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AHS athletics won't suffer

BY DOUG HARRISON

The Acton Tanner

An aging staff and small student body does have its advantages.

It may dissolve any effect the Social Contract has on Acton High athletics.

Teachers throughout the province are being told by Premier Bob Rae that in order to cover their share of the Social Contract — about \$425 million over three years — their wages will be frozen and they will be forced to take an as yet undetermined number of unpaid days off.

On an athletic front, the concern is that some teachers who coach now may not be so willing in the future.

But this view doesn't seem to be shared by the local Physical Education department.

"It won't hurt Acton High athletics a bit," says former 12-year boys basketball, track and volleyball coach Lyn McLaren, who continues to coach Junior Girls basketball at the school while in retirement.

"The smaller towns are not as militaristic and with an older staff," he adds, "they've been through this before. They have the kids at heart. In the larger centres with a younger clientele, there is a more militaristic aspect."

Bruce Andrews, who coaches

the school's track team, feels the door is open to any coach who feels they don't have the time and energy for extra-curricular involvement.

Not crunch time — yet

"Some teachers in Halton will decide they don't want to coach, but at our school, I don't think you will see anything happen," he says confidently. "The teachers work with kids in extra-curricular activities and they like to work with them. We have difficulty getting outside coaches anyway."

It's not time to cry the blues yet, assures Acton High librarian and eight-year volleyball coach, Ken Ellis.

"I wouldn't do it if I didn't like it," he says. He added that two or three 7 am practices plus two games a week on top of other activities can be press-

ing, but it's no great crunch — yet.

However, if the board decides to remove their support from extra-curricular activities to save money, then the chances of athletics collapsing at Acton High are greater.

Cost is \$7,500

Andrews says he hasn't heard of any removal of money from any extra-curricular activity, namely athletics.

"They see it as quite important," says Andrews, who adds that with referees fees and transportation for out-of-town games, it costs the school of 500 students about \$7,500 for 140 kids in inter-school sports.

Dave Boycott, a 15-year Phys-Ed teacher and coach of volleyball, basketball and rugby, understands the teachers will be taking their unpaid days off on Professional Development (PD) days, which he feels will be the least disruptive time to slot them.

Mature staff least hurt

"We will probably struggle this year," he admits, "but that's the reality of the size of the school."

"The more mature staff will be the least affected. The younger ones moving up the grid will be hit the hardest financially and may be a little reluctant to get involved."

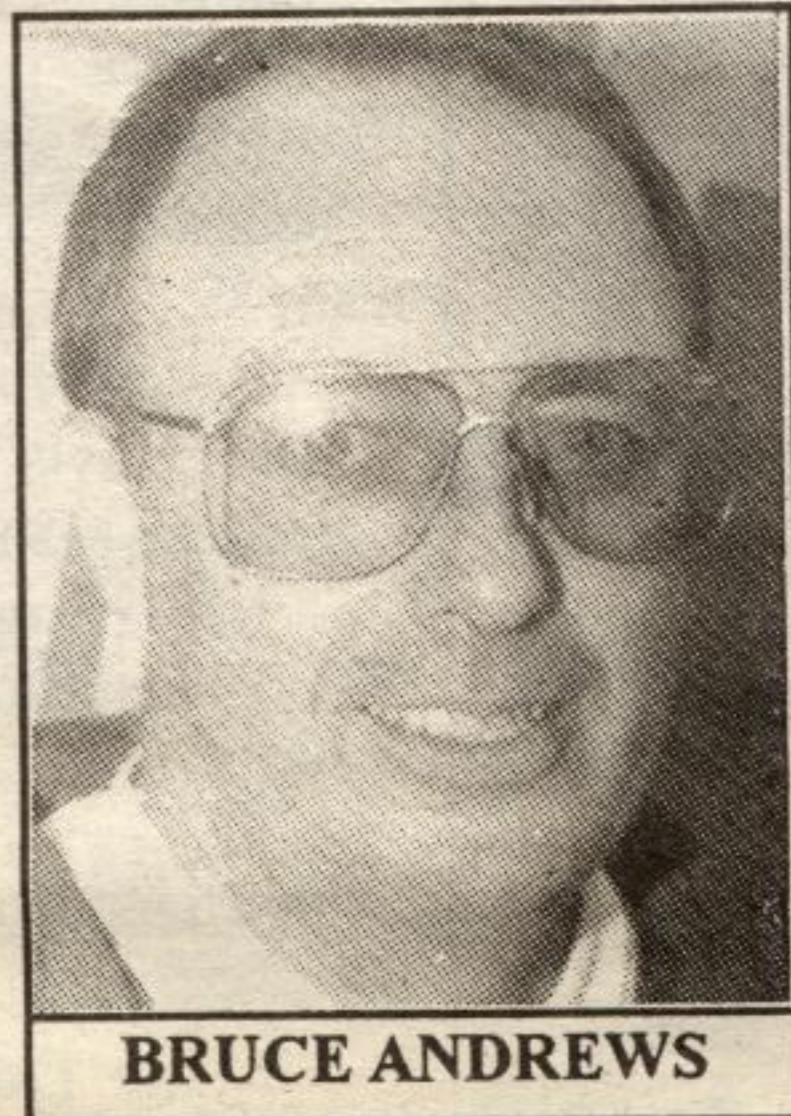
McLaren, Steve Bailey and Paul Nolan are three coaches that haven't been reluctant to coach Acton High teams over the last few years. Boycott mentions all three have been vital to the school's basketball and soccer programs.

