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Leafs waive Hudson, claimed by Keenan

BY DOUG HARRISON
 The Acton Tanner

Brash, demanding, a tyrant and Captain Hook. All have been used, in one form or another, to describe Mike Keenan.

After being waived by the Maple Leafs last Wednesday and subsequently picked up by the St. Louis Blues' general manager-coach, Mike Hudson added *The Saviour* to the list.

It was Keenan who rescued an unhappy Hudson in 1993, plucking him off the waiver wire from the Edmonton Oilers. And it was Keenan who talked to Pittsburgh Penguins GM Craig Patrick before the latter grabbed the Acton Minor Hockey product in the NHL waiver draft last January from the New York Rangers.

Now, he has suspended any thoughts the eight-year veteran had of hanging up the blades and heading to university.

"I started my career with him and could very well finish it with him," Hudson, 28, says. "He's the reason I got my foot in the door of the NHL. I owe him."

Despite sitting the bulk of the Leafs' past 10 games after missing a recent team flight to the West Coast as well as nursing a cracked bone in his left ankle - tests have detected ligament and tendon damage - the fourth-line centre says the news did come as a surprise.

But heading to his sixth team in eight years, Hudson also realizes more than ever how much of a business the sport has become.

"It's a numbers game and I was

the most expendable guy," admits Hudson, who denies the missed flight precipitated his release. "If I didn't get picked up by anyone I was going to retire."

Had he cleared waivers, a stint with the St. John's Baby Leafs of the American Hockey League wasn't an option, notes Hudson, who signed a one-year, two-way contract with the Buds.

The Rockwood native sat upstairs at Maple Leaf Gardens talking with Leafs assistant GM Bill Watters as management mulled over his destination had he cleared.

"All I thought was 'I'm not reporting.' I

don't play hockey to play in the minors," Hudson says.

Then Keenan came calling.

"I was surprised St. Louis took me," Hudson continues, adding he seriously considered not reporting for his third tour of duty with Keenan before the frustration of being waived wore off.

"I didn't expect to get picked up because I was a free agent last summer and didn't see much interest from a lot of teams. I didn't want to go to a no hope team."

In the end, Hudson was grateful to Leaf management, who gave him the chance to fulfill a childhood dream, if only for 27 games.

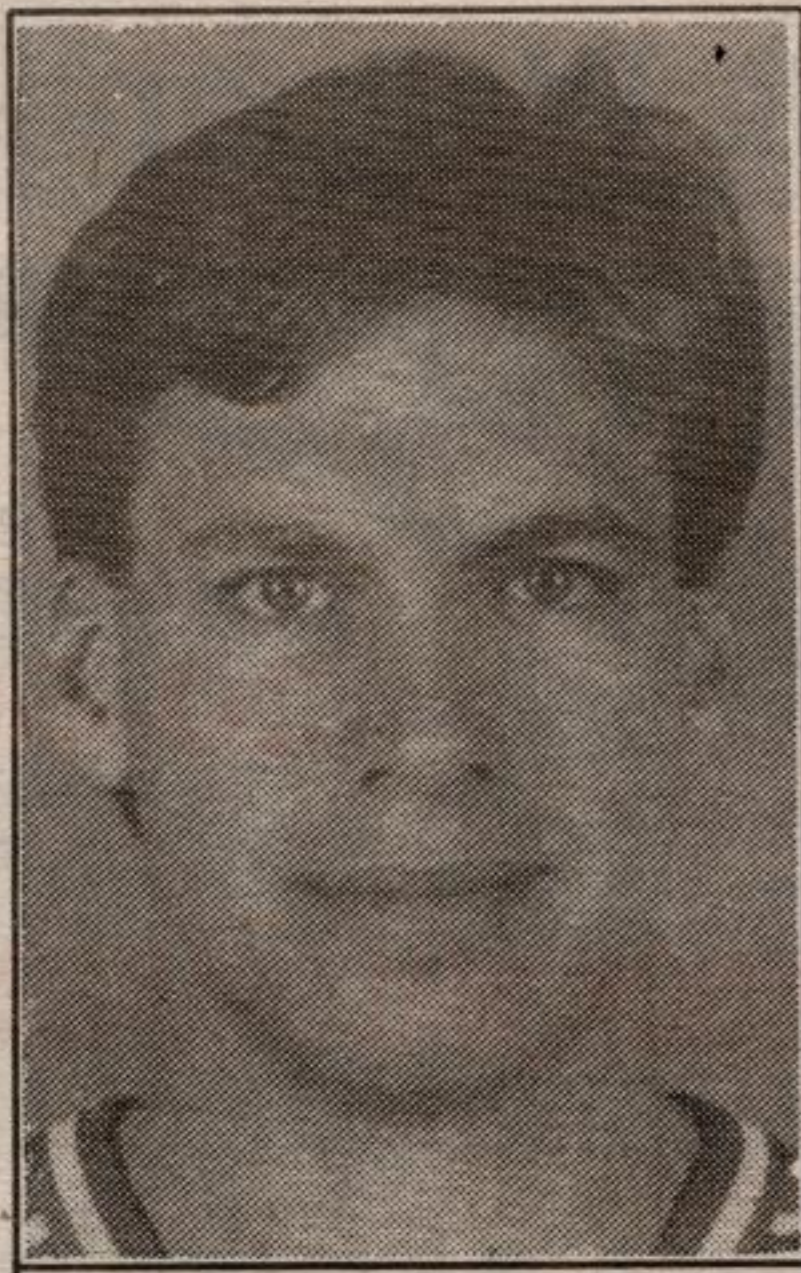
"It was a lot of fun. Anytime I stepped on the ice it was exciting because I was stepping on as a Leaf. I'll miss the guys."

