

Surprising Sabres sure showed Gibbons



Diana Waltmann

A long, long time ago, when I was still a little girl, there lived a sports editor named Denis Gibbons.

He was born and raised in a small town called Acton and grew up to become the revered sports writer of the local

newspaper aptly named the Acton Free Press.

Yes, this very same paper you are now reading.

Every week in this paper he would scribe some observations and witticisms on sports in Acton.

Probably the most favorite part of his job as sports editor was covering the Acton Sabres who were then Junior C.

Each week he'd rush off to the arena to watch the Sabres do their stuff. All was well in sportswriterland.

But the lure of the big time was just too great for Gibbons. Onwards and upwards he moved, first to Georgetown and then stardom at the Burlington Post.

But he hasn't forsaken the Sabres, who

since moved into Junior B status. Although he must cover the rival Burlington Cougars, Gibbons still holds a soft spot in his heart for our own Swordsman.

So much in fact, he wrote a column about them the other day. He wrote about the folks in Tannerytown (that's us), having made suggestions "that the goose-pimpled skin of one Denis Gibbons be the first tacked to the wall of the Old Hide House."

"Under it (he wrote), would appear a simple inscription.

"But the only thing sure, besides death and taxes, he regrets to say, is that the Acton Sabres will be last again."

His prediction of the Sabres along with the rest of the Junior B league, appeared in the Sept. 27 issue of the Post.

Ho!Ho!Ho! Jules Russiani and the Sabres sure showed him. The season is at the midway point and Acton isn't anywhere near last place. Ha! Ha! Ha! They do indeed, as Gibbons puts it, have a comfortable hold on fourth place.

Not only that, (teehee) the Sabres have already beaten the Cougars into submission once this season 8-6 in November.

The fact they lost Friday night (after suffering an incurable bout of home ice sickness) 7-6 in Burlington is of little consequence. You can still catch an Acton Sabre fan gloating and with just cause.

After all the last time, according to Gibbons, who remembers better than I do, Acton had an OHA championship team was in 1938-39 when the Intermediate B Tanners

won it. They grace the front cover of the Sabres program.

And the Sabres of this year have already buried most other records, like total points scored in a season (21).

Now if I might go back to the end of last season, when Russiani told me the Sabres would do no worse than fourth this year, I might admit that I too, was skeptical, but I left the forecasting to gypsies and hockey coaches.

Granted, the Gibber was correct in his assessment of the Cougars and the Oakville Blades battling it out for first place and Georgetown in 10th and Barrie in 11th as he predicted.

But for the rest of it, well, the Gibber is eating his words.

Last place, indeed. That'll teach him.

Sabres' wins and total points scored isn't the only upwardly mobile thing in the organization. Frank Allsop, Sabre pres., says attendances on the whole has risen. Wednesday night games don't attract too many spectators, but Friday games usually have a good crowd.

Sports copy deadline for next week's paper is Monday morning at 9 a.m. If you can't get your game sheets in by then, don't worry. They'll be published the following week.

Free Press

sports and recreation

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Second Section

Winning not a sure thing

Two weekend games and their results brought the Acton Sabres down from cloud nine and back into reality.

The Sabres, undefeated in their last 12 games, losing only once in the last 19 matches, has finally got their come uppance, but not from the first-place Burlington Cougars which defeated them Friday 7-6.

Instead they received a lesson from an improved Thornhill Thunderbirds club, of which the Sabres narrowly defeated 4-3 Saturday at the Community Center.

"We played terrible," said coach Jules Russiani of Saturday's match. He said in spite of the loss suffered the day before, the Sabres are taking winning for granted.

"The enthusiasm is not at the level it was two weeks ago," said Russiani.

"They play only good enough to win. That doesn't thrill me."

Russiani said they didn't take the loss to Burlington as a major thing. The Cougars are in first place after all, and the Sabres did play well enough to win. Only a disallowed goal in the final seconds of play prevented a tie.

