

The Free Press Short Story

THE STRENGTH OF THE PACK

By F. C. DAPOR

At six o'clock on the night of the Friel dinner and lecture at the auditorium, Phillip Stanton, captain of Western University's hockey team, and known to the school fans by the affectionate title of "Grumpy," telephoned his left forward, Rodney Wright. "Oh, Red, Steve's called an extra workout as the rink to-night. I want you to have a last try at those new stunts he thinks will knock Lawrence cold. Means we'll have to grab a bite and beat it to the Hippo pronto. Dad's letting me have the car so I'll hook for you in twenty minutes."

Time and again the unerring shots of the right forward were fumbled in the hands of the left forward. Time and again students howled and the coach groaned when Phillip's mastery attacked shriveled because Rodney was "off side." The rest of the team were living up to all that was expected of them in the matter of speed. They were massaged into a bewildered uncertainty, however, at the inexplicable conduct of the two forwards. Never had Phillip played so selfish a game. Never had Rodney bungled so many sure shots. Perplexity and strain communicated themselves to the grand stand. Rooters became suspicious. Cries of "Rotten!" "Put him out!" "He's throwing us down!" emanated from all parts of the arena. Before the end of the first period Rodney found himself ridiculed to the bench, confused, amazed, angry realising that Phillip, by some subtle strategy was making him pay for having cut the last practice to attend the Friel dinner.

"Looks like it. I'm pretty down myself about the mkrup, but I can't see how crabbing will help. Steve's word is law. You understand that?" "Aw, cut it." Rodney was truculent. "If Steve thinks I'm passing up the chance of Friel's choosing me for the polar trip, he has another think coming. You and I don't need an extra practice. We're stars. What's the big idea?" "Don't be an egg, Red." Phillip started arguing. "It's teamwork we need to defeat Lawrence not individual star playing. Lawrence is bringing along a km or so of eastern pressure. We've got to be better perfect or go under."

This was exactly what Phillip meant Rodney to understand. As is the way with sunny-tempered people, rage grooved his mind to a single track. All he had thought about for the last forty-eight hours was to humiliate Wright and to show him up before audent if fickle fans. He knew that Rodney had counted, and counted correctly, upon being allowed to play in the big game even if he did not attend the last grind. No matter how furious the coach might be or how desirous of disciplining his truant left forward, he would feel himself helpless in the face of the team's need. Rodney was a valuable player. He had speed, stamina, and a body that worked with automation-like precision. No one but Phillip suspected, unless it might be the coach, that without the co-operation of the right forward, Rodney's game would be a flop. Phillip gave the line to Rodney's fuel, timed signals so accurately that the received passes acted as ballast to the other's excellibility. Withhold that support, and Rodney, in the parance of the rink, would "blow up."

"Sport fans are as unstable as weather-cocks. They boo us avidly as they cheer. Several errors, a fumble or two a hint of panic in a pinch, and even a star may find himself sent into ignominious retirement. Phillip, well versed in fan psychology, deliberately put two and two together and waited for the answer four, sooner than he had expected, Rodney went to pieces. Feet and gibes completed his downfall. He was benched, where, unless some unforeseen contingency arose, he would remain, raging but helpless.

"Serves him right," boasted Phillip, throwing himself into the fray with renewed satisfaction. "Figured he could pull a boner and get away with it, did he? He's got another think coming. Watch our smoke now, Lawrence! We're going to show that piker we can win without him."

The great building on the campus, known to the student body as the "Hippo," was packed to capacity on the night the Western University-Lawrence hockey game. Seven thousand excited fans stamped, howled, and exchanged good natured chaffing as the Easterners in their striking suits of orange and black shot goals and warmed up generally for the coming fray.

As though to refute the boast the unexpected happened. Lawrence's left defence gathered his center and right forward into middle ice in a triangular combine which for an instant puzzled their opponents. Some one in the orange and black grabbed the puck in the looz, passed it to the center, and the center let fly. Too late the "U" players understood and lunged. The shot went true. The rubber zipped into the net as the bell changed the end of the first period.

"The telltale figures registered on the score board were: Visitors, 1; Western 'U', 0."

