

AHS Redmen Lady cagers stressing defence

BY DOUG HARRISON

The Acton Tanner

A good remedy for a lacking offence is a good defence.

Lyn McLaren, co-coach of the Acton High Redmen Junior Girls' basketball squad, is hoping the latter is just what the doctor ordered for the 1993 season.

He has to. He lost his star player last week when it was learned that Jenny Goy, last year's Most Improved and Most Valuable Junior player, opted for Senior ball.

While it's huge loss for the Junior program, McLaren realizes it's the best move for Goy.

"There's more pressure in Senior and a faster game. She's the fastest girl on the court in the county," he says of the 5-foot-11 speedster. "She would have been a scoring machine in Junior, but

she's a top gun on either team."

McLaren says the Junior team is inexperienced Junior-wise and admits the team will take its lumps. But on the bright side, some Juniors are making strong bids to get court time.

Grade 9 player Denise Katsilieris has been showing good skills throughout tryouts. Other players making it tough on the returning players are Shondra Stroud and Robin Croft. Returning player and layup specialist Jackie Jahn has really improved, says McLaren.

He has only two other girls returning this year. Heather Trotter, 15, is coming off an ankle injury that sidelined her for the entire 1992 campaign. Shelley Hand, a Brookville resident, brings speed, aggressive play and average shoot-

ing skills to a team, which is weak in that facet.

McLaren hopes his troops can offset poor shooting with a strong defence. The Big D has been effective throughout tryouts and may be the team's strength by midseason.

"We're probably looking at 26-18 games without Goy," McLaren says. "She (Goy) could score up to 20 points herself. But we will put out a balanced lineup."

The Redmen will stress man-to-man coverage in tomorrow's (Thursday) opener at Lord Elgin High in Burlington. But McLaren, entering his 13th year as coach of Acton High sports, will open the match in a zone alignment.

"We want to protect from scaring the kids from the start and don't want to embarrass them,"

says co-coach Anne Andrews.

Who's on the court may dictate the strategy, though.

"If the players are slow you go to zone and if you have speed, you run man-to-man. But to run a zone, you have to have man-to-man skills. That's where you learn your fundamentals."

With emphasis on defence, McLaren and the girls hope to erase memories of 1992, when losses of 80-28 (Central) and 62-

19 (M.M. Robinson) were often commonplace.

Georgetown, E.C. Drury and Milton High will be the powerhouses of the north, while M.M. Robinson will rule the southern sector of the Richardson Division.

"The most important point about this team is they come to work and are not afraid. They are very cooperative and tuned in to the discipline that is required for basketball," McLaren praises.

V-ballers go 1-2 in opener; improve in tournament

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It appears the Acton High Redmen Junior Boys' volleyball team opened the first two matches of their 1993 high school season on Thursday with their eyes shut.

The Redmen fell 15-10 and 15-4 to Burlington Central on the road before waking up to post a 15-9 victory.

"We were really flat and weren't playing up to our capabilities," said disappointed Redmen coach Ken Ellis on Friday. "Our timing was off and we had some players suffering from severe colds."

A week between practices (due to a Grade 10 mandatory Outdoor Education school trip that depleted 67 per cent of the head coach's lineup) didn't help matters.

It showed in its ugliest form as the Redmen failed to get organized and control the ball with any consistency.

"The most obvious sign of the layoff's effect was in our serving. We lost a total of 14 serves, either hitting the net or letting the ball go

out of bounds," Ellis said.

Yes, there were some positives from the trip. Shawn Hopkins, who played his first game for Acton, used his height to deny the opposition at the net. Ellis says he has middle blocker potential.

Scott McIntyre missed the opener for personal reasons.

It was Round 2 in Burlington on Friday for the Redmen as they competed in the Pearson Spike Classic volleyball tournament.

After a good night's sleep, the Redmen knocked off the host Patriots in a hurry by a 15-0 score. Local power hitter Steve White reeled off 12 consecutive service points in the match.

Ellis's prayers were answered as his team improved greatly on their service play, a large contributor to Thursday's misfortunes.