But says Russiani, "a loss is a loss as far as I am concerned. I don't care who you lose to."

The Sabres may have taken the Thunderbirds and a victory for granted, but Thornhill wanted a win badly.

Steve Miller opened the scoring at 3:02 in the first period assisted by Paul Stark.

But Thunderbirds came back to tie it at

9:59.

Barry Trood put the Sabres ahead again at 13:40 of the second period, but it was short-lived lead as the Thunderbirds came back on the power play tying it at 13:13.

Then they capitalized on another powerplay opportunity to take a one-goal lead with only 23 seconds left in the period.

That shook the Sabres up a little, so Glen Murray wasted no time in scoring the third-period equalizer. Trood and Tony Dulisse assisted on the play at 1:22.

David McGilloway scored the clincher at 6:19 on an unassisted play.

Mark Duval and Murray picked up the other Acton aids.

Russiani thought his Sabres may have pulled out a tie in Friday's game.

The Swordsman battled back from a 5-1 deficit in the second period to come within one of a sister-kisser.

Then with 1:38 left in the game, and goalie Wayne McDougall pulled in favor of the extra attacker, Cougar goaltender Mark Green found the puck in his net.

But the referee disallowed the goal, saying it was knocked down by a high stick.

Russiani said he was sure Green was the player who knocked the puck down.

"We shot it from the point, he reached high and knocked it down with a high stick then Trood knocked it into the net. I was sure we had it but, the ref disallowed it."

Dulisse was first on the scoreboard at 12:50 in the opening frame. Burlington tied

it at 15:33.

The Cougars unleashed four goals in the second at 36 seconds, 8:43, 11:24 and 15:13. Trood replied for Acton at 15:30.

Murray made it 5-3, 49 seconds into the third period, also on an unassisted goal. Burlington came back with their sixth goal.

Rob Vermuelen connected on the powerplay at 9:05, but once again the Cougars countered, scoring at 10:32.

Sabres looked out of it until the 16:09 when Vermuelen potted his second marker of the night. Trood put the Sabres within one at 18:50.