Phillip's heart was bitter within him. From the start the second period was fast. Phillip, with the coach's words ringing in his ears to keep rushing and carry the play, took the puck into the heart of the enemy's defence with a daring and an abandon that dumfounded even himself. Whenever the milling was the thickest his dark head bobbed up and down like a cork. He matched speed with anybody and his stick handling was the best he ever had shown.

From the start all eyes were focused on Phillip. In the glare of the arena lights he looked silent, nervous, out of sorts. Where was that buoyant smile which had earned him the affectionate title of "Grumpy"? Where was that good-natured, confident, contagious smile, flashing out at opponent as readily as it did at colleague? All around was heard the same query. "What's the matter with Stanton? Can he be sick?"

Phillip's position was that of right forward. Rodney played left forward. In addition there was a right and left defence, a centre, and a goal guard. From the start all eyes were focused on Phillip. In the glare of the arena lights he looked silent, nervous, out of sorts. Where was that buoyant smile which had earned him the affectionate title of "Grumpy"? Where was that good-natured, confident, contagious smile, flashing out at opponent as readily as it did at colleague? All around was heard the same query. "What's the matter with Stanton? Can he be sick?"

Plays brought him so close that those at the rail could see his eyes, grim and hard, not aught with that exultant enthusiasm which time and again had inspired team and roder to keep on in the face of threatened defeat.

"Tub it into Lawrence!" Seven thousand throats shouted simultaneously. "One more goal and we got 'em." The rink seemed to shake when the "U" rushed and Lawrence blocked. A visiting team has a hard time winning recognition but one could not help applauding the effective way in which the Easterners played their code. They staged a defence that even partisan critics were forced to admit was a masterpiece. One to one the score stood. One to one it threatened to remain.

Phillip, playing the greatest game of his career and knowing that he was playing it, was nevertheless in a vicious mood. The applause, his school yells, the heart-warming support of his skating mates were dust and ashes in his receiving it.

When we were first married I used to waken my husband with a kiss every morning. "And how?" "After three months he bought himself an alarm clock."

HEARTS ARE TRUMP AGAIN By BETTY BARCLAY

Hearts are trumps on St Valentine's Day so what could please your Valentine party guests better than a Valentine Heart Salad? If there is to be dancing you will wish to serve a punch. Here is a little menu, and recipes for the suggested salad and punch.

Valentine Heart Salad With Sweet French Dressing Cheese Biscuits Red and White Heart-Shaped Minis Coffee The punch will be served later

VALENTINE HEART SALAD On lettuce-covered salad plates, arrange small individual, heart-shaped moulds of cranberry jelly. Surround with half slices of seedless oranges arranged to look like the scalloped edges of an old-fashioned Valentine. Serve with:

SWEET FRENCH DRESSING Blend together thoroughly: 6 table-spoons lemon juice, 1/4 cup salad oil, 1/2 teaspoon salt, 1/2 teaspoon paprika, 1/2 cup any red jelly. Serves 8 to 12.

PARADISE PUNCH 1 cup lemon juice 1 cup grapefruit juice 2 cup raspberry or loganberry juice 1 quart water 1/2 cup sugar

Orange slices cut in small fancy shapes for garnish. Blend ingredients thoroughly. Serve very cold. The orange slices should be cut from clean-skinned, seedless oranges. Serves 12-16.

GOOSE RAISING FOR PROFIT

The essentials to success in goose raising are free range, and an abundance of green feed. The breeding stock and the goellings will live well if there is an abundance of tender grass or clover, even if grains or mash are not fed.

The breeding geese should start to lay about the middle of March and the eggs should be set as soon as enough have been laid to make it worth while. The sooner the eggs are set after being laid the better. The period of incubation is 31 days. Eggs may be set in incubators, under hens, or under the mother geese. It is a good practice to sprinkle the eggs with lukewarm water once daily when set under the mother geese or under hens, and twice daily when set in an incubator.

The moulting of the eggs keeps the embryo from becoming too dry and sticking to the shell, especially at hatching time. Coolings require much heat after they are hatched and it is safe to leave them in the incubator or under the mother geese for about two days after hatching. The air in the incubator chamber should be maintained at the same temperature after the birds have hatched but the goellings should be let down into the nursery when they have dried off and are able to move around freely.

