



You can tell by the concentration on his face that Don Gregg isn't slacking off even if it is the year end's fun day for the Acton tennis club.



The Acton tennis club held its wrapup day on Sunday with trophy presentations to the outstanding members of the 1984 season. Back row left to right are Steven Pun, Men's doubles champ; Chris Steen, runner-up mixed doubles; Bob Bruce, mixed doubles runner-up; Vic Morris, Men's Doubles champ; Don Gregg, Men's Doubles champs and mixed doubles champ; Harold Saville, mixed doubles over 40 runner-up; Marcia Gregg, ladies' singles champ, ladies' doubles champ and mixed doubles champ; Gerda Neubacher, ladies' doubles champ and ladies' singles runner-up; Glen Duff, mixed doubles runner-up; Robert

Thorpe, men's singles consolation champ and Eileen Saville, mixed doubles over 40 runner-up. Front row left to right are Jason Pun, boys' under 14 singles champ; Dave Thorpe, boys' under 14 singles runner-up; Paul Kilpatrick, boys' under 18 doubles champ; Steve Martin, boys' under 18 singles champ and doubles champ; Erik Valdman, runner-up in boys' under 18 singles and doubles; Chris Lewis, runner-up in boys' under 18 doubles; Lisa McIsaac, girls' under 14 singles champ; Carroll Thorpe, girls' under 14 singles runner-up and Donny McLean, boys' under 14 singles runner-up.



Steve Pun let fly with some powerful serves at the Acton tennis club's year end wrap-up on Sunday.

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## A final lament for the Sabres

When the Acton Sabres joined the Junior "D" hockey loop in 1971, optimism and promise surrounded them. By the time the season ended, the optimism was still there, but the stage was set for the next 12 disparaging years.

The story of the Sabres is not entirely bad, but more often than not, bad luck and misfortune were the monkeys on the back of the team.

In their 13 years of existence (this would have been their 13th season) the Acton Sabres played in three different leagues starting in Junior "D", then moving to Junior "C" and finally ending in the Junior "B" loop.

The Sabres never finished better than third in any of the leagues and in 12 seasons they finished in the basement nine times.

The bright spots, however, were all that more noticeable.

The first good season the Sabres experienced was in 1973-74, their first year of the Junior "C" loop.

Most of Acton's competition from the former "D" league were moved into "C" as well and, under coach Dave McKnight, Acton recorded a 16 win, 10 loss and four tie record to capture third place.

Unfortunately, though, the Sabres were immediately crushed in the play-offs by Bradford in four games.

Despite the poor showing in the play-offs, the following season saw over 60 hockey players show up at the Sabres camp for the second best season they ever had.

Finishing with a 17 win, 13 loss and four tie tally the Sabres went into the first round of playoffs in fourth position against Penelang.

Penelang, a newcomer to the league that year, was easily defeated in four games straight by the Sabres.

Then, taking on a tough squad from Alliston, the Sabres' hopes of a championship were cut short in four defeats.

The only other bright note in the Sabres' career was a fifth place finish in the "B" division in 1980-81 with Jules Russiani behind the bench.

With Glen (Motor) Murray leading the team with his fast paced style, the Sabres notched a fifth place finish in the league and found themselves pitted against the Burlington Cougars in one of the most exciting playoff series the league had ever seen.

Going into the series as the decided underdogs Acton surprised both the fans and their opponents by taking Burlington seven games. The end result however was a final, decisive win by Burlington.

When the Sabres were first formed in 1971 the team filled a void left by the Acton Tanners, who folded after their six team league

was narrowed to two squads. It seemed impractical for the Tanners to have only one opponent and the alternative move from Intermediate "B" to Intermediate A was voted down by their executive.

Robin Inscow, now the sports editor with the Georgetown Independent, named the Sabres in a contest sponsored by the team's newly formed executive.

Bill Dawkins, a graduate of Acton Minor Hockey, was named the Sabres mentor and Bob Marshall, a former manager of the Tanners, took on the job of team manager.