"I don't think I played as well as I could have. That may be the only regret in Toronto. But I know a lot of the guys in St. Louis, so it won't be a huge transition."

Hudson, who scored two goals in 27 games as a Leaf, says he expects to see a lot of ice time, since the Blues have their own share of injuries.

"I know what to expect from Keenan," says Hudson, who played for him in Chicago and with the 1993-94 Stanley Cup champion Rangers. "He uses me as a checker and momentum breaker or maker."

Ironically, Keenan asked Leaf coach Pat Burns how Hudson was playing during a recent Leaf visit.



MIKE HUDSON



YOUNG DUCKS: These Acton Aqua Duck swim club members fared well at a meet in Georgetown on Dec. 2 and 3. Front row, from left: Jesse Maxwell and Adrianna Burton. Back row: Jason Charland, Kristi Galvin, Caitlin Lichty and Daniel Charland. (Doug Harrison photo)

Acton blanks Erin-Hillsburgh 10-0

HOUSE LEAGUE HOCKEY

MIDGET-JUVENILE

Supported by three-goal performances by Ryan Seads and Chuck Gair, Acton dismantled Erin-Hillsburgh 10-0 in house league play on Sunday.

Rounding out the scoring were Dwayne Rhynold, Jason Lowrie, Brad Rhynold and Adam Petch.

Chris Sargent led Acton with four assists. Others went to Lowrie, Mark Ridley, Joel Lucier and Scott McDonald with pairs, Gair, Brad Rhynold, Jeff Hunter, Adam King and Todd Chumley.

BANTAM

Derek Nolan scored twice and added an assist to pace Dave's Home Services and Painting to a 5-1 win over Acton Subway.

Scott Galway, Nathan Irving and Mike Golderick were the other goal scorers.

Ben Muggridge set up three goals. Golderick with two, Nolan and Fraser Hewitt drew other assists.

Joey Zinke from Josh Wilson replied for Subway.

Also on Sunday, Dave's dropped a 5-2 decision to Erin-Hillsburgh.

Galway and Irving scored in a losing cause.

Irving and Muggridge posted helpers.

In action on Saturday, Joey Zinke fired the hat-trick and assisted to lead Acton Subway past Erin-Hillsburgh 8-2.

Adam Churchman and Mike Smith,

who assisted twice, had two goals apiece, while Josh Wilson also scored.

Counting four assists was Ryan Schmidt. Marc Chaisson had two.

PEEWEE

In a select encounter, Mount Forest doubled Acton 4-2.

Ryan Weatherall and Mike Rowsell found the net for Acton.

Earning helpers were Weatherall, Matt Hall and Alex Zinke.

M & M Pro Sports and Erin-Hillsburgh played to a 6-6 tie in league action.

Kurt Bosch with three, Nathan French a pair and David White were the M & M marksmen.

D.J. King assisted on three scores, while Adam Bosch, with a pair, and Michael Varanelli had other helpers.

ATOM

Matt Dayman, Trevor Hall, Travis Medland and Taylor Seads all scored in Mr. Mugs' 4-0 blanking of Nellis Construction at the arena.

Grabbing two assists each were Hall, Dan Payne and Chris Foster. Taylor Seads and Lance Morin registered singles.

Tallying for Mike and Al's Transport in their 3-1 win over Mike Luty Transport were Mike Chapman twice and Blaine Murray.

Setting up scores were Shane Drexler twice, Dylan Jacobs and Brendan Blair.

Answering for Mike Luty was Harry Schaeffer from Tyler Chapman and Matthew Chapman.

NOVICE

Jonathan Tysoe and Joel Graydon scored for Acton, which suffered a 5-2 setback to Guelph in a select matchup.

Picking up assists were Mike Kuiper with two, Graydon and Tysoe.

In league play, Tysoe (hat-trick) and Kyle Murray scored to give Legion Branch 197 a 5-3 victory over R & M Construction.

Chris Golden supplied three assists, while Dalton Winstone racked up two. Murray had one.

For R & M, Jay Lalonde scored twice and D'Arcy O'Driscoll once.

Assists went to Brendan Pezzack with two and Lalonde.

Nick Perron accounted for five of MacMillan's goals in a 10-2 rout of Remax on Saturday.

Robbie Rolfe with three, Greg Henry and J.J. Edwards finished the onslaught.

Dennis Hunak topped the winners with six assists. Recording others were Edwards and Amanda Schroeder with three and Henry and Nichole Gobin two each.

The Toletzka boys, Trent and Kyle, put home Remax goals.

Joe Douglas and Trent Toletzka assisted on the scores.

Kurtis McArthur scored the winning goal in MacKenzie-Chapman's 3-2 verdict over Acton Galvcast.

Scott Williams, who drew an assist on the winner, scored the other two goals.

Matthew Sebastian with two, McArthur, Bradley Durocher and

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