

# Finn: 'Dombrowski did good job'

By SUE LEHN

The NHL sent their best players. The Soviets sent their best players. Some of the best referees and linesmen in hockey today also gathered at the Challenge Cup in New York City.

One of those linesmen was Ron Finn of Georgetown, who was one of the officials in the second game of the three game series on Saturday.

Finn worked the game with referee Victor Dombrowski of the Soviet Union, and says that he called a good game, and the NHL all-stars couldn't blame him for their 5-4 loss. Dombrowski has been blamed before.

"Everybody was surprised at how well Dombrowski did. They were expecting him to make mistakes, but he didn't," said Finn.

The language barrier between Finn and the referee proved not to be a major matter, according to Finn. The Russian official could speak little English, and between that and sign language, there were no communication problems between the officials.

"Hockey is hockey no matter what language you speak," said Finn.

## USE SKILLS

He finds that the Soviet players have the basics, skating, and stickhandling, down to a perfection. They seem to use these skills much more effectively than North American players do.

"The Soviets are great skaters. Their defensemen skate as well as their forwards do. We have good skaters here too, but it seems like all their players can skate and handle their stick well. LaFleur can stickhandle and skate as well as the Soviets, but he's only one player," said Finn.

The Russian hockey players also tend to play a tight zone, according to Finn. They pass in the zone, and they always know where each player is when they pass the puck.

He thought that the NHL all-stars defeat could be partly attributed to the short time which they have been together. The Soviet team has been together for a long time and so had much more team work going for it.

The NHL team may also have been overconfident going into the second game.

"The second game was a big game in the series," said Finn. "The NHL had a

3-1 lead, and then a 4-2 lead. When a team has a two-goal

"Everybody sees the best hockey they possibly can



lead they usually expect to win. They just got too confident and lost the lead, and then the game."

Finn finds these international competitions a welcome change from NHL games. He finds that hockey is one of few sports popular in North America which offers its fans a chance to view international competitions at the professional level.

when they see a series like the Challenge Cup. Soccer is about the only other team sport that professionals from countries face one another. People who watch hockey are the same people who watch baseball and football games, so the only sport they're used to seeing country against country competition, outside of amateur teams, is in hockey. The players are playing for their country, so it makes the game more exciting for the players and for the fans," said Finn.

International competitions also present some problems for the officials which they don't generally have to deal with when working strictly within the NHL.

## STAY ON TOES

Finn has a solution worked out: "You have to remember that you have a job to do, and you have to do the best you can at that job. You have to forget which teams are playing and pretend that it's just another NHL game. In this business, you can't be biased. You can't be for one team or country. Concentration, staying on your toes, and experience are all important."



Being a linesman or a referee in the NHL can be a tough and demanding job. Snap decisions must be made, and those decisions must be as correct as possible under the circumstances. There are so many cameras and people at the games, and depending on where they are positioned, each sees a different thing.

Officials in sporting matches always get fans in the stands thinking that the referee has made a mistake. Finn says that you just can't let the fans bother you, or let them start telling you how you should call the plays. He finds that the only real time he is aware that the fans are there is when they aren't making any noise.

"Whatever you do, whatever you call, you must be sure it's the right thing," he says. "When I make a mistake I know it, I don't need the fans to tell me."

Finn has always loved hockey and wanted to play in the NHL when he was a boy. When he realized that he wasn't skilled enough to make it as a player in the league, he opted to officiate instead.

Starting out with what was then the Toronto Hockey League (now the Metro Toronto Hockey League) as a linesman, when they advertised that they needed new officials, Finn soon moved up to the Ontario Hockey association, where he officiated in both Senior and Junior A and B division games.

He did not hesitate to accept an offer to attend the NHL training school for officials, but the first year he applied there were no openings. The next year he applied again and was accepted. He was now been with the NHL for 10 years.

## HAD DOUBTS

As in any profession, there have been times when Finn has felt that he just can't go on any more. When the NHL scheduled games over Christmas, he had to spend it away from his wife and four children. He was also away from home due to his work when two of his children were born.

"Sometimes, when I'm stuck in a snowstorm, far from home, I ask myself what I'm doing there, but I really do love what I'm doing for a living."

One thing Finn enjoys about his work is the opportunity for travel. He works as a linesman in about 80 to 85 regular season games per season, plus exhibition and playoff games. In two weeks, Finn estimates that he works six or seven games. Generally, he is home for five days every two weeks.

Depending on the weather, travelling from one city to

another, can be either a joy or a very depressing matter.

"Everybody thinks that we do most of our job on the ice, but we have to get to the game on our own. We have to make our own plane and hotel reservations. They give us a list of hotels and a plane pass and it's up to us to get there," said Finn.