Casselman Fuels, of Georgetown became the Sabres' sponsor and on Oct. 19, 10 prospective Sabres worked out at Guelph Memorial Gardens in hope of claiming a place on the newly formed team's roster.

In their league debut Acton started off with a bang routing Shelbourne 19-4.

Throughout the year Acton found themselves pitted against teams from Shelbourne, Alliston, Fergus, Schomberg and Bradford and when the final buzzer rang Acton was at the bottom of the pile with 14 wins, 15 losses and a tie.

The second season wasn't much different except the department of recreation had asked the Sabres to move the home schedule from Sunday to Friday.

Again the Sabres maintained constant losses to claim last position in the league and a highly contested play-off series against Stayner heralded the end of the Sabres efforts in the Junior "D" loop.

That final series saw Acton down two games to one and after a ruling by OHA convener Bill Church the Sabres forfeited a fourth game.

The Sabres management was upset that the game was to be held on neutral ice in Bradford and took their plea to the OHA hierarchy. The result was an untimely end to 1972-73 season.

The Sabres season record was four wins, sixteen losses and five ties.

The remaining seasons were similar stories with the Sabres facing defeat after defeat with only occasional wins to break the monotonous losing streaks.

In their Junior "B" debut they accumulated only three wins and two ties in 41 starts and their second year in the league wasn't much better with only three wins and two ties in 25 starts.

The final years spanning from 1981 to 1984 saw the team either eliminated from the playoffs or just squeaking into the first round only to lose against what seemed, undefeatable odds.

It wasn't a pretty story and unfortunately there isn't any chance for a happier ending to the saga.



Almost 300 riders competed in the Ontario BMX championship races Saturday at Leathertown Park. Nearly 600 spectators watched the action under sunny skies and warm temperatures.

## Serious about shuffleboard, local men heading to B.C.

It may not be a high profile sport, but John Vlietstra and his partner Geoff Denny take table shuffleboard seriously—so seriously, in fact, they're going to the Canadian national championships in Victoria, B.C.

Vlietstra and Denny have both qualified for the national competition after cleaning up at the provincials against the six best teams in Ontario.

Both men play in the United Shuffleboard League that includes Acton, Georgetown, Milton and Guelph and while John tosses rocks at the Acton Legion, Geoff improves his skills in Milton.

"Most people think shuffleboard is a bar game and that competitions are just a big drunk, but we take it very seriously," said Vlietstra.

John has been playing since 1967 and Geoff is a 19-year veteran.

Both men have been qualifying for provincial and national competitions for over 15 years and, with a wealth of experience under their belts, have high hopes of bringing home a national championship Oct. 7.

Each team will compete in 12 matches, said Vlietstra, and there are five categories in which to compete; men's and ladies' doubles, Men's and Ladies' singles and mixed doubles.

Seven provinces will be represented at the competition in which John and Geoff will be playing in the men's doubles division.



Geoff Denny (left) and John Vlietstra will be travelling to Victoria B.C. to compete in national table shuffleboard competitions next month. Both veteran shuffleboard players are hopeful of bringing home top honors in the doubles competition.

## Arena back to normal

Following a breakdown in ice making equipment at the Acton arena last week, councillors heard that the repair bill could reach \$25,000.

Recreation director Tom Shepard told the town's General Committee that three tubes in the chiller had to be temporarily patched, putting this season's ice schedule three days behind.

Shepard explained that a repairman's estimate between \$8,000 and \$15,000, but indicated it could reach \$25,000.

Arena Manager Harold Townsley said a pipe under the concrete floor of the arena had broken and, to get at the pipe, a hole had to be chipped through the cement.

"Everything is back to normal now," claimed Townsley, "but we're two or three days behind schedule."

Townsley said he believed the repairs would last indefinitely and he couldn't see any forthcoming problems except the possible rescheduling of hockey games this weekend.

Shepard also told councillors a complete review of money allocated to the Acton and Gordon Alcott arenas will be conducted next year.



In this photo the Acton Sabres pit their strength against Shelbourne in their first game ever in 1971. The Sabres folded last week because of a lack of local hockey players.