

# Championship earned Raiders spot among best teams ever

The Georgetown Raiders were a very good team. In 10 years, beginning in 1972, they won the Ontario Hockey Association Intermediate A championship five times and were finalists on three other occasions.

But only one thing could make them a great team.

The Hardy Cup, the symbol of national intermediate hockey supremacy, finally found a home in Georgetown on April 18, 1982. That night the Raiders completed a three-game sweep of the Quesnel (B.C.) Kangaroos with a 4-1 victory at the Gordon Alcott Arena.

The Raiders made a determined run at the Cup in 1981, only to be upset by Timmins in the OHA final. They came back even more intent on winning the following season. They lost only four of 36 regular season games and the late-season acquisitions of Jack Smith, one of the best defencemen in the league, and goalie Wayne Wood, the American Hockey League's playoff MVP the previous season, made them even better.

"Everybody made sacrifices," said Dave Kentner, the team's general manager. "Everybody from the big gun hockey players to the people who worked in the booster club. Everybody was dedicated to winning the Hardy Cup."

The Raiders exacted revenge knocking off Timmins. They followed those up with victories over Thunder Bay and Cap Pele, N.B.

Against Quesnel, the Raiders stormed out of the gate in front of the home town fans in the opening game. They took an early 3-0 lead and went on a 4-2 victory.

In game two, with Quesnel clinging to a one-goal lead and on the verge of evening the series, the Kangaroos were called for icing in the dying seconds of the game. The Raiders seized the opportunity as John Cook tipped in the point shot of Raider captain Steve Lyon with 14 seconds remaining to tie the game. In overtime, series MVP Joe Ens capped a

thrilling comeback by converting Doug Fry's pass for the overtime winner.

Up 2-0, the Raiders were not about to let their cherished prize get away. Just over a minute into the game, Ens scored to put the Raiders in front. Before the opening period was over, Lyon extended the lead to 2-0.

Quesnel continued to battle and pulled within one but Juri Kudrasovs' short-handed goal midway through the second put Quesnel on ice. "All 21 players played super," said coach Ray Inglis as he celebrated the victory. "If someone had a bad shift, someone was there to pick it up."

Kentner was thrilled at seeing the Hardy Cup dream realized.

"The year was an absolute, total, out and out success in every way," he said.



Kentner and Inglis decided that the Hardy Cup would be the crowning achievement of their hockey careers. Even as the team was celebrating, both announced that they would be stepping down from their positions. Many of the players also decided to hang up the blades and go out as champions.

The Hardy Cup had been the team's goal all along but the opportunity to win the championship at home made the victory even more special.

Kentner said Raider fans rarely got to see them play against the country's best teams.

"Until then we would always be going somewhere else for all the big games. People in Georgetown never got to see how good these teams from the other provinces were," Kentner said. "There would be 10, 15 guys on their roster who had played pro hockey."

None of those teams were better than the Raiders. Including playoffs, they played 57 games in the 1981/82 season and won 51 of them.

Georgetown remains the only team from Ontario to ever win the Hardy Cup. And when the Ontario Hockey Association celebrated its 100th anniversary, it awarded banners for the best team of each decade. The Georgetown Raiders were one of the 10 recipients.

—By Herb Garbutt staff writer

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