'Times are tough now'

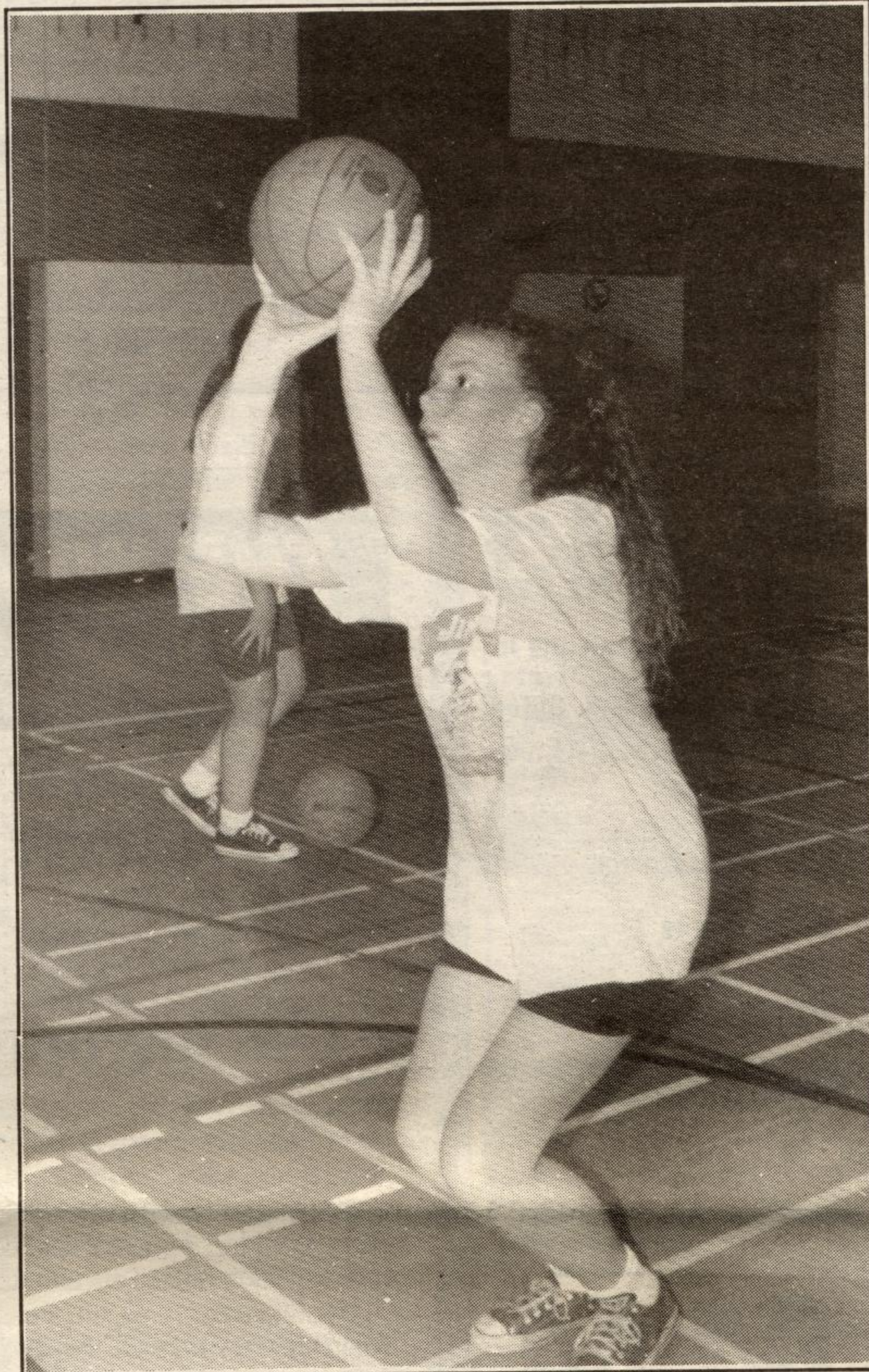
McLaren remembers only the minor work-to-rule salary dispute in the mid-'80s as comparable to the Social Contract issue.