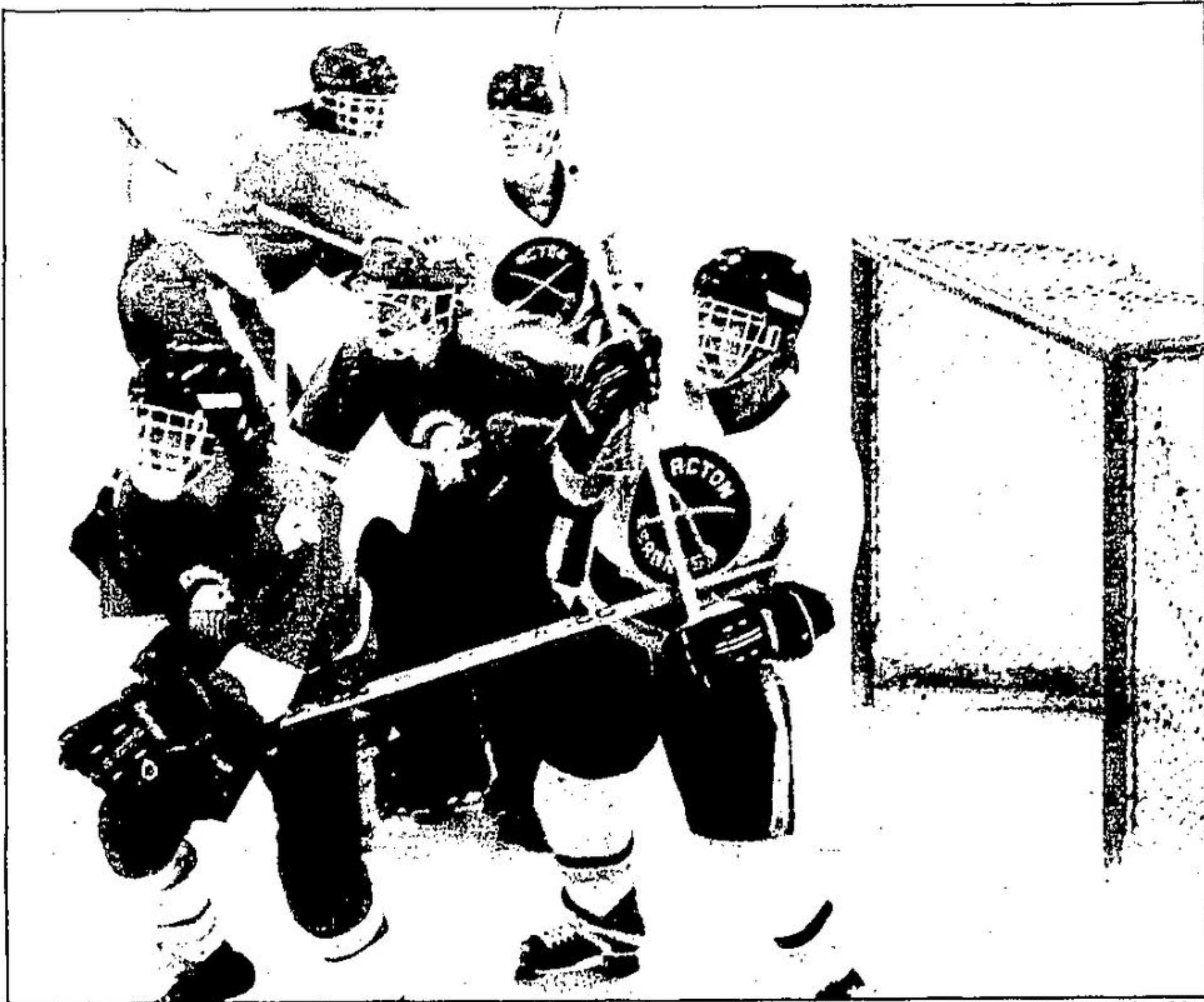
Mike Monahan assisted on both of Vermuelen's goals. McGilloway earned a pair while Vermuelen picked up a single.

Last Tuesday the Sabres met the Derby's in Streetsville picking up a 9-4 victory. Both Monahan and Steve Miller collected a pair of goals, with singles to McGilloway, Fung, Vermuelen, Trood and Murray.

McDougall earned his first point as a Sabre, collecting an assist on Murray's goal. Denis Kirtan, Duval, Monahan, McGilloway, Murray, Roy Dolman, Vermuelen, Trood, Miller and Williams received additional assists.

Russiani said he was going to rebuild the Sabre's enthusiasm for tomorrow's game in Brampton. Friday at the Community Centre they meet Orillia.

The Sabres, said Russiani, are not quite as good as they think they are. Yet.



The Acton Sabres swarm around Thunderbirds' net Saturday in their 4-3 win over Thornhill. The Sabres were defeated Friday night in Burlington, ending their 12-game undefeated streak. Sabres, says coach Jules Russiani are taking winning for granted and it's costing them.

Figure skaters do well at yearly Club competition

Members of the Acton Figure Skating Club performed well during their annual Club competition Thursday night at the Community Center.

Thirty skaters competed in events ranging from beginner's free skate to interpretive girls.

Four girls passed their national badge test; Wendy Norton, Tracey Bruce, Paula MacPherson and Reni Suzen Smith. They had to perform the saichow, one foot spin, forward inside edges and backward outside edges.

Tracey Oakley placed first in the beginner's free skate, with Ann Gardener second, Gillian Brain third, Cheryl Genoe fourth, Kim Petty fifth and Stacey Perry sixth.

Genoe and Heath Norton teamed up to win the mixed dance with Ann Gardener and John Gardener placing second.

Susan Auty came first in the pre-juvenile girls competition. Lisa Gilliss placed second.

