

the HERALD

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Sportsweek

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Dance partners didn't see eye to eye

Barber hangs up amateur skates

World class figure skating dance partner Kris Barber of Glen Williams has announced that he will give up amateur skating.

Barber, 21, along with dance partner Kelly Johnson, 20, of Willowdale won the silver medal at the Canadian Skating Championships last February. The skating duo also placed twelfth in the World Figure Skating Championships in March 1981.

The dance pair finished two places ahead of the Canadian dance champions Rob McCall and Marie McNicole in world competition last year. Even though Rob McCall changed partners and joined up with Tracy Wilson, the Barber-Johnson duo couldn't make gains on the new skating team.

LEFTOUT

Only one team was sent to the World Figure Skating Championships from Canada this year which left Kris and Kelly watching Rob McCall and Tracy Wilson from the sidelines.

Even though their coach Roy Bradshaw considered their Canadian silver medal one of their best performances ever, it wasn't enough to beat their McCall-Wilson rivals.

Kelly will go on skating on an amateur basis with a new partner, Kris says, but he will turn professional at any time.

Kris has four more credits before he finishes his teaching certificate in skating and this is his interest in skating that he wants to pursue in the future.

His courses will be completed in one year, but he says at the moment he is negotiating with two Toronto skating clubs for his teaching services.

DIFFICULT FOR BOTH

Kris says if he could have found another female partner with the skill level comparable to Kelly Johnson, he might have continued on.

"It was a matter of getting along and working together. It became difficult for both of us," Barber says of his strained relations with Johnson which had deteriorated over the past year.

"We improved some this year together, but we could have improved more if we had seen eye to eye," Barber says. "When it's an effort to just go down to the rink, you know it's time to stop."

Kris will skate his last performance with Kelly this weekend which is being taped and could be shown on television at a later date.

He says there is a possibility he could turn to professional skating and tour in different cities, but he isn't yet prepared to join a skating show.

The origins of rugby football

By DAVE ROWNEY
Herald Sports Editor

There is a man who in 1823 is credited with the beginnings of a sport which has now blossomed into a game played in over 41 countries around the world.

The game, rugby, has expanded in Halton Hills recently as Acton High School added a third team to the two they fielded last year. Georgetown District High School also revived a rugby team from two years ago.

Webb Ellis has not been forgotten as the man who impetuously disregarded the rules of soccer. His tombstone is thus inscribed: "This stone commemorates the exploits of W.H. Ellis, who with a fine disregard for the rules of football as played in his time, first took the ball in his arms and ran with it, thus originating the distinctive feature of the rugby game."

Researching the roots of rugby, or rugger as some may know the sport by, Denis Fletcher found that Mr. Ellis' act was exploited by an entire "soccer mafia", which became known as the Rugby Football Union.

LEGALIZED

Running with the ball caught on reasonably slowly. The sport apparently achieved customary status between 1830-40 and was first legalized by Bugside Levee in 1841-42 as stated by Judge Hughes.

The final step toward officialdom was taken in 1846 when the "rules of the game" were agreed upon.

After a Rugby Union was founded in 1871 to govern the conduct of the game, the sport spread to other countries from Great Britain. Most of the exposure in other countries can be attributed to armed servicemen overseas and English businessmen who were stationed around the world.

The Ontario Rugby Union was formed around 1950 when a club called the Wanderers split up into three other rugby clubs: the Wanderers, the Nomads and the Barbarians. As of 1979 there were 34 clubs in the Ontario Rugby Union fielding 71 teams. However, there are also 130 high schools, 10 private schools and 22 universities all playing Rugby in Ontario.

North American football originated from the game of rugby and is generally credited with a game in Canada played against a Harvard team around the year 1912.

Harvard detached a wing forward from the pack and lined him up beside the scrum. This floating forward from the United States was countered with a Canadian wing forward and thus, the beginnings of a lineman or tackle in North American football was initiated.

The growing popularity of the sport in the high schools can be attributed to a number of reasons. For school administrators, rugby is cheaper than football and it doesn't take 40 boys to field a team.

From a player's standpoint, rugby gives them an opportunity to run with the ball even if they are not one of the "backs". In football, only the halfbacks and flankers see much of the pigskin.

Another advantage of rugby is that all of the 15 players are utilized and no one sits on the bench. There is no offence and defence. Rugby takes speed, strength and endurance while football concentrates more on just speed and strength.

For a school administrator's point of view, rugby, unlike football, is usually played by boys past the age of 18. Rugby can be played from teens to most any age, players in their 30's and 40's are not uncommon.

