gemini and the Sabres are currently sitting in the last two spots in the Central Ontario 'B' league and although the hockey wouldn't be good, the outcome would be in doubt.

Right from the time the teams and referee stepped on the ice you knew that there could easily be trouble.

With a losing hockey team tempers seem to flare rather easily. The game was between the rival Halton Hills clubs and, with what I feel has to be one of the league's most incompetent officials working the game things were destined to erupt.

The referee was Allan Dawe and the Sabres had seen him on two previous occasions. He was in Acton the night the Milton Flyers topped Acton 10-6. In that game the officiating was by no means 'good' with several cheap shots and slashes thrown but it was a darn sight better than his debut in Acton.

On that particular night the Oakville Blades were in town supplying the Sabres opposition. It had to be one of the poorest officiating jobs of the season that I have seen.

Players on both benches were literally laughing at Dawe as they hit, fought, high sticked, slashed and did anything else they could get away with until the point where nine players were ejected from the game after a mass brawl at centre ice.

It was evident to me, during the Blades game, that Dawe was not capable of refereeing the junior 'B' level of hockey or he was having a very bad night. Even a referee can have a bad night, just like a player.

The answer came out on Wednesday night.

The slashes were endless and the cheap shots became ever so much more evident as the players on both sides realized what they could get away with.

There were a total of 110 minutes in penalties given out by Dawe as he tried to take the players to the penalty box two at a time.

I could not believe my eyes at times as Dawe watched and then waited, for retaliation, fan reaction, or anything else he could find. It seemed he didn't want either team playing a man short.

There is a five minute high sticking rule which is used to curb sticks making contact above the normal height of the shoulders. An Acton player was making his way to the players' box for a quick change and a Georgetown stick made contact in such a way over the players' helmets that it could be heard all over the arena.

Maybe it was an accident but from where I was standing it looked more like a Whoops, Gotcha, than a Whoops, Sorry. However, the Acton player turned around, objecting to the infraction and striking back with a slash of his own. Dawe saw fit to give each player two minutes. The Acton infraction, granted, didn't deserve much more than two minutes but I must question the official's decision of two minutes for the Georgetown player.

Things like that continued all night long. Hit and slash, hit and slash. But that wasn't the thing that got the Sabres and fans riled up the most.

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Acton Bantam Firefighters were the first team from the Acton Minor Hockey Association to bring home silverware this season.

The team was in New Hamburg over the past week for that town's Christmas Tournament.

The Firefighters fell in their first round game 4-3 to Exeter but then put everything together as they made the run to the Consolation Championship and trouncing the host New Hamburg team for the title with a 6-1 win. In reaching the final, Acton topped Monkton by a 7-1 score, and Rockton 10-0.

The scoring came quick in the opening game loss for the Firefighters as they netted two of their three counters and allowed Exeter three goals in the first period.

Exeter jumped into a two goal lead over the first two minutes and then allowed Tim Evans to net Acton's first of the day from Gord McArthur and Ken Kavanagh. Acton allowed Exeter to regain the two goal margin before Mark Duval scored from Rob Vermeulen and Wayne McMillan before the period ended. The Exeter second period counter was what proved to be the winner as they

regained their two goal lead for the third time. Rob Vermeulen scored from Mark Duval at the midway point of the final frame but the Acton club could not find the equalizer.

"The team played one of its poorest games of the year," said coach Steve Marshall of the game.

It took the Firefighters a while to get going in their first round consolation match with Monkton.

After a scoreless first period the bantams exploded, scoring three in the second frame and

adding four more in the third.

Tim Evans netted the first Acton goal from Ken Kavanagh and Rob Vermeulen at the 2:31 of the frame. Rob Vermeulen scored one of his own at the 4:21 mark from Rick Greenley to give Acton a two goal lead. Tim Evans found the mark for the second time in the period to round out the Acton scoring from Tim Ferguson and Mark Duval.

Gord McArthur, added two goals in the final frame with Wayne McMillan and Mark Duval adding singles.

Duval assisted on two of the goals with Tim Evans, Tim Ferguson, and Rob Vermeulen adding singles. One of Gord McArthur's goals and Mark Duval's counters came while the Firefighters were shorthanded. Coach Marshall felt his team "moved the puck well and had many more good scoring chances." The Firefighters' third game of the tournament was a definite mismatch as Acton scored seven times in the first period en route to a 10-0 win over Rockton. Gord McArthur opened the scoring, with his first of two from Rob Vermeulen at the one minute mark.