"Times are tough now, but the staff aren't going to make the kids suffer because of the social contract," he says.

It doesn't appear so.



BRUCE ANDREWS



EYEING THE BASKET: Acton High Redmen Senior Girls basketball player Rachel Haggett, 17, measures up her shot at the free-throw line during a break in practice on Thursday. It paid off for the second-year Senior at the Collingwood Girls basketball tourney on Saturday where she shot 100 per cent from the charity stripe. (Doug Harrison photo)

AHS Redmen Girls thumped

BY DOUG HARRISON

The Acton Tanner

It was an opportunity to get their feet wet and they got soaked.

The Acton Redmen Senior Girls' basketball squad played two games on Saturday in the 17th annual Collingwood Senior Girls basketball tournament. It probably worked out to more time on the court than their total number of practice sessions.

The girls were trounced 56-29 in the first game against Shelburne and then pounded 66-26 by Owen Sound.

"I was pleased with our second-half performance against Shelburne," said Redmen coach Anne Andrews on Monday. "I took eight Senior and five Junior players with me and I might have seen six of them at practice last week."

The Redmen's chances of winning were also hurt by the fact a lot of the schools involved had practiced for two weeks straight and were beginning their regular season schedule on Monday. The locals don't open their season until Oct. 7 at Lord Elgin High in

Burlington.

The bulk of the players absent from practice were on the mandatory Grade 10 Outdoor Education field trip to Terra Cotta.

Jenny Goy, who won Most Improved Player honours as a Junior last year, led the Redmen with 13 points against Shelburne. She seems to be leaning toward playing Senior ball this year.

"I think playing Senior will be better for her own development," said Andrews, adding that Goy improved her offensive talents significantly at a basketball camp during the summer.

"This isn't meant to sound bad, but I think playing Junior after she won the Most Valuable Player award would bring her level of play down."

Andrews noted the play of Janis Bailey and Goy, who played aggressively and Laura Sanderson, who caused turnovers and was often able to get the ball to the eventual scorer.

"Owen Sound just outclassed us," said a blunt Andrews, who added the northern school had

some players in their fourth-year of basketball and "we have a young team."

"They had us 26-5 at the end of the first quarter and we weren't able to get possession of the ball. I couldn't throw any strategy into the game because the players had to worry about where they were positioned on offence and defence."

Owen Sound was up by 40 points and continued to press Acton. Andrews wondered aloud what the opposing coach was gaining by this.

Andrews felt there were players who went home feeling they played okay and others who felt their outing was horrific, but they were glad to have an opportunity to play.

"We played unselfishly in the second half against Owen Sound and played together as a team, which was nice to see," praised Andrews.

"It was a bit of a shell-shock at the start of the tournament once they realized how much faster the Senior game was."



ALMOST DONE: Kristen Finley, 12, had a strong showing at last Wednesday's North-Halton public school cross-country meet at Acton High. The Grade 7 McKenzie-Smith student finished seventh in the Intermediate Girls' 1,500-metre category in six minutes, 56 seconds. (Doug Harrison photo)