



Sports Beat

By Tony Panacci
Sports Editor

The ones who didn't go

In late October defenseman Brian McBratney returned to Flint, Michigan, where he had played as a professional for a few years, after only playing six games with the Georgetown Raiders.

In January Bob Elinesky, a man who had played both defense and forward for the Raiders, was cut because the team felt he could not make it out to enough games.

Losing those two players, according to coach Gerry Inglis, was one big reason the Raiders did not do better at the Eastern Canadian Championships played in Timmins last week.

BIG BRUISER

McBratney was a much heralded acquisition and Inglis showed his confidence in the big bruiser by selecting him as his captain. He returned to Flint to rejoin his wife and family who had stayed behind.

Elinesky was one of the big reasons the Raiders came back against the Thorold Athletics in last year's semi-final. His aggressive and tireless work was a major reason in his teammates not giving up after being down six points.

Elinesky was not cut because of his hockey ability. The team let him go because Elinesky had just joined the Ontario Provincial Police and of course being a rookie took a great deal of his time.

"We sure could have used those type of hockey players up in Timmins," Inglis, who has been worried about his defense corps throughout the year, said. "McBratney was just what we needed, a big guy who could move the puck out."

The Raiders used John Boyce, Brad Pirie, Ron Fogal, Ron Twiss and Peter Sturgeon and occasionally

Ray Tonelli on defense up north.

GOODEYE

"I would have much rather have used Sturgeon and Twiss up front," Inglis said. "Peter really has a good eye around the net so I felt bad about using him on defense."

However, Boyce and Pirie were both playing with injuries. Boyce has had a fracture in his ankle since the series against the Fort Erie Frontiers and Pirie has had a charlie horse.

The man that was most missed up north was Bill Currie, who could not get the time off work. Had the Raiders made it to the semi-finals Currie would have flown up for the Saturday game.

"Currie could have been the defensive leader we needed," Inglis said. "But he just couldn't get the time off work."

The coach said that in both games, a 6-6 tie with Timmins and a 8-6 loss to Charlottetown, his players had many chances but just couldn't put the puck in the net.

"Against Timmins we ran into a really hot goaltender," Inglis said. "Without him we would have had five more goals."

The coach said that the Raider big shooters were not up to par up north.

"We got great performances from the likes of Archie Chase, Pat Maloney and Terry Porter, but our big shooters throughout the year did not do that much."

Inglis said that he had hoped that his shooters, who he rates among the best in intermediate hockey, could have helped overshadow the team's defensive deficiencies.

SPARK PLUG

"We had enough shooters up front, but we didn't have the sparkplug who could play with the kind of intensity to get everybody else going...the Bob Kelly or Pat Boutette," Inglis said.

The player who Inglis figures could have filled that role is Elinesky, who did just that in last year's semi-final against Thorold.

"Bobby would have certainly caused havoc in our other team's zone for us," the coach said. "But because of his job commitments I couldn't afford to keep him in the lineup."

Inglis went on to say that he thought Neil Cotton, who left the squad after a dispute with the coach early in the campaign would not have helped that much in Timmins.

"Cotton would have helped us a couple of years ago," he said, "but because of his other activities he has not got enough speed right now."

LAST YEAR?

Before heading up to Timmins last week, Inglis said that this would be his last season at the team's helm.

"I said that this is going to be my last year," he said, "but I have been saying that for the last 12 years."

He said that coaching does take a lot out of him, both mentally and physically, and that as of now he does not think that he'll be back. However, he added that there is still a slight possibility he will return.

The coach said that he expects most of the players off this year's roster to be back in red and white next year.

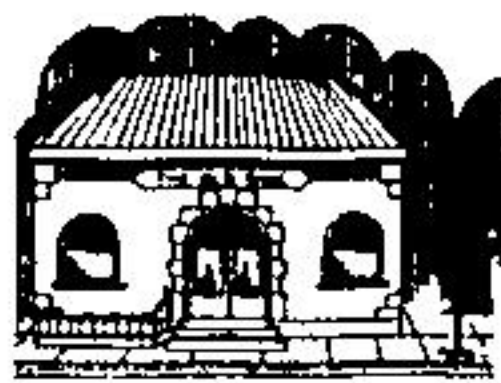
"The guys seemed to have a lot of fun this year," Inglis said. "They really went out to win too...I think most of them should be back next year."

The coach said that not winning the Hardy Cup, which was his goal from the outset, was a hard blow.

"It was really disheartening not to win it this year," Inglis said. "I really thought we had the team to go all the way."

The unsuccessful bid by the Raiders to win the Hardy Cup should not take away from the outstanding season the club had.

The team won their first league pennant ever, took the southern division crown in easy fashion and then took the OHA Intermediate "A" title.



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