When the goellings are ready for feeding it is a good practice to place a green sod near the nest or brooder and let the young birds pull the tender shoots themselves. This will induce them to start feeding. For the first few days goellings should be fed on bread crumbs moistened with milk. When the young birds are about a week old they may be given a mash composed of equal parts, by weight, of cornmeal, barley meal, bran and shorts. This should be made moist, but not sloppy. The birds should be fed three or four times daily for about two weeks. When the weather is fine they should be given their liberty but they should be protected from cold rains and confined at night until the weather gets warm. Give the goellings a good start and they may then be turned out on good pasture and the feeding of mash discontinued. Make sure that the goellings have plenty of shade and a liberal supply of fresh drinking water before them at all times.

The raising of a flock of geese is so simple that every farmer should avail himself of the opportunity. The expense is very small. The birds require very little care, either winter or summer. They are almost immune from disease, and a geeling once hatched is almost sure to develop. No branch of farm work offers greater opportunities, or better returns for the money invested, than does goose raising.

WHEN BANANAS ARE RIPE

Do you know when a banana is ripe? Possibly you think, because it is turning yellow, that it is sufficiently mature to eat. This is not correct, however. Until the bananas becomes speckled, that is, shows brownish spots, it is not ripe enough to use.

Green immature bananas contain considerable starch, similar to the raw potato starch. As the fruit becomes ripe, this starch turns to sugar. It is not so many years ago that bananas were sold at so much each—now this fruit may be obtained at quite a low cost by the dozen or pound.

One of the most valuable properties of the banana is that it can be shipped in the green state and ripened as needed. Considering the long distance that bananas have to be shipped, this is a great advantage.

HONEYMOON IS OVER

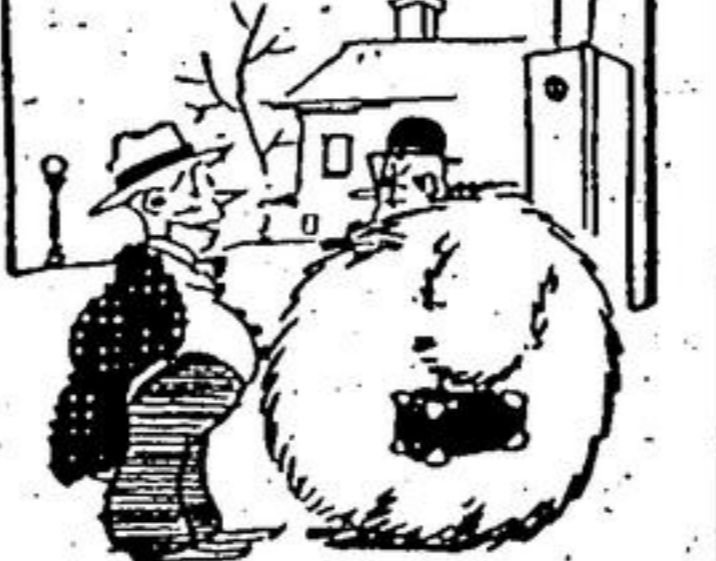
"When we were first married I used to waken my husband with a kiss every morning. "And how?" "After three months he bought himself an alarm clock."

CASE OF SUNSTROKE



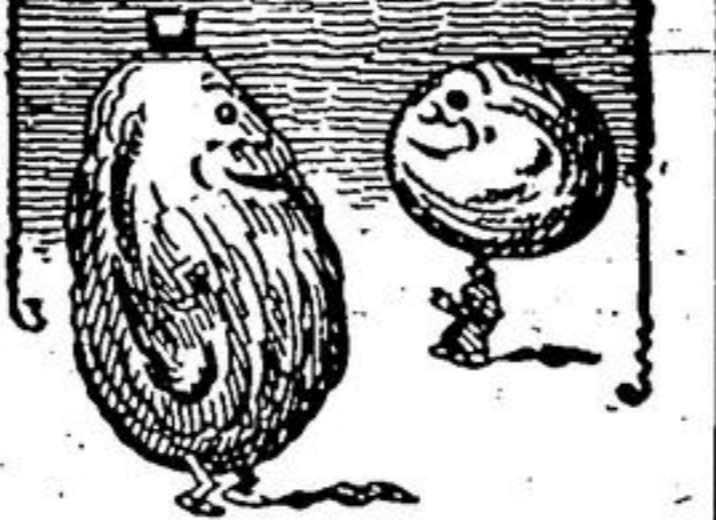
"What's ailing Mr. Trout?" "He had a sunstroke." "Go on! Who ever heard of a fish with a sunstroke?" "Well, you see, a sunfish bumped into him."

