

Her words aren't hard to swallow

Anne Lepick is hoping she'll have to eat her words. Back in September, when her junior basketball club was just starting to practice, coach Lepick said the Acton High School Redmen would be rebuilding this year. The club had a lot of speed, she said, but had only four players back from the previous year. She predicted the team would do about as well as the year before, when they lost out in the Halton semi-finals.

Friday the junior club made Lepick one step closer to a dinner date with those same words, when they beat White Oaks 38-33 in the quarter-final round of the Haltons. Teresa Dunn was top scorer for Acton with 11 points, Sally Briggs hooped 10 points. "I thought it was one of their best pressure games," said Lepick. "They've always been in there." According to the coach, this year may be successful, but they're still looking towards next

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season. "We had four players back (from last year). Basically we're a young team, we're still looking for more growth. Only two players are moving

up next season," she said. Still, beating Lester B. Pearson in the semi's today (Wednesday) will be no easy feat. "We know Pearson is strong, but we'll give them some competition," said coach Lepick. Pearson hosts the game today, at 3:30 p.m.

Close quarters

Acton senior Redmen didn't have such an easy

time in their quarter-final match with White Oaks. The White Oaks team bettered the Acton girls 54-40. "They're (White Oaks) a strong team, they're very good and their rebounding was better than ours. Our players had a good season, but the other team was just better. It was unfortunate," said coach Lepick.

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Second Section

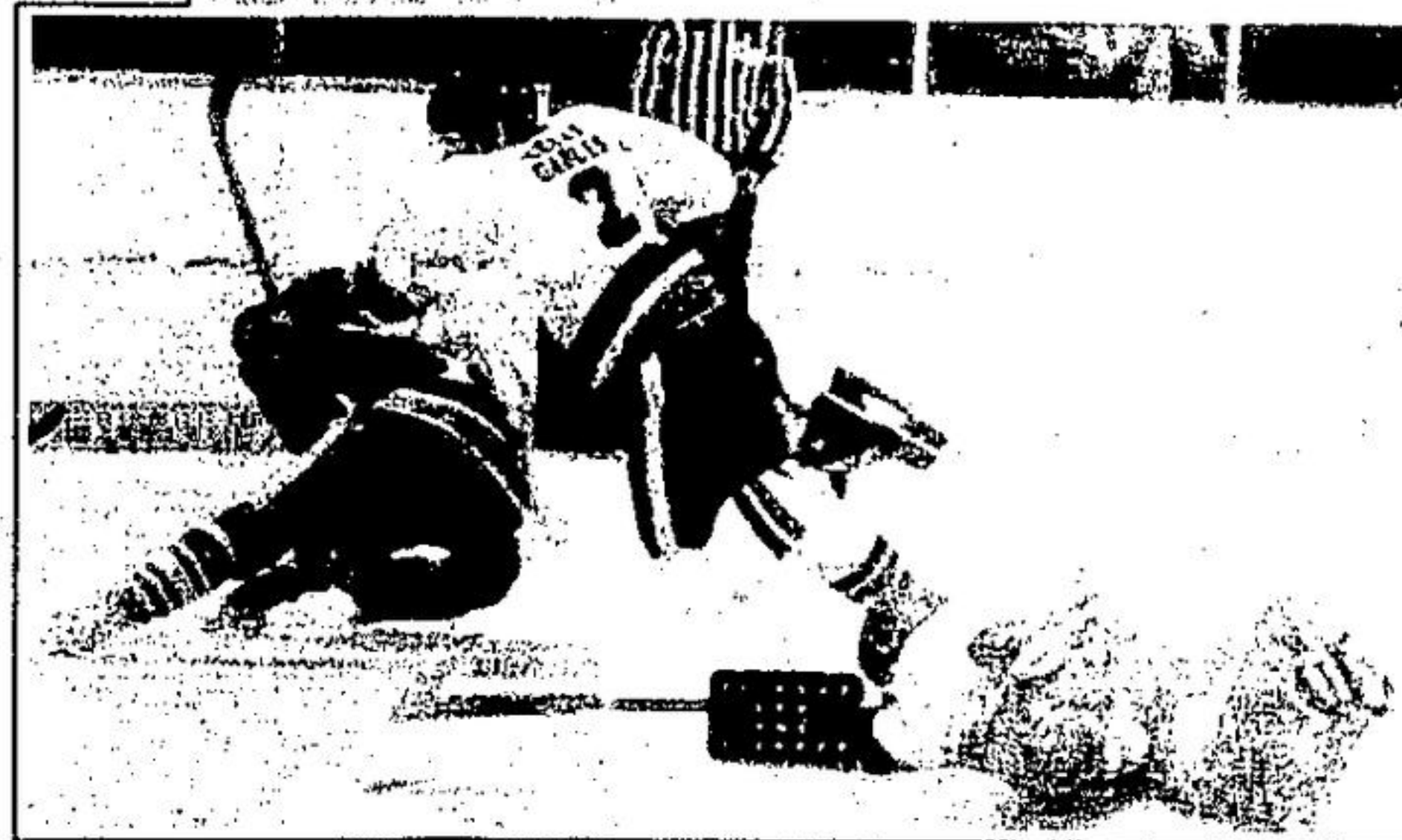


Bob skates and figure eights

The Acton Figure Skating Club is out in full force every Monday, Thursday and Friday nights, teaching about 145 skaters from 3-20 years of age all the skills of figure skating. Besides a core of six professional instructors, the club relies on the dedicated tutoring of 20 CFSA approved amateur coaches. The Free Press photographer went out and caught some of the younger students as they slipped, slid and skated their way through their class.



photos by dave dorken



Those Sabres are still dull

Those Sabres are still running into trouble in the Central Ontario Jr. B. loop. Last week Sabres were tripped up by Barrie in a 10-3 humiliation, and embarrassed at home by Brampton 10-5. Even Bobby Allsop (left bottom) was tripped up, by net-minder Les Williams.