Cindy Brouillard won top spot in the juvenile girls' division with Andree Charlebois second.

First place in the intermediate interpretive girls division went to Karen McEachern. Sharon Campbell was next in line, followed by Sarah Homer, Colleen Petty, Andree Charlebois, Lori deBruyn and Lisa Gillis. In the interpretive competition, skaters are judged on their interpretation of the music. The musical selection is not known to the skaters until

the warm-up before the competition and is then played three times.

Also skating were Stacey Perry and Tina Krzyzik in the similar dance, Heath Norton on his own in the beginner boys free skate, Sharon Campbell in the novice girl's and Michael Creighton in the boy's free skate.

Other competitors were Jennifer Pearce, Brenda Porty, Kara Leatherland, Nancy Norton and Kim Griggs.

Three members of the Canadian Figure Skating Association were judges at the event. First, second and third place finishers were awarded ribbons.

The next big event for the Acton Figure Skating Club is the annual skateathon, this year scheduled for Monday, Dec. 22. (Photos on B3)

Lakeview scores upset

Last-place Lakeview Centre upset first-place Family Cleaners 4-1 Sunday in industrial hockey action at the Community Centre.

Heller's handed Neilsen's Clothing an 8-2 loss and Acton Travel bumped ATW 6-2 in the other games played Sunday.

Bert Post clinched the victory for Lakeview Centre in their upset, scoring a pair of goals in the third period.

Chris Tennant opened the scoring for Family Cleaners only 28 seconds into the first period.

But Lakview soon tied it up with John Sykes connecting at 1:11. Then Ernie Ruck put them in front with his goal at 11:02.

The middle frame remained scoreless, leading to Post's pair at 3:25 and 15:21 of the third.

Dave Thompson and Steve Atkinson assisted on his goals.

Bart Jacobs, Ruck and Atkinson again earned other Lakeview aids.

Kent Kenner picked up a point on Tennant's goal.

Bruce Cooksley netted the hat trick to

lead Heller's to their 8-2 victory over Neilsen's.

Neilsen's held a 1-0 lead on a goal by John Snow going into the second period but Heller's tied it via a marker from Russ Van Fleet. They went ahead by one with Jim Roger's goal.

Heller's exploded in the third with six goals from Bill Manes, Oliver Cooper, Van Fleet and Cooksley's triple play.

Lloyd Smallwood and Ron Schmidt were the other Neilsen's marksmen.

Cooksley also earned three assists in the game with a pair going to Rogers and Van Fleet. Cooper and Bill Severinski picked up singles.

Snow collected a pair of aids for Neilsen's with a single to Bruce MacPherson.

Henry Toebes collected a hat trick as Acton Travel dumped ATW 6-2 Sunday.

He opened the scoring just 28 seconds into the game, assisted by George McPhail and John Ashley.

McPhail connected for a goal of his own at 6:38 before Toebes scored his second marker at 9:25 ending the first period 3-0 for

Acton Travel.

Claire Snow potted a fourth Travel marker at 10:38 in the only scoring play of the second frame.

ATW replied with two goals by Jim Hurly and Jim Posuick at 8:43 at 16:55, but Toebes put the game away with his third goal at 17:33.

George Artem made it final at 18:09.

Steve Townsley, Gary Moore and Bruce McPhail aided on ATW's goals.

Toebes added a pair of assists to his game total, Artem picked up three, with McPhail and Ashley, getting the other aids.

Sunday industrial action continues with Acton Travel facing Cleaners at 7 p.m., Heller's meeting ATW at 8:20 and Neilsen's and Lakeview Centre squaring off at 9:40.

Moms blank Kitchener

Minor atom Moms and Scrooge have something in common. Scrooge wouldn't give any Christmas presents and the Moms wouldn't give Kitchener any goals.

They blasted Kitchener G's 6-0 last Wednesday at the Community Center.