A minute later Wayne McMillan found the range from Tony Sheppard and Mark Duval.

At that point the Firefighters went dry. At least until the six minute mark of the period when they really exploded. Over the last four minutes of the period the Firefighter found the goal five times.

Gord McArthur and Tim Evans added second period goals to put the game out of reach for the host club. Duval assisted on both goals with Vermeulen helping on the other.

Gord McArthur scored the only goal of the third period as the Firefighters recorded the 6-1 win picking up the silver medals, crests and the Consolation Championship trophy donated by the New Hamburg Firefighters.

Coach Marshall was pleased with the way his team carried out the game plan in the final, dumping the puck in and forcing New Hamburg into many mistakes. Marshall pointed out Tim Evans, Gord McArthur and Mark Duval as the outstanding players over the four tournament games. The Bantams now return to league action. Next home game for the Firefighters is January 9 when Elora will be the visitors.

Team members include Tim Baker, Bruce Shannon, Tom Shannon, Mark Duval, Rob Vermeulen, Brad Manes, Gord McArthur, Tim Evans, Ken Kavanagh, Wayne McMillan, Tony Sheppard, Tim Ferguson, Rick Greenley, Brian Canary, Andy Valvods, Fred Kappert, Dean Hughes, and Jeff McNabb. Coach, Steve Marshall, manager Barb Currie.

Firefighters found the mark only once in the second period, that coming off the stick of Mark Duval.

In the third period Acton got goals from Wayne McMillan and Brian Canary to bring the total to ten. Duval assisted on two of the counters with Vermeulen adding on another.

Bruce Shannon and Tim Baker shared the shut-out.

In the Consolation Championship game with New Hamburg, the Firefighters struck early getting goals from Tim Ferguson and Mark Duval in the first 1:11 of the hockey game. Gord McArthur assisted on the Ferguson goal while Wayne McMillan and Andy Valvods assisted on the Duval counter. New Hamburg got back



Prospect Park is not only a place to enjoy summer swimming, roller skating and sun bathing, some find the winter a popular time for such things as cross country skiing, snowmobiling or skating.

Terry Bateman and Randy McIntyre found some time to do a little snowmobiling last week. Terry enjoys his machine and is making plans to race it before the season is over.



One of the most popular uses for Prospect Park during the winter has been the use of the lake banks for tobogganing. Darryl Johnson and some friends made a ramp on the north side of Fairy Lake and enjoyed maneuvering the toboggans over it, even if it meant taking a slight spill.

Losses to Gemini hurting Sabres as playoff spot moves further away

If the Acton Sabres could do like the rest of the teams in the Central Ontario Junior 'B' Hockey League, and beat the Georgetown Gemini, their chances of catching a play-off spot would have been greatly enhanced.

The Gemini have now won five games in the Junior 'B' season, three at the expense of the Sabres. If the Sabres had won the three matches with the Gems they would have a point total of 22. That would be good for eighth spot in the stand-

ings and most importantly, a play-off spot.

The losses leave the Sabres in eleventh spot with 16 points. A total, they have carried for six weeks. The Sabres fell to the Gemini by a 6-4 count in the latest Halton Hills battle, giving the Gemini the town title for the third successive year, the teams meet only four times a season and the Gems have won three of three. In other action the Sabres fell by a wide 11-3 count to the Orillia Travelways. The Sabres' home contest with the Georgetown team was marred by fights with the game being held up on several occasions as players met in fistbuffs.

The hockey could not be considered sensational either. The two bottom placed clubs provided hockey that demonstrated missed passes,

checks and goals. Neither team could obtain much of an advantage throughout the contest as teams battled evenly.

The game looked as if it was going to be the end of the Sabres losing streak as they scored goals from Denis Charbonneau and Paul Salvibusburg in the first ten minutes to jump into a 2-0 lead. Glenn Murray assisted on the Charbonneau counter with Wade Vickery helping on Salvibusburg's.

Georgetown came back with a goal from Bob Allison before the frame ended. The Gemini tied the game as Gary Thompson found the distance to open the second period. The Sabres regained the lead when Denis Charbonneau was credited with an unassisted goal as he tried to reach one of his players with a pass in front of the

Georgetown net. The pass was intercepted by Gemini netminder Chris Salja and inadvertently redirected into his own net. The Gemini tied the game with six minutes remaining in the period and then took the lead for the first time on a powerplay goal with 2:05 remaining. Georgetown scored again at the midway point of the final stanza to take a two goal lead. Mark Schinkel came back to net the twine from Neil Anderson with six minutes remaining to set the stage for a thrilling ending.

