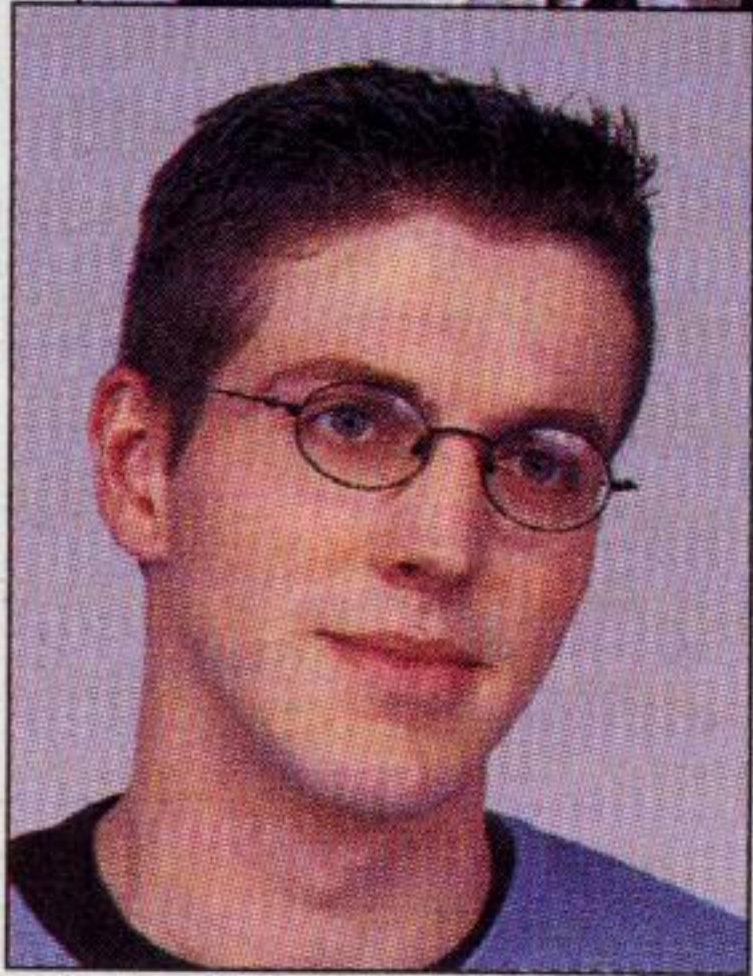


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Jim Ford has been president of the Kinsmen Girls Softball League for the past 28 years. The sports-loving grandfather is also a Georgetown Hockey Heritage Award winner.