Rene VanKesteren scored two goals while other marksmen were Jeff McRae, Mike Williams, Jason Boose and Mike Brower.

Williams, VanKesteren, Sean Sears, Steve Robertson, Phillip Landriault and Tim Tibbits earned assists.

Short-handed goals clinch Laing atoms a 4-1 victory

Two short-handed goals by Greg Leatherland and Craig Cadenhead clinched a 6-1 victory for the Laing Construction major atoms Saturday at the Community Center.

Friday they bumped Waterloo 4-1, also at the rink.

Carl Yaroschak scored a pair of goals in the opening frame. His first came at 1:32 before John Van Dam potted the second marker at 2:67, followed by Yaroschak's next goal at 3:21.

Troy Foster made it 4-0 at 9:42 in the second period, leading to Leatherland's and Cadenhead's short-handed markers at 4:49 and 9:55 in the third.

Kitchener spoiled Laing's bid for a shutout when they replied with a powerplay

Firefighters douse Oakville, Elora

Despite being short four players, Acton Firefighter major bantams came up with a 6-2 victory in an exhibition play with a house league Oakville team Sunday.

The score might have been closer but Acton goaltenders McKendry and John McGrath were outstanding in nets.

David Milne picked up a hat trick in the game while Randy Coverdale scored a pair. Richard Kilpatrick netted the single goal.

Friday the Firefighters were outplayed by a strong Hespeler club, dropping a 5-1 decision.

Although Acton defeated Hespeler 10-2 earlier in the season, Friday's match showed why they are ahead of the bants in the standings.

Rick Dodds scored the lone Acton marker.

Although David McKnight did not officially receive an assist, he did help out on Dodds' marker by lying on top of the

Hespeler net minder during the goal.

The Firefighters started the week by blasting Elora 12-3.

Once again Elora was short-staffed, using players from the minor bantam and peewee levels, yet still put up a good effort.

staying in the game in the early stages.

But eventually the Firefighters started rolling. Chris Hicks, Todd Laing, Dods and Brad Youmans each scored two goals. Other Acton marksmen were Milne, Coverdale, Kilpatrick and Paul Cargill.

Dear Santa: for Christmas I want...

by Diana Waltmann

Most people want dolls or Star Wars (Empire Strikes Back), snow speeders or even a cosy pair of slippers for Christmas.

But there is a certain group of people involved in the local sports scene that are wishing to find something slightly different under their tree Christmas morning.

Jules Russiani, coach of the Acton Sabres isn't greedy. He wants only one thing—second place in the central junior B hockey standings. Sabres are now fourth. "I'd be very, very thrilled with that," he says.

Richard Vanderwal, president of the Acton Soccer Club wants "a 1981 season we can be proud of." He also wishes to enhance the game of soccer in the town of Acton... "a game everyone looks forward to."

It would be nice to have enough equipment without worrying about it too, he adds.

Bob Johnston wants more or less the same thing as president of the Acton Minor Ball Association. "We'd like a group of kids to have as much fun as

those from last year and a lot of active parent support."

Then he adds, "We'd also like to have good relationships with all other baseball groups in town competing for diamond time."

"May the most needy group win."

Carol Campbell says the nicest present the Acton Figure Skating Club could receive is continued success and enjoyment for skaters and lots of parent support. "Watching our children progress and do well in tests and badges and all competitions would be nice," she said.

Bruce Cargill, president of the Acton Minor Hockey Association feels the town is being a little "scrooge-like" with their ice time. "We'd appreciate a full 60 minutes instead of 50 when we pay for ice time," he says.

That and having parents watch the game and let the coach do the coaching.

Tennis people always want tennis balls for Christmas, says Joan Morris, president of both the Acton Tennis Club and Acton Badminton Club, "and badminton people would like a dozen birds (Continued on B3)



The Firefighter major bantams doused Elora Tuesday night at the Community Centre in Hub league action. Although Elora was short-staffed and put up a good fight, the Firefighters won it.