"Last year I was in Boston on Thursday and then had to do a game in New York on Saturday. The weather wasn't good so I left for the airport around 10 on Friday morning. When I got there, all the planes had been cancelled, so I phoned the bus station. They didn't think that taking a bus would be a good idea, so I had to try the train. I got a train at 11:30 and I figured I'd be in New York by three in the afternoon. I finally got there at eleven at night. The next day, they cancelled the game, and I had to try to figure out how to get home."

There are no teams in the NHL that Finns dislikes officiating for. He finds that it doesn't really matter what place a team holds in the standings, as far as officiating goes.

## FIGHT AS MUCH

"If you get two teams that are near the bottom in the standings, it's just like being a linesman for two of the top teams. They fight just as much from the time the puck is dropped, and they keep on fighting to win," he said.

Real fighting, using fists, is a different matter with Finn.

"There are more rules every year to prevent fighting. Many of the players are now getting away from it. Fighting belongs in the ring with boxing and wrestling, although I'd rather see fists swing than sticks. It's a part of the game, but it shouldn't be a big part."

## Gems finish season with two setbacks

The Georgetown Geminals dismal season came to an end with two more losses last week. They lost a 10-9 decision to Oakville here last Tuesday and Thornhill beat them 6-2 there Friday.

The showing against the Blades was very encouraging as the Gems played one of the three top teams a close game.

One of the Gems problems this year has been their inability to give the big clubs, Oakville, Streetsville and Burlington, good games.

It was a barnburner all the way with both teams pulling out all the offensive stops.

### RECORD BREAKER

One of the Blades reasons for playing it wide open was undoubtedly to have Frank Carnevale add to his record-setting point total. Carnevale picked up only a goal and an assist on the night.

## Balanced scoring for Bruin cagers

The Sheridan College basketball Bruins got balanced scoring in 96-74 and 71-68 wins over George Brown and Humber Colleges respectively.

Jerry Auger led the Bruins over George Brown with 23,

The Gems led 3-2 after the first period which also saw Chris Salja playing very strong in the Gem net. The big Gem goaltender was kicking them left and right.

Andy Broadbent opened the scoring on an unassisted goal. Greg Rowan came back to tie it up for the Blades.

Oakville went ahead on Kevin Adam's shorthanded goal. The Gems then got goals by Steve Crossman, from Broadbent and Marty Power, and Greg Thompson, from Tony Giannini and Bob Allison, they had the lead again.

The second period proved to be the Gems downfall as they were outscored 6-2.

Carnevale got the first Blades goal on another shorthanded goal. Other scorers were Craig Kowalchuk, Mike McElroy, Brian Marvel Willie McFarlane and Adam on the power play.

Georgetown's Mark Reis hit for 21 points with Paul Kane scoring 16.

Kane and Andre Graovac both had 15 against Humber with Reis right behind them with 14. Auger had 13.

Paul Martin, from Thompson, and Broadbent, from Power and Mark Euteneier, replied for the Gems.

Trailing 3-5 the Gems came on like gangbusters in the final period to make it very interesting.

The Blades went up by another goal when McFarlane tallied just over one minute into the frame.

Then the Gems began to pour it on.

Martin started things when he scored from Thompson and Euteneier.

Defenseman John Barnes then hit twice with Power and Broadbent setting him up.

With 4:42 showing on the clock Martin completed his hat trick and the Gems were within one goal. Barnes and Mike McMenemy assisted.

The Blades scored with 46 seconds showing on the clock to regain a two-goal lead.

With four seconds showing Allison, from Broadbent and Lance Doucette, ended the scoring.

The Gems fired 26 shots at Dave Makysmuik in the period. Brad Miller replaced Salja and he faced 15 shots.

### THORNHILL

The Thunderbirds scored two goals in the first period to put the Gems behind the eight ball. The scorers were Bruce Clatworthy and Mike Davidson.

In the second period the Gems got goals from defensemen Mark Falby and Giannini. Both were solo efforts. The Thunderbirds' Rick Buchan added to their tally and the homeside led 3-2 heading into the final period.

Kurt Pearson and Clatworthy scored for Thornhill in the third to hand the Gems their thirty-sixth and final loss of the campaign.

### REP HOCKEY ALL STAR GAMES

Major Atom, Thurs. Feb. 15 8:00 p.m. Owen Sound, Mem.  
Major Atom, Thurs. Feb. 22 8:00 p.m. Owen Sound, Mem.  
Minor Pee Wee, Sat. Feb. 17 7:00 p.m., Owen Sound, Alcott  
Minor Pee Wee, Sun. Feb. 25 5:30 p.m., Owen Sound, Alcott  
Minor Bantam, Sat. Feb. 24 8:30 p.m., Owen Sound, Alcott  
Major Bantam, Sun. Feb. 18 4:00 p.m., Owen Sound, Alcott  
Minor Midget, Sun. Feb. 18 5:30 p.m., Owen Sound, Alcott  
Major Midget, Thur. Feb. 15 8:30 p.m., Owen Sound, Alcott  
Juvenile Game to be decided, Owen Sound

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