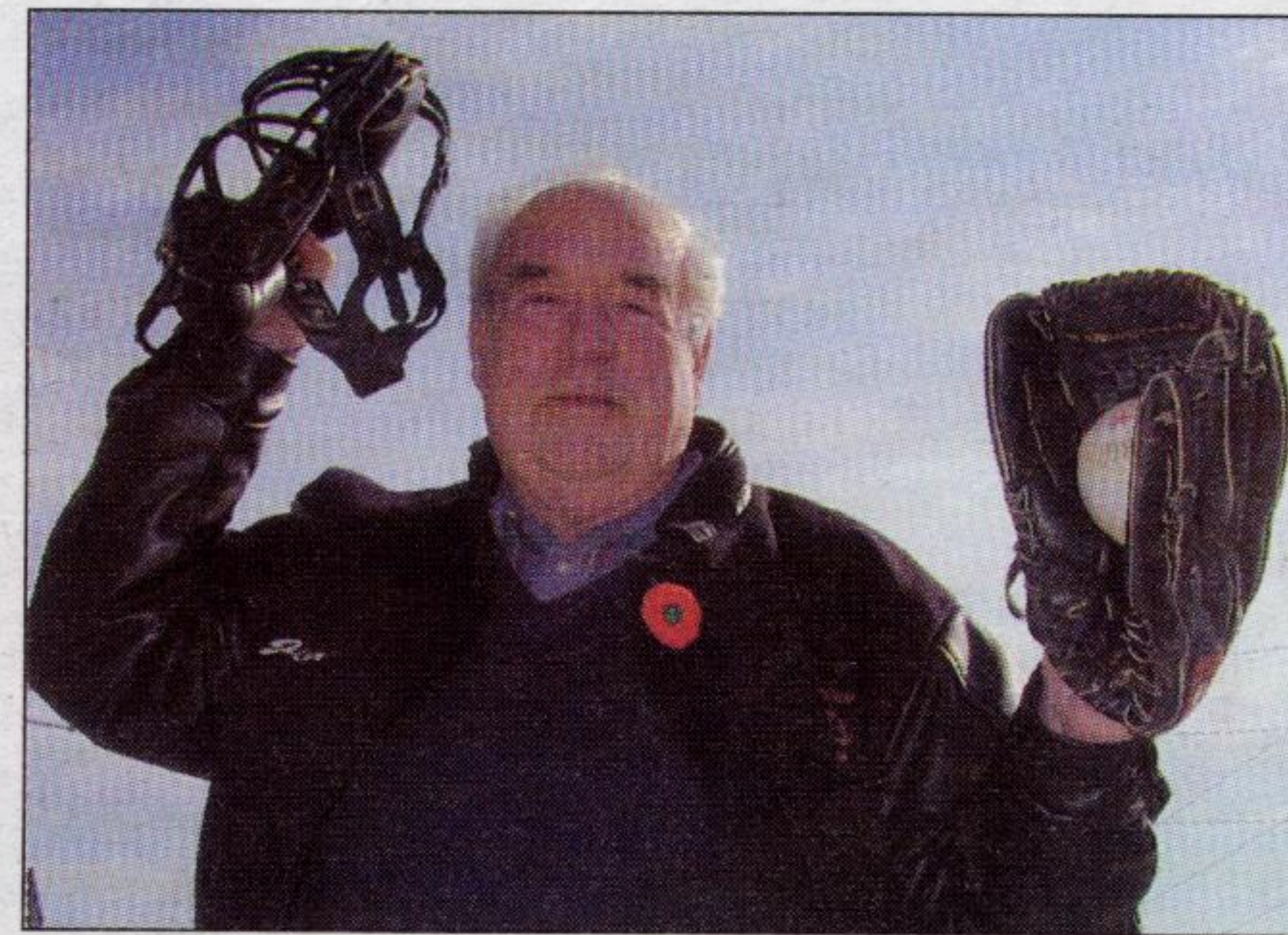


Photo by Herb Garbutt

Jim Ford

## Softball league found a real diamond

Each year Jim Ford tells the executive of the Kinsmen Girls Softball League it will be his last. Of course, Ford has been saying that for almost 20 years.

When the day finally comes that Ford follows through and turns over the president's title, his successor will have big shoes to fill. One of the league's original umpires, Ford has been president of the league for 28 years. With the league in danger of folding in the early 70s, Ford, Garry Alton and Pat Butler "put our heads together because we wanted the league to carry on," he explains.

Carry on it did.

Ford watched his four daughters and now one of his granddaughters progress through the league. Approximately 1,500 players, including Kara McGaw who went on to represent Canada at the 1996 Olympics, have played in the league under Ford's leadership.

"I like seeing the improvement of the

girls through the years, from the time they're five or years-old through to when they're 18," Ford said. "It gives them, especially the older girls, something to look forward to doing each week."

Ford's time on the diamonds of Georgetown dates back to the mid 1940s when he was the bat boy for the Alliance Paper Mill and Georgetown Ladies Fastball teams. He also managed the Georgetown Combines to the industrial Fastball League title in 1958.

