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The Plackett Family

A truly sporting life

By COLIN GIBSON
Herald Sports Editor

How Ya' gonne keep them down on the farm, after they've met the Placketts? Answer: Move the farm.

The Chapel Street family appear to exist in a state of happily controlled confusion the likes of which most of us would envy. In this writer's view, they are also fairly representative of Halton Hills families in their participation and outlook on sports and recreation within the community.

The titular head of the family, Eddie, 42, oversees - with the sometimes grudging permission of wife Sally - Louise, 11, Nick, 15 and a menagerie of extended family members that includes, Nibs the dog, two Zebra Finches named Snazzels, and Busbie, a guinea pig

who embarrassingly answers to the moniker, Lester Piggitt, a matched set of domestic Mallard ducks dubbed Quakers and Titch and Charlie the cat - presently under house arrest for unconcernedly delivering a litter of five kittens with little, if any, thought to their future well-being.

Eddie, a licensed structural and plate work fitter, for Halton Steel Fabricators of Milton, coaches a Bantam soccer House League team and has been involved in coaching for three years.

He is a member of the Georgetown Legion, plays in the Legion Industrial Darts League, enjoys tennis and prior to emigrating to Canada from England, was a serious squash player. He was also an avid amateur soccer player in his

native England.

Sally, who admits to coming from a "very unsporting English family" has made amends in that respect. She became actively involved with the Georgetown Figure Skating Club and is in her third year as a member of the club's executive. A seamstress, she handles the figure skating club's outfits and accessories requirements through Sally's Skate Shop. An enthusiastic crafts person, she is currently involved with Tole painting on wood.

Louise is in her sixth year as a member of the Georgetown Figure Skating Club and for the past two years has skated with the Precision Skating Team, the Ice Dreamers. A second-year Junior bowler, she has played minor soccer for three years and represented Stewarttown school in volleyball.

Nick plays and referees minor soccer, engages in competitive tennis matches with Eddie and is the proud possessor of an impressive baseball card collection.

Eddie and Sally first chanced upon each other at the Nottingham nightclub, Tudor Court. The audience was being royally entertained by singer Buster Blood Vessel. The couple's first dance together was a Can-Can and while it wasn't exactly love at first kick, romance did blossom.

Eddie was divorced and Sally had been a widow for 18 months. Louise and Nick are from her first marriage and still use their natural father's name, Hatton - a practice Eddie encouraged from the outset of the marriage.

The decision to emigrate to Canada had already been made by Eddie prior to his courting of Sally. She was hesitant to leave England for the uncertainties of life in a new land. However, after two months of separation from Eddie, she made the decision to pull up roots and join her future husband in Chatham.

The Placketts moved to Georgetown in 1984 and now view themselves as solidly entrenched citizens of Halton Hills.

The Placketts enjoyment of and honestly caring attitude towards youth shines through at every opportunity and is obviously reflective of their feelings towards each other.

It is safe to state that many of the neighborhood children regard Eddie and Sally as virtual surrogate parents; a responsibility the Placketts are aware of and handle accordingly.

Their attitude towards youngsters involved in athletic competition similarly reflects their views on children and life in general.

Eddie became involved in coaching minor soccer because he felt he could share his knowledge of the game and also because, "I enjoy seeing kids enjoying themselves."

He stresses the fundamentals of the game and insists his charges "be competitive, but fair."

As Eddie succinctly puts it, "In life, in general, you learn about winning and losing and as far as I'm concerned, an important part of life is getting along with people. Being a member of a sports team can be compared, to a certain degree, to training for life."

The Placketts might be viewed as slightly eccentric in some quarters. Be that as it may. The family is happy with their lot in life and in terms of critics, don't really give a hoot... er... quack that is.



ALL IN THE FAMILY

The Plackett family home is a happy collection of humans and animals with each member rightfully accorded his - or her - rightful place in the sun. Sharing this bit of sun Eddie, Sally and Louise. The extended family includes Nibs, the dog, Charlie the cat and her kittens, Zebra Finches Snazzels and Busbie, domestic Mallard ducks Quakers and Titch and of course, Lester Piggitt, the Guinea pig. Absent when this photo was taken was Nick. He was out refereeing a soccer game. (Herald photo)

Raiders ready for title run

By COLIN GIBSON
Herald Sports Editor

The gauntlet has been dropped and Georgetown Pontiac Buick Raiders President, Dave Kentner, is hoping those Junior "B" aspirants slated to attend the teams' training camp at Gordon Alcott Memorial Arena, will rise to the challenge.

