

Councillor's hockey career turned to refing

By MAGGIE HANNAH
Herald staff writer
Breaking his ankle when he was 18 may have put an end to any hopes town councillor C.F. (Pat) Patterson had of becoming a great hockey player but it didn't prevent him from becoming referee in chief for the Ontario Hockey Association.

His referee's career began in Hamilton in 1930 by accident. A friend of his was in charge of referees for a Junior A game and discovered the man who had had an accident. He turned to Mr. Patterson, handed him a sweater and told him he was going to be the referee that night.

Hamilton that night," he recalls with a smile, "and the next day we got a call from their manager saying that he'd have me back as a referee any time. Any guy that had the courage to make that sort of call on a Hamilton team in their own town was a guy he liked and I was welcome to referee their games any time."

OVER YEARS
Over the years he has refereed every major series in Canada except the Memorial Cup. His last refereeing job was in the Alexandria Cup finals in 1950.

One of his more ticklish decisions resulted from a print journalist's "sneaky tricks" at the International World Ice

Hockey Championships in Sweden.

The Swedish team was playing the Russians and the referee was Czechoslovakian. He called Mr. Patterson before breakfast one morning in a great state because press reports were claiming that the Swedes had scored a goal during the previous evening's game which the referee hadn't allowed. Mr. Patterson immediately called the company who filmed the game and arranged to see their tapes of the period in which the goal was supposed to have been scored.

When he arrived at the viewing room there were about 25 newsmen sitting there waiting for his reaction to this goal.

Viewing the tapes showed him that the newspaper had done a double exposure shot. At one point in the action the goaltender had been making a save that put the top of his stick in the corner of the goal. The newspaper had removed the goaltender completely and left only the black-wrapped tip of the goalie's stick showing in such a way that it appeared to be the puck flying into the top corner of an empty net.

After they saw the explanation of the picture the press asked Mr. Patterson what he would be doing about it.

"You have to be so careful when it's international," he says, "they were all just waiting for me to put my foot in it. So I told them I'd be recommending that they use white tape to wrap the sticks so that couldn't happen again and I left."

HOCKEY TEAMS
His travels with Canadian hockey teams to international hockey tournaments took him to Sweden (twice) and Austria once.

He also had charge of all the referee schools east of Winnipeg to Newfoundland for the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association. Although he made good money as a referee Mr. Patterson says he got nothing more than expenses in his work with the OHA. He did the work because he was interested in hockey and also because of the prestige involved with his position.

Mr. Patterson's nickname is Pat and The Herald asked him what his initials, C.F. stood for. He tells us his name is Clifton Fletcher. However, the twinkle that goes with the reply warns you that there is more to the name than just a name.

Apparently when Mr. Patterson's parents were first married the Clifton Hotel in Niagara was a prosperous concern. They went there for a second honeymoon and the required number of months later young Clifton appeared on the scene.

His early days were spent on a farm near Orono but his family moved to Toronto when he was 12. Almost from then on he worked tending coal furnaces, cutting lawns, doing any job he could find so that he had his own money.

He left school at the end of Grade 10 so that when he later decided he wanted to be an accountant he had a lot of qualifications to pick up.

OPENED BUSINESS
He started working as a butcher for the Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company when they first opened for business in Canada in 1928. He was asked if he would like to go into the office and gave up night courses from the University of Toronto to do so. Instead he took a four year cost accounting course and a night school degree through extension courses from Chicago's LaSalle University. When he left A&P he was the head of the cost accounting department.

He took \$15 a week cut in pay to become a salesman for Swifts but the gamble paid off. Within six weeks of entering the plant he was one of their top salesmen and within two years he went into the office as an assistant to the sales manager. In 1939 he was made assistant manager of the by products department for Canada and took over as manager two years later.

His position with Swifts saw him taking a seat on the Oils and Fats Commission during the last war.

Oils and fats were controlled at that time because the nitrogen content of fats was important to the war effort.

ADHESIVE PLANT
Eventually Mr. Patterson took over the Swift soap business in Guelph and kept it from closing down. He selected and purchased every adhesive plant site in Canada except the soap plant in Guelph. In 1952 he was made a vice-president and general manager of a chemical company for Swifts, a position he held until his retirement in 1975. He was also a director of Swifts for the last nine years of his employment.

His career as a referee brought him into contact with many well-known Georgetown hockey supporters including the late John T. Armstrong and it was through one of these friends that he found his farm outside Norval. He and his wife Irene moved there in 1949.

Mr. Patterson began showing his Herefords at the Canadian National Exhibition and the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair in 1956 or 1957 and his office picture gallery contains photos of assorted winners along with rosettes and trophies. When his manager, John Vandervell, left in 1977, Mr. Patterson sold his 140 head of registered polled Herefords and his machinery and rented his land.



Halton Hills councillor C.F. (Pat) Patterson proudly displays crossed sticks and a puck he received in the late 1960s as a memento of his involvement with International World Ice Hockey Championships. (Herald photo)

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