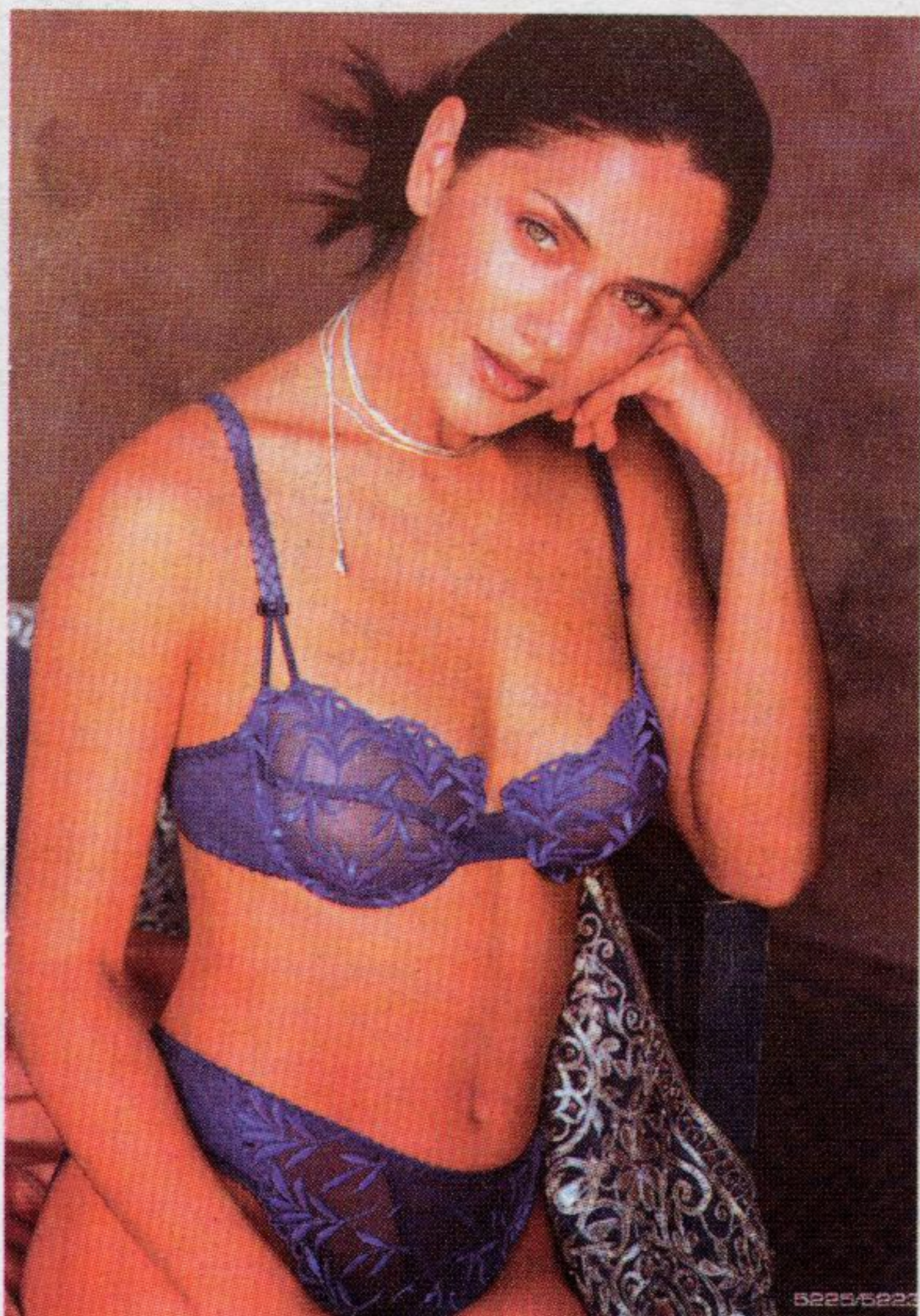
For as much time as Ford spent on the diamonds, the 1993 recipient of the Georgetown Hockey Heritage Award is equally accomplished in the town's rinks.

He served as president of Legion Minor Hockey, the Minor Hockey Support Group and served as trainer for the 1958 Ontario Intermediate B champions.

And Ford's giving nature doesn't end in the world of sports. His next blood donation will be his 150th.