Ellis juggled his lineup for the second game and it resulted in a come-from-behind 15-11 win. This put the Redmen in the championship round where they faced the tournament consolation champs from M.M. Robinson.

The Burlington outfit proved too much for a surging Redmen squad and were 15-8 and 15-7 victors.

"I was pleased to see the players bounce back from Thursday's loss and play with confidence," said Ellis following the game.

"We now have to concentrate on our blocking and block coverage for the home opener (tomorrow) against Lord Elgin."

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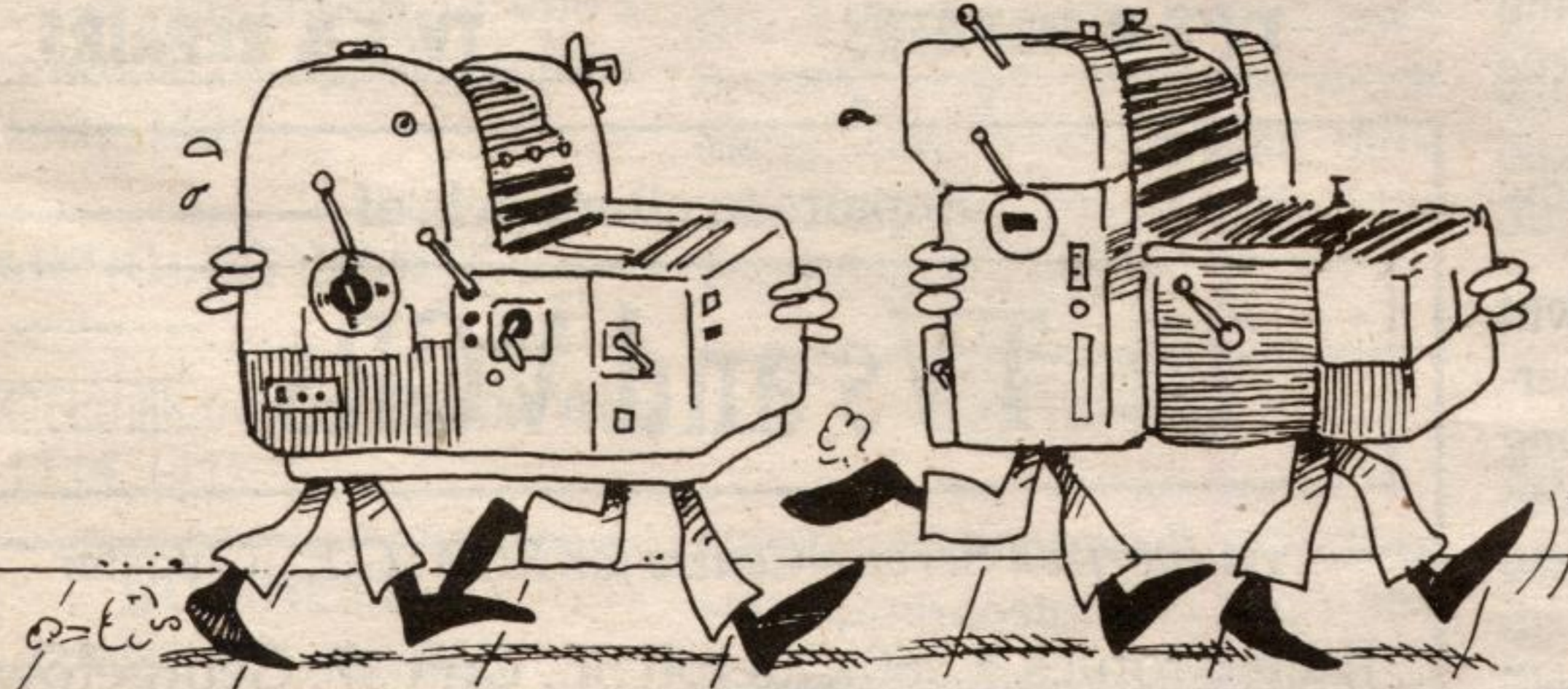
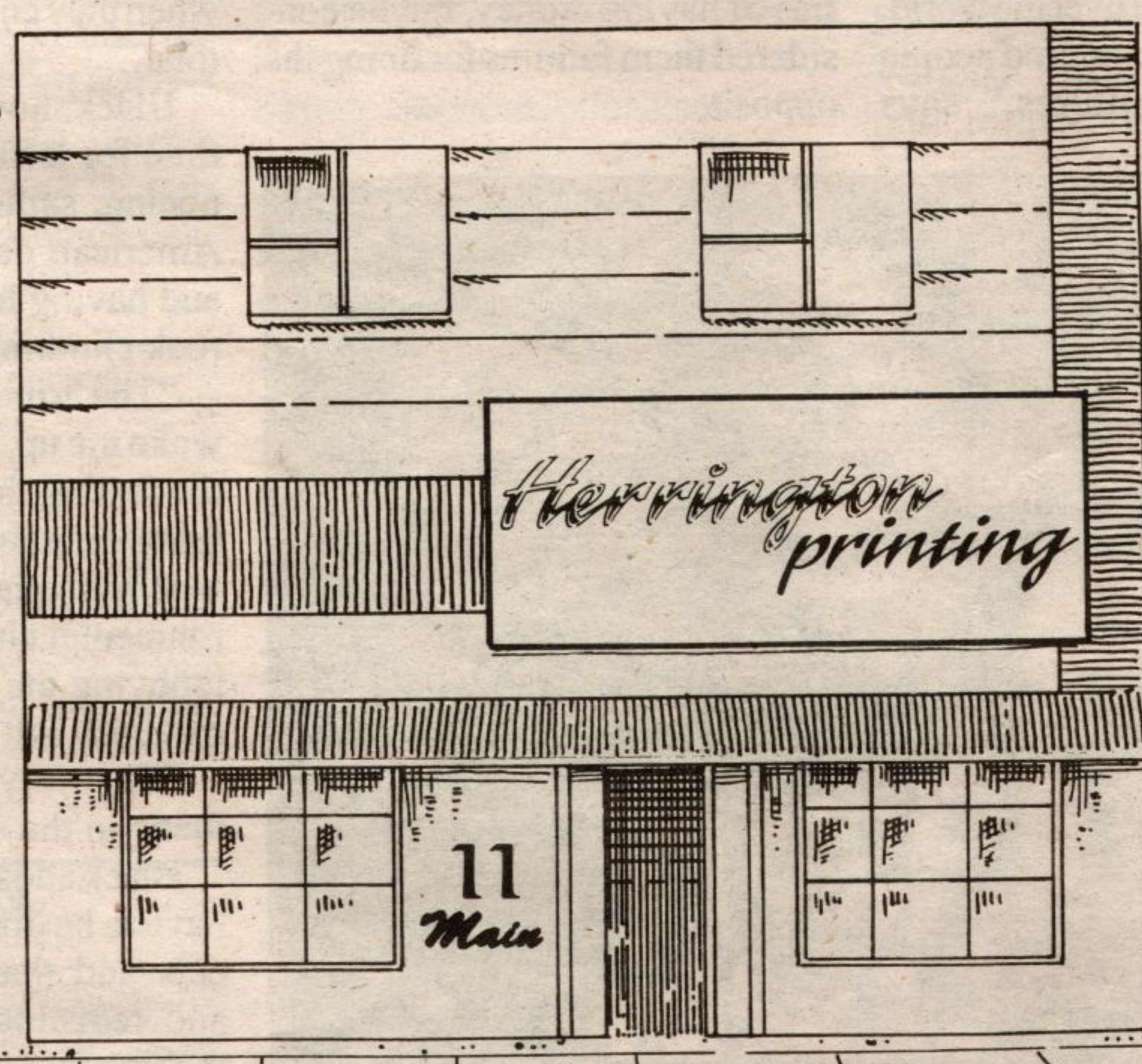
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