

Sports Week

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BIG REACH

John Vieira of Ego Fashion reaches for the flag of Peel Fence's Doug Cousins during Georgetown Flag Football League action at the high school Sunday morning. Peel Fence emerged

as victors in the game by a 31-16 score.

(Herald photo by Lori Taylor)

Coach not discouraged

Raiders have few at first practice

A very low turnout at the first practise of the season for the Georgetown Raiders has not dimmed the hopes of new coach Steve Blundy.

"I'm not at all discouraged that we had so few players out to our first practise," the new Raider mentor said. "At this time of the season it's hard to get guys intermediate age to start thinking about hockey."

Only seven players, including Blundy, off last year's finishing Raider squad were out at the first practise. Others were Ray Tonelli, John Boyce, Brad McKenzie, Juri Kudrasovs and Chris Milne at the Sunday morning practise.

Blundy was very pleased to see newcomer Gary Ford at the practise. Ford has played professionally in the International League the past several seasons and is one of the

all-time leading scorers in that loop.

BAD NEWS

Blundy did get the bad news that several top-flight Raiders from years gone by will not be with his team this year. The most noticeable of the players not vying for a spot on the team are defenseman Bill Currie and centre Ray Evans.

"Bill has decided that he does not have the time to play and Ray has a leg injury which has been slow in mending and I also think that he does not want to do all the travelling involved," Blundy said.

More bad news for Blundy was hearing that Colin Gordon, one of the team leaders last year, suffered an injury at work and he may not be able to go until December.

Blundy also said that he does not expect Steve Novis and Terry Porter, two top rookies last year to be with

the squad this term. "Steve is getting married so I don't think he will be returning and it seems wherever Novis goes, Porter goes," Blundy said.

There were six goalies at the practise, but conspicuous by their absence were Mario MacDonald and Peter McDuffe. Blundy said he hopes to have both the goaltenders with the team, but that he will settle for whatever he can get.

MacDonald told the Herald that he wants to play hockey somewhere this season, but he is not sure whether it will be with the Raiders.

NO INVITE

"They (the Raiders) did not even send me an official invitation to camp," MacDonald said. "However I did have a lengthy chat with Steve."

Bill Humphreys and Bill Masters, who spent half season each backing up McDuffe last year, were both at the practise. Humphreys was

there to tune up for the Toronto Marlboro camp which he is scheduled to attend.

Another familiar face was that of netminder Gregg Hooper. Judging from Blundy's comments it would appear that if only MacDonald or McDuffe eventually show up Hooper has a lock on the backup job.

An interesting press release which may be great news for the Raiders appeared at the Herald Monday. Kent Ruhnke, who has played in both the World Hockey Association and National Hockey League, has been appointed assistant athletic director at Sheridan College. Blundy is also on the athletic staff at the college.

"I definitely plan on having a talk with Kent about joining the Raiders," Blundy said. "However, he will be quite involved in his new job and I don't know whether he will have the time."

Ruhnke has been with the

Winnipeg Jets the past two seasons and also spent some time with the Boston Bruins.

The team was scheduled to practise last night and will have another session tomorrow night. Blundy said he expects many more players to come out as the summer wears thinner.

The coach said that there is a very strong possibility that several players from the rosters of the defunct Thorold Athletics will make an appearance. The players off that roster that Blundy covets most are centre Peter Mara and big winger Paul Sheehan. He also said that there is a good chance that Danny Blair, who played several seasons with the Fort Erie Mavericks, will be joining the squad.

SHORT AT BLUELINE

All the players mentioned above are forwards. It would appear that the Raiders are going to have a problem rounding up solid defense-

men. Boyce, who is the team's assistant coach, was the only experienced blueliner at the practise.

"Good defensemen at this level are always hard to come by," Blundy said. The coach said he was surprised to see that Bob Elinesky and Brad Butterworth were not at the team's practise. "I think they'll show up before training camp ends." He also said that he does not know what the status of Ron Fogal is.

Ron Twiss is away on holidays and the sophomore should be with the team before too long.

The team does not have long to prepare for four scheduled exhibition games. They will be playing home against Senior A clubs Stratford and Preston.

Blundy also reported that Tonelli will again be the club's captain this year. He took over the post after Brian McBratney left the club last year.