WHEN HE GOT IT



Patient—Where did you get your big evercoat, doctor? Doctor—I got this when Mr. Brews had appendicitis.

GLUM OYSTER



Claim—What's the matter with you? You look glum. Oyster—I was just wondering why they couldn't have Lent in the month that have no "r" in them.

INSOMNIA CURE



"What's the best cure for insomnia you know of?" "Sleep."

ODD CAMPAIGN



"Do Wise is making a novel campaign, isn't he?" "Yes, he's passing out good cigars."

HUSBAND WAS MARVEL



"Edison was a wonderful inventor, wasn't he?" "You might think so until you had heard my husband."

SOMETHING OF A NAG



"Isn't your wife a little hoarse?" "Well, she's something of a nag."

News! 'SALADA' TEA now has a blend for every purse Yellow Label 28c - 1/2 lb BROWN LABEL - 33c 1/2 lb. ORANGE PEKOE - 40c 1/2 lb. All leaders in their class

ACCIDENTS AND COMPENSATION

There were 4,376 accidents reported to the Workmen's Compensation Board during the month of January, compared with 4,328 during December, and 3,867 during January of last year. The fatal cases numbered 30, as compared with 16 last January. The total benefits awarded amounted to \$566,070.86, of which \$409,525.54 was for compensation and \$96,545.32 for medical aid. The total benefits awarded last January were \$346,370.01.

Your Home Medicine Chest—Among the standard household remedies that should always be on hand in your home medicine chest, none is more important than Dr. Thomas' Eclectic Oil. Its manifold usefulness in relieving pain and healing sickness is known by many thousands throughout the land. Always use Dr. Thomas' Eclectic Oil for relieving rheumatic and sciatic pains, treating sore throats and chests, coughs, burns, scalds, cuts, bruises and sprains.

ARE YOU BUILDING or REMODELLING? Don't commit yourself until you get all the facts about E. S. P. Burns—Steel Truss, Plank Truss or Cantilever types. Make full use of our twenty years' experience in Barn Building! Let the Engineers in our Farm Building Department advise you. Their services are absolutely free to farmers who are building or remodeling. Write today Eastern Steel Products Limited, Guelph St., Preston, Ont. Factories also at Toronto and Montreal.

Manufacturing Customers! THIRTY per cent. of one's customers cease being customers every year. They die, or move away, or become disgruntled, or change over to some other retailer. This is a ghastly loss, and alas, it is one impossible to prevent. It means that a retailer has to be very, very busy every month, getting new customers to replace the monthly wastage, and to gain a few more customers in excess of the annual loss, in order that his business shall grow. The fatal thing is just to do nothing in the way of customer attraction and replacement. How can new customers be attracted? Various things can be done. The most obvious way is just to ask non-customers to do business with you. That is the first thing to do. And your invitations will get attention just because so few retailers will be your competitors in this "asking" activity. You can ask people to do business with you by post, by personal calls and by newspaper advertising. And, of course, your store windows can and will be invitations. Beyond asking, you must fulfill customers' expectations—this by the quality of your service and the rightness of your goods and prices. What customers like when they go into a store is attention and interest, without fussiness. They like briskness in those who serve them. Customers want nothing extraordinary—just plain attention and courtesy. Customers are continually measuring stores—matching one store's service, goods, prices and atmosphere against those of other stores, and they steadily drift to those stores where they are served, in all ways, most in accord with their likes. Newspaper advertising is the least costly—results considered.