The thrilling ending was not the hockey, it was how the Gemini got their last goal. Each team had two players in the penalty box yet Georgetown apparently carried an extra skater on the surface. Greg Thompson stepped over the blueline and found the corner over the

shoulder of Acton goalie Kent Moffatt.

Georgetown coach Harold Schooley said after the game he didn't know how many skaters he had on the ice "and to be truthful" he said "I don't know how many I should have had."

Dave McKnight, who was filling in for Fred Buchanan behind the Sabres bench, was upset that the official hadn't caught the number of Georgetown skaters. "It's pretty poor when the official can't count to four in 15 seconds." That's the amount of time McKnight feels it took Georgetown to score after the Acton bench had directed the officials attention to the player numbers. The goal gave the Gemini a two goal lead and margin of victory. Schooley felt the reason his Gemini came

back to win after the Sabres jumped into a 2-0 lead was Acton's non-aggressiveness over the final 20 or 30 minutes. Sabres coach Fred Buchanan was busy keeping statistics during the contest and when asked what happened he just pointed to the stats sheet. It showed the Sabres giving the puck away 17 times in the first period and accounting for 24 hits. At that point, the Sabres held a 2-1 lead.

In the second period, the Sabres gave the puck away almost twice as many times—33—and had only eleven hits. The Gemini outscored them in that frame 3-1.

In the final frame the Sabres managed only four hits and gave the puck away 22 times.

Buchanan expects his

club to amass 60 hits per game if they expect to win. They made contact only 39 times.

Kent Moffatt stopped 15 shots in each of the three periods while Salja blocked 31 Sabre drives.

The long trip to Orillia must have taken some of the teams skating legs away from them as they could stay with the Travelways for only the first half of the game.

The Travelways scored three unanswered goals in the first frame but Acton didn't give up the fight. Wade Vickery scored from Neil Anderson and Brad Buchanan to start the middle stanza and Kelly Shaw hit from Glenn Murray before the period reached its midpoint.

From then on it was all Orillia as they outscored the Sabres 8-1 in the last

half of the contest. After the Sabres pulled to within one, Orillia came back with three goals to hold a 6-2 second period lead. Five more in the final frame brought their total to 11. The Sabres only counter in the last 30 minutes came off the stick of Glenn Murray. Mark Schinkel assisted.

The Travelways added insult to injury when they made the total 11. The last Orillia goal came while the Sabres had a two man advantage.

Bob Morley and Steve Simons combined to stop 39 Sabre shots while Rob Brenner blocked the same number in the Acton net.

The Sabres will be looking to regain the winning way that they started the '78-'79 season with when they return to the place it all began, Oakville, in their first game of 1979.

Bantams edge Woolwich

Acton Rotary Minor Bantams captured their fourth league win in a row in Woolwich last week.

The bantams played what coach Ed Hillier thought was the club's best game of the year as they scored a 3-1 win to move into a second place tie with the defeated Woolwich team.

Paul Vermeulen opened the scoring for Acton from Mike Yelowica at the one minute mark of the opening frame. Woolwich came back less than two minutes later to tie the game.

The game remained tied for a period and a half before Wayne McMillan scored to give Acton the lead for the second time. Mike Yelowica assisted.

An unassisted goal by Brian Demone with 39 seconds remaining secured the Acton win.



Central Ontario Junior 'B' standings

Team	GP	W	L	T	F	A	P
Burlington	30	27	2	1	204	86	55
Streetsville	28	26	2	0	226	80	52
Oakville	30	19	11	0	190	143	38
Oakridges	31	15	11	5	166	158	35
Orillia	31	14	13	4	150	157	32
Brampton	32	14	15	3	143	145	31
Thornhill	31	12	14	5	131	149	29
Milton	32	10	18	4	149	211	24
Dixie	30	9	16	5	135	156	23
Barrie	30	10	19	1	134	181	21
Acton	31	7	22	2	132	201	16
Georgetown	32	5	25	2	120	213	12

Acton goaltender Kent Moffatt must wonder if the rest of his teammates were playing a joke on him at the arena last Wednesday night. The Sabres didn't leave Kent to do all the work but he was

forced to make 45 stops as the Gemini topped Acton for the third time in three meetings, this time 6-4. In other action the Sabres fell to Orillia 11-3.