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Hudson picked up by Pens in waiver draft

BY DOUG HARRISON
The Acton Tanner

Despite coming off a Stanley Cup victory, Mike Hudson was one New York Ranger who didn't want a repeat of last season.

A season that was marred by a broken bone in his left hand and a 10-game suspension for high-sticking Pittsburgh Penguins defenceman Kjell Samuelsson.

But what was more damaging for the 27-year-old was sitting in the press box for the final 15 regular season games, the playoffs and the Cup final against the Vancouver Canucks.

"I asked (new Ranger coach) Colin Campbell if I would be play-

ing (in the season opener) on Friday and he said probably not, so I said I wanted to be traded," Hudson said on Thursday, a day after being picked off the waiver-wire by the Penguins in the NHL waiver draft.

While the Rockwood native "is still sort of enjoying his Stanley Cup win," he's fairly upbeat about joining the Pens, his third team in two years.

"It will be a good chance for me to play a more offensive game. They (Penguins) certainly don't have a lot of players who play my style," Hudson said before boarding a flight to Tampa Bay, where the Penguins scored a 5-3 win in

their opener on Friday.

"I just hope (coach Ed Johnston) doesn't ask me to dump the puck in and hammer every guy I see."

Although Hudson wasn't claimed by his former coach, Mike Keenan of the St. Louis Blues, he said the fiery coach did have a hand in the move.

"I heard that (Penguins GM) Craig Patrick called Keenan and asked about me before selecting me. He somehow always has his finger in the pie when it comes to me," Hudson said of Keenan, who coached him when both were members of the Chicago Blackhawks three years ago.

Waiting to see Hudson in Tampa

Bay was Samuelsson, the victim of a high-stick to the face from the former Ranger centre.

"The first thing I'll have to do is apologize to Kjell," said the less-than-anxious Hudson, an Acton Minor Hockey product. "It'll be interesting, that's all I'm going to say. I will tell you more when it's over."

Hudson, though, did have more to say about his first return visit to Madison Square Garden tonight (Wednesday).

"It will be a little emotional," he admitted, "but I'm looking forward to it. I told the guys 'don't hate me if I run you.'"

Not thrilled with having to leave

a good Ranger organization and move again, Hudson felt it was best.

"It's a shame," he began, "but sooner or later you have to take care of yourself in your career. But, realistically, in 10 months in New York the only jersey I wore was a practice one."

But the eighth-year veteran did see some ice on Friday night. He hopes to see more in battling young centre Len Barrie for likely fourth-line duty.

NOTE: Hudson picked up his first goal as a Penguin in Monday night's 6-5 win in Florida against the Panthers. Joe Mullen and Martin Straka drew the assists.

AHS Midgets win 6 of 8

With a goal to win three of eight games at Bishop Reding recently, Acton Redmen Midget girls' volleyball coaches Bruce and Anne Andrews saw their players double their fun in winning six.

It was the most successful showing by far from the locals who opened the tournament-style season with a dismal performance at their own tourney on Dec. 8.