From a safety aspect, rugby is not the high-risk sport uninitiated observers may think. Again, comparing rugby to football, a study in Boston by doctors showed that 9.8 per cent of rugby players in one season required medical treatment while 52 per cent of football players required medical treatment.

A consultant surgeon to the Irish Rugby Union feels that injury is less prevalent in rugby because body contact is forbidden, except in the vicinity of the ball.

Players catch the ball behind the line of scrimmage and can usually see their tackler coming. They are able to take the contact on large back muscles or roll with the tackle, sliding on the turf rather than bouncing off it.

The Acton High School Redmen Junior rugby team hosted an exhibition game against Georgetown (see pictures) last Thursday. The two teams battled to a 0-0 stalemate in a game full of mid-field action.



SABRE HONORS

Coach Jules Russiani presented the awards last Saturday night to seven of his Acton Junior B Sabre charges in the Swordsman's annual awards-night banquet. Seen here are the recipients: (back row, left to right) Mike Stocchias,

Denis Kirton, Coach Jules Russiani, Wade Vickery, Denis Charbonneau; (front row, left to right) R.J. Farnsworth, Mark Duval, Roy Spear. (Herald photo)

Who loses in war of words?

A rebot published in the Acton Free Press to a letter written by the Acton Sabres club president last week, stirred up a flurry of emotions at the Herald sportsdesk.

It was the second time in which statements had emerged from that newspaper in an attempt to discredit a well respected coach.

Some skeletons are best left in closets, but when former Acton reporter Dave Dorken took some uncalled for pot shots at Sabre Coach Jules Russiani without witnessing the event, he lost our respect - and silence on the matter.

LAST WORD

A subsequent justification of Dorken's behavior by his replacement did nothing but give The Free Press the last word. Someone needs to tell the other side of the story.

Aware that knocking your competitor can be unsportsmanlike, sour grapes, cut-throat or what-have-you, The Herald refrained comment on the issue last January, although coach Russiani was phoned by us that week to tell him our opinion on the incident and subsequent coverage.

Coach Russiani was delivered an injustice by Mr. Dorken. Club president Frank Allsop rightfully set the record straight after waiting months in silence.

His words: "I was very upset by the remarks made by an Acton Free Press reporter (Jan. 5 issue) about his actions over an incident in Georgetown this past season, especially when this reporter was not even in attendance at that particular game."

ABORT

The Free Press retort: "The views reflected came from the reporter and fans. In fact, the reporter in attendance at the game in Georgetown formerly worked for The Free Press. We find it interesting to note the author of this letter says there would be more fans, 'if only a handful (of fans) would clean up their language and gestures' and yet condones the same type of language, regardless of provocation or motive, on the part of the coach."

As a spectator at the game, I feel inclined to comment about what our paper saw: The game was a typical, high-spirited affair which is not unusual for the Acton-Georgetown rivalry. The Georgetown Gemini seemed intent in the latter stages of the game to browbeat the Sabres not only on the scoreboard, but also in their physical play.

Before Acton's Denis Kirton was speared, the referee had missed, on the same shift, another questionable hit by a Gemini. As a reporter who covers more Georgetown games than Sabre games, my supposedly partisan attitude was thrown into reverse.

Someone has to stand up for the players (yes, madam, sometimes in abusive language) and coach Russiani knew

the price of his disobedience.

While it is of utmost importance that we respect our referees for their efforts in officiating the game of hockey, the competitive nature of Junior B hockey can cause tempers to flair up. Coach Russiani was justified in losing his temper last January 3.

Georgetown coaches have been known to sit out three or four games per season because of their language, Gemini general manager Bob Tost says. It is not uncommon for Junior B coaches to be given one game suspensions, Tost says.

DREAMWORLD

Mr. Dorken is living in a dream world if he believes what he writes: "While a similar vocabulary may be heard in any bar, or any restricted movie, a hockey game isn't restricted. The hockey game should be more on the scale of a Walt Disney flick, than some sleazy bar joke."



**Sports
beat**

By DAVE ROWNEY
Herald Sports Editor

Mr. Dorken was, it seems, out to get one last parting shot at a respected coach before he left town.

In fact, it was interesting that Mr. Dorken left Acton to work for the Woodstock paper the same week rather than defend the fan reaction he had stirred up by writing his editorial.

The whole incident calls to mind what we need most in sports journalism: reporters who will call it the way it is if they see it - if they don't, they should never editorialize about an incident. NEVER should they assume what another person has told them, especially if they were not attributed or quoted (ie. the anonymous sports editor and fan should have been identified in his story).

But, most of all, let's consider interviewing the players on the team, do profiles on their hockey background, give the players some publicity and stop concentrating on the coaches. We'd all benefit from hearing about the game from the players who know it best.