—By Herb Garbutt, staff writer

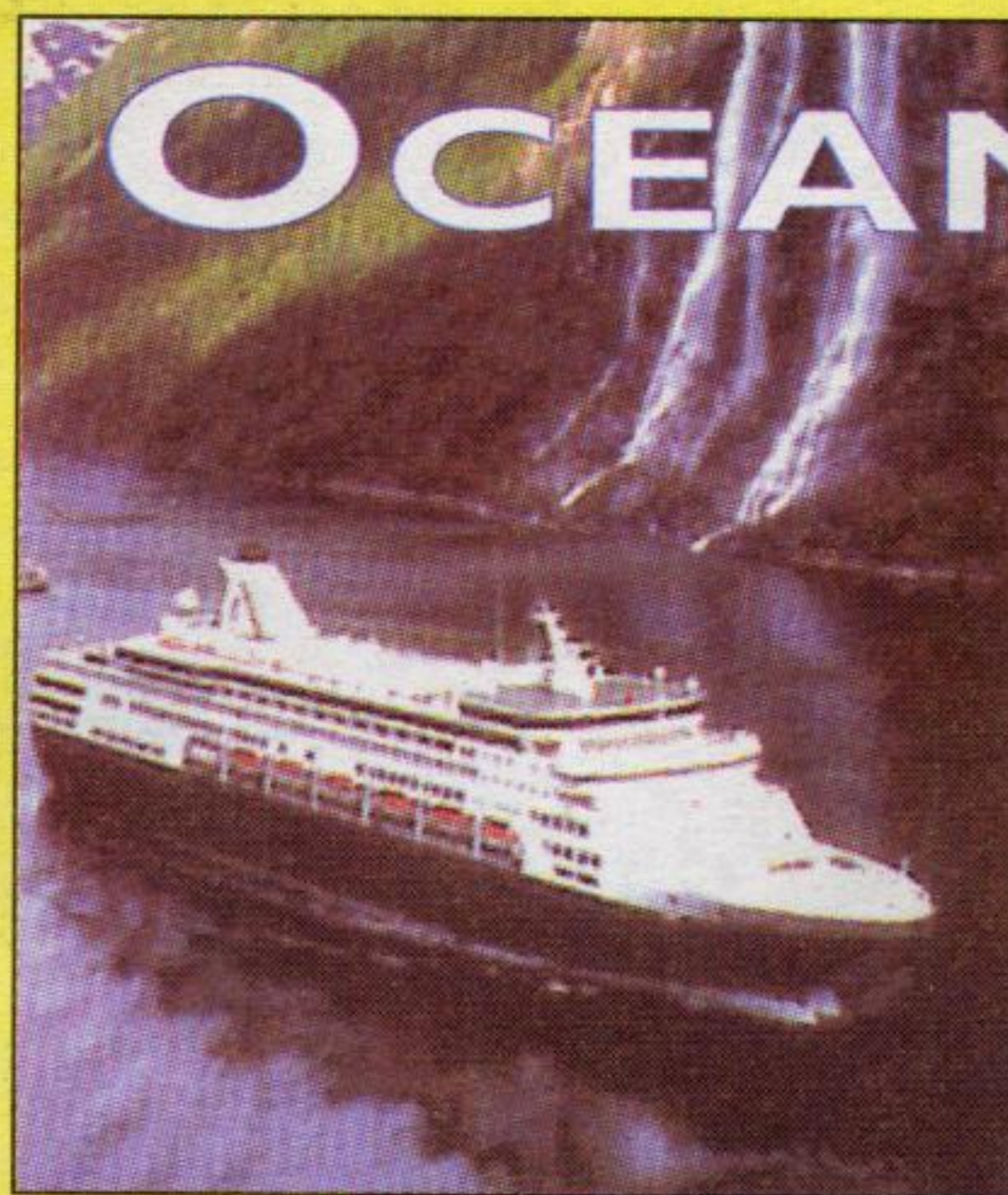
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