"We feel we are finished building the organization," stated Kentner, in a recent interview. "The steps have been taken. This will be a great year, we will be there. I think I can safely say our coaching situation is stable, the attitude and atmosphere within the organization is one of confidence and we have a strong nucleus of returning players. The team must produce."

The six week training camp opens Aug. 22 at Gordon Alcott and 140 players have been extended invitations. Kentner stated there will be a strong contingent of local players vying for positions with the team and this can only help to fan the competitive flame and heighten the intensity level of those participating.

Kentner favorably compares the Raiders, at this stage in their development, to the New York Islanders and Edmonton Oilers prior to their embarking on their respective NHL championship binges.

That's not to say a cakewalk to the Central Ontario Junior "B" Hockey League crown is expected. Far from it. Burlington Cougars and Streetsville are expected to once again ice strong teams, with the Raiders, Oakville and Milton knocking on the door. If the team jells, as expected, in Kentner's view, the Raiders will be capable of breaking down the door and claiming the elusive coveted prize lying just over the threshold.

Defending league champion, Etobicoke Capitals, might be termed an unknown quantity at this point. The team has just been granted permission from the OHA to shift their base of operations to Brampton (playing out of Brampton Memorial Arena) but are without a coach or general-manager. Rick Bince, who held both positions last year for the Capitals, has moved on to Milton.

All in all, it should be an interesting year in the Central Ontario Junior "B" Hockey League. Made even all that more interesting with the prospect of a local championship contender.

"Hello again, Hello"



"As I See It"

Colin Gibson
Sports Editor

Begging indulgence from the reader, I feel I can safely state, that returning to a previous writing venue - especially sports writing - is akin to a chance encounter with a lover from years past.

Wariness and a sense of trepidation hover, like all-encompassing humidity.

Memories long barricaded - some even involuntarily - rush to the fore and threaten to torture the senses. But the moment must be met.

With acknowledgement to that painter of songs, Neil Diamond, "Hello Again, Hello."

I was Sports Editor of the Herald from 1974 until mid-1977. At that point I headed West and took on the position of Sports Editor with the Nanaimo Daily Free Press.

Ah, but the Herald years.

The Intermediate Raiders playing in the Old Arena on Mill Street. With "Battling Bob" defending the locals if any outsider dared to question either their honor or willingness to do battle on the frozen pond. (I recall once, "Battling Bob" even defended the water cooler in the lobby. But that's another story.)

The Royalettes, the Georgettes; the first faltering steps taken by our now ready to mature Junior "B" hockey team, the Pontiac-Buick Raiders.

Centennial School's excellent and unfortunately demised, wrestling program.

Georgetown and District Secondary School's always impressive - and at times formidable - athletic accomplishments.

The list could go on - ad nauseum - or add names and teams, your choice.

While out West, I was again privileged to view and also play a part in athletic excellence.

The Tier II Junior A Nanaimo Clippers hockey team ended up as Provincial champions during my stay, but faltered on the road to the Centennial Cup. The team was coached by former NHL'er, Larry McNabb, and included Barry Pederson, Torrey Robertson and Greg Adams. At last look, all three were still registered on NHL rosters. I also did radio color commentary for the Clippers.

Nanaimo's senior High School boys basketball team won the Provincial title and was ranked Number 1 in Canada during my tenure as Sports Editor. Greg Kazanowski, a member of that team, went on to represent Canada Internationally.

I had the "Distinct pleasure" (his words, not mine) of interviewing Howie Meeker. But, that's a moot point. Come to think of it, in human terms, I think Howie Meeker is a moot point.

I met and interviewed the soccer playing brothers, Bob and Sam Lenarduzzi. Bob is now vying for the position of Head Coach of Canada's National soccer team.

Suffice to say, I know sports and have covered sports at all levels.

I attended Laurentian University in Sudbury, where I majored in History and minored in Political Science. I also studied for a term at the University of Aberdeen, Aberdeen, Scotland.

I was enrolled in the Journalism course offered by Sheridan College, Oakville Campus and attended Sheridan College, Brampton Campus, in the Law and Security Administration program.

I am hoping to renew old acquaintances, perhaps heal old wounds and of primary importance, make myself available to those involved in all levels of sports and recreation in the environs of Halton Hills.

To borrow from the well-worn phrase uttered by that luscious lady of bawdiness and burlesque, Mae West, "Come up and see me sometime."

POSTSCRIPT - For all you trivia buffs in Halton Hills. You won your bet. I'm the same guy who survived being hit broadside by the train, in my Datsun, at the level crossing in Acton, in 1975. Also, one and the same, whose MGB was lifted into the air - with me in the car - when the tornado hit downtown Georgetown in 1976.