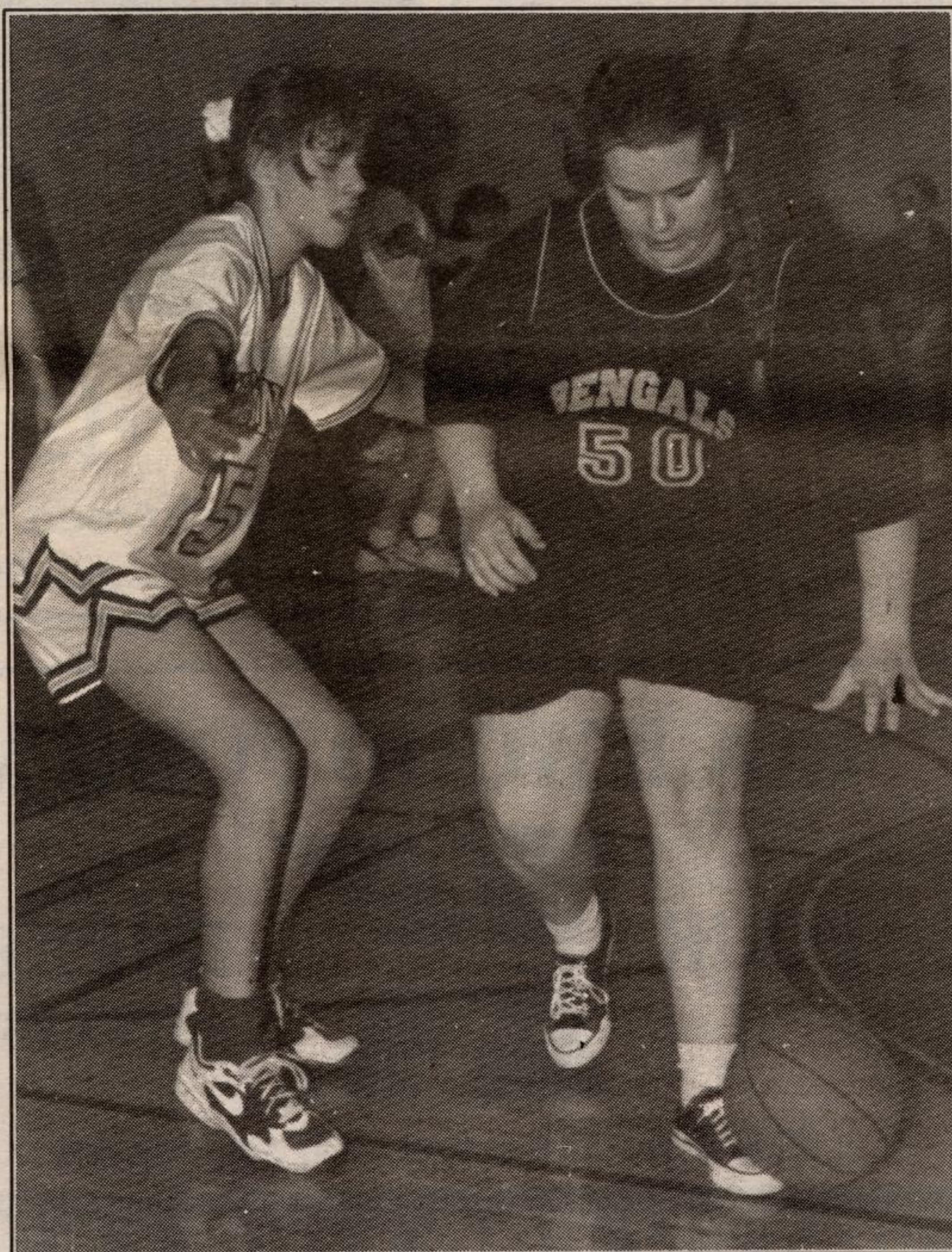
At Reding, the Redmen split 15-9, 11-15 with the hosts, fell apart against the Milton Mustangs 0-15 before rebounding for a 15-8 win. Then they went on to handily defeat the Georgetown Lady Rebels 15-7, 15-12 and E.C. Drury Spartans 15-7, 15-7.

"It's an ongoing experiment," says Anne Andrews of her team. "We served much more consistently in this tourney — 19 for 22 in one game and 13 of 17 in another."

"And the girls played well together. Their court coverage has improved, but they need to be ready when the other team's setters set."

Andrews mentions an improving Eleni Halis showed leadership on the court.

The Redmen will host an eight-team tourney at 9 am on Feb. 10.



LOSS OF POSSESSION? McKenzie-Smith Mustangs girls' basketball player Maya Barbir, left, had this Brookville Bengals opponent covered during action in Acton on Thursday. Barbir scored seven in the Stangs' 47-13 victory. (Doug Harrison photo)

Mustang girls' bench gets plenty of work

BY DOUG HARRISON
The Acton Tanner

Facing a weak Brookville basketball squad on Thursday was just what Dave Walker wanted before visiting Stewarttown yesterday (Tuesday).

A 24-2 first-quarter lead that eventually became a 47-13 whitewash allowed the McKenzie-Smith Mustang coach to give his bench of Grade 6 and 7 girls' players much-needed court time.

"It was a good team effort," Walker said on Monday of his 2-2 outfit. "The starters did an extremely good job in the first quarter to build a comfortable lead, so I could get the rest of the team on the floor."

"They (the Grade 6s) have the raw talent, so they just have to apply it in game situations."

Walker was pleased with the effective ball control by his starters and was looking forward to a battle with 3-1 Stewarttown on the road yesterday.

"It's coming, but we've

started slow this year," he conceded. "We're a strong athletic group with big potential. We'll be in contention for the (North-Halton) title at the end of the season."

Darya Barbir led the Stangs with 10 points, while Rebecca Austin and Maya Barbir counted seven apiece.

NOTES: The Lady Mustangs dropped a 39-26 decision to first-place Centennial last Tuesday. Darya Barbir led with eight points. Austin added six, while Maya Barbir chipped in with four. The Mustangs sit in fourth-place in the six-team loop, two points behind Centennial, W.I. Dick and Stewarttown.

The Mustang boys' cage team, meanwhile, has a two-point lead on Centennial after Daryn McIntyre's 16 points helped down Brookville 46-32 on Thursday at home. Mike Hills scored 10. Last Tuesday, the locals defeated Centennial 40-32. Adam Ahearn poured in 14 points, while Hills had 10.



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