Russiani stumped . . .

. . . over Jr. B. slump

Fans may 'brown bag' it

By Dave Dorken
Acton Sabres may have overlooked one way to start drawing more fans and making some extra cash. The way the Swordsmen have been playing of late they should be able to do a booming business in the sale of paper-bags—to hide the embarrassed faces of fans, coaches and players. After their pathetic 10-3 humiliation at the hands of Barrie Colts Thursday night even coach Jules Russiani didn't want to associate with the boys in blue and orange. Instead of his usual position behind the Sabres bench, Friday night—Russiani sought the reprieve of a less conspicuous position in the arena and left manager Rick Smith in charge.

Divorce

"I thought I'd divorce myself from the boys for a while," said Russiani. "At that time they needed a babysitter more than a coach." According to Russiani, Sabres don't need any more talent to start winning hockey games. All they really need is a lot of maturity. "There's a lot of immaturity (on the Sabres). Most people on the team are just happy to wear a Jr. B uniform, they're just happy to be there—that's not what we need. We can't afford to carry anybody who is not mentally prepared to play," steamed the coach.

It is this poor attitude that is hampering Sabres play. The coach feels his boys aren't starting to think about the game until they hit the ice for warm-ups. This happened Friday night against Brampton Warriors. Once again Sabres had a dismal start. After the first 20 minutes of play they were burdened with the manacles of a 5-0 deficit.

Not as bad

The Sabres didn't play as hapless in the next pair of stanzas and matched Brampton goal for goal to escape with a 10-5 loss. Russiani has never run into this type of problem before. "All the teams I've ever coached have been strongly disciplined fired up clubs. I've always been able to get a team up so they play a fired up game," lamented the coach. This year's edition of the Sabres just don't seem to get cooking—at least not until they find themselves fighting a hopeless battle. The coach feels there is one alternative to change the players attitudes so they realize the seriousness of belonging to the Sabres.

"There's a strong possibility three or four boys are going to be dropped from the team," said Russiani. "Right now I'm working on one boy from out of town—he's having personal problems, but will be a great asset to the club. I'm constantly on the lookout (for new players). I think the talent is here, but if it's developing then I can't wait for it. . . I've got to move now. If we don't have a half decent position by Christmas then we'll be in bad shape for the playoffs." The "Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" Sabres have at times shown flashes of an entertaining and talented team. Most of the time however, it is the lesser side that comes to light. Only last week Russiani was ecstatic about his club after they lost a close 4-1 decision to Streetsville Derbys. He even thought they were going to be the team to beat Oakville's so-far undefeated Blades.

This week his attitude was similar to those of his players. "We're back to square one. For a while it looked like we were on a come-back trail, but we faltered again," said the coach. Coach Russiani would like to forget about the loss to Barrie Thursday night. Friday, things weren't as bad as the scoreboard said. The first frame was a write-off, but Sabres didn't do too badly in the last 40 minutes of play. If it hadn't been for five unanswered markers in the

opening period Sabres could have even beat Brampton. Wade Vickery opened up the scoring in the second frame at the 14:55 mark, but Brampton came back with a goal two minutes later. Vickery took advantage of a power play to even things again, but Brampton scored twice more before the close of the frame. Captain Dave McGiloway found the opening in the last frame, at 16:44. Once again Brampton scored to widen their lead. Denis Kirton made good on another tally, but it was nullified by Brampton on a power play. Just before the final buzzer sounded Sabres Paul Stark scored the final goal of the game.

Bad bounce

"The puck just hasn't been bouncing right, the breaks just haven't been coming our way. We've been hitting posts and crossbars, getting the breaks builds the team's confidence," explained Russiani. Sabres are sticking close to home this week. Friday night they host Dixie Beehives, 8 p.m. at the community Centre. Sunday they travel to Georgetown to face the Gemini, 7:30 p.m. at Gordon Alcott Memorial Arena. One week from Saturday is Kids' night at the Community Centre. Any child accompanied by a parent receives a ticket for a draw on a ten-speed bike.

Gems and Jules

Acton Sabres coach Jules Russiani may be trading his hockey jacket for the green and gold of the Georgetown Gemini. Last week Russiani received a call about moving east—to Georgetown. While Russiani said he was still dedicated to Sabres, he didn't discount the possibility of a change should he decide to "divorce" himself from Sabres organization. "My first priority and first love is with Acton but if things don't work out I'd certainly like to coach Georgetown," he said. "I've said before, I'd never coach too far from where I live (Acton)." Georgetown manager Bob Tost seems very interested in Russiani. "If he wasn't attached to Acton I would be (interested in Russiani)," said Tost. "He has the

experience." Georgetown is trying to find a permanent coach after Dave Switzer resigned a little more than a week ago. Former assistant coach Bob McCandless has been appointed as interim coach, but Tost isn't decided if he'll be signed on as a permanent replacement. The Gems manager said he'll wait a few weeks to see if coach Russiani becomes available, if a replacement is warranted for Georgetown. Russiani hasn't been too happy with Sabres this year. Their lack of discipline and melancholy attitude is something he has never had to contend with in a team. Last Friday he watched Sabres 10-5 loss to Brampton from the stands because "the team needed a babysitter more than a coach."—Dorken