

# Veteran goalie leads Canada into Commonwealth Games

*Forbes provides leadership to young field hockey team*

By **STEVE LeBLANC**  
*The Champion*

Sarah Forbes hopes her netminding is up to par when she competes down under next month.

The 33-year-old Miltonian and her national women's field hockey teammates fly out to Melbourne, Australia this weekend and will participate in the Commonwealth Games March 16 to 26.

As Team Canada's longest-serving goalie ever — having spent 13 years and 109 games between the pipes so far — Forbes will be looked upon to provide a stabilizing presence for the international showcase. And recent results against one of the planet's premier teams suggests she's up to the challenge.

"We went over to play South Africa in November. They're ranked eighth in the world, 11 places higher than us, and we had some really close games with them," said the local cager, who gave up just six goals in the four-game series. "I think I'm peaking at the right time."

Forbes' introduction to goal-keeping is typical of many in her sport. When she first took up field hockey as a 10<sup>th</sup> grader in her native New Brunswick, there was nobody willing to guard the net one game — so she volunteered.

The rest, as they say, is history.

"I tried it once and I've been stuck in there ever since," she quipped.

With lightning-quick reflexes and a knack for direct-

ing the defense, Team Canada's backstopper has enjoyed her share of international success over the years.

In 1994 she made her first trip to the World Cup in Ireland and in 1999 — with her parents watching her play for the first time in six years — she captured bronze at the Pan-American Games in Winnipeg.

She's also helped Team Canada secure sixth-place finishes at the last two Commonwealth Games, and figures a one or two place improvement this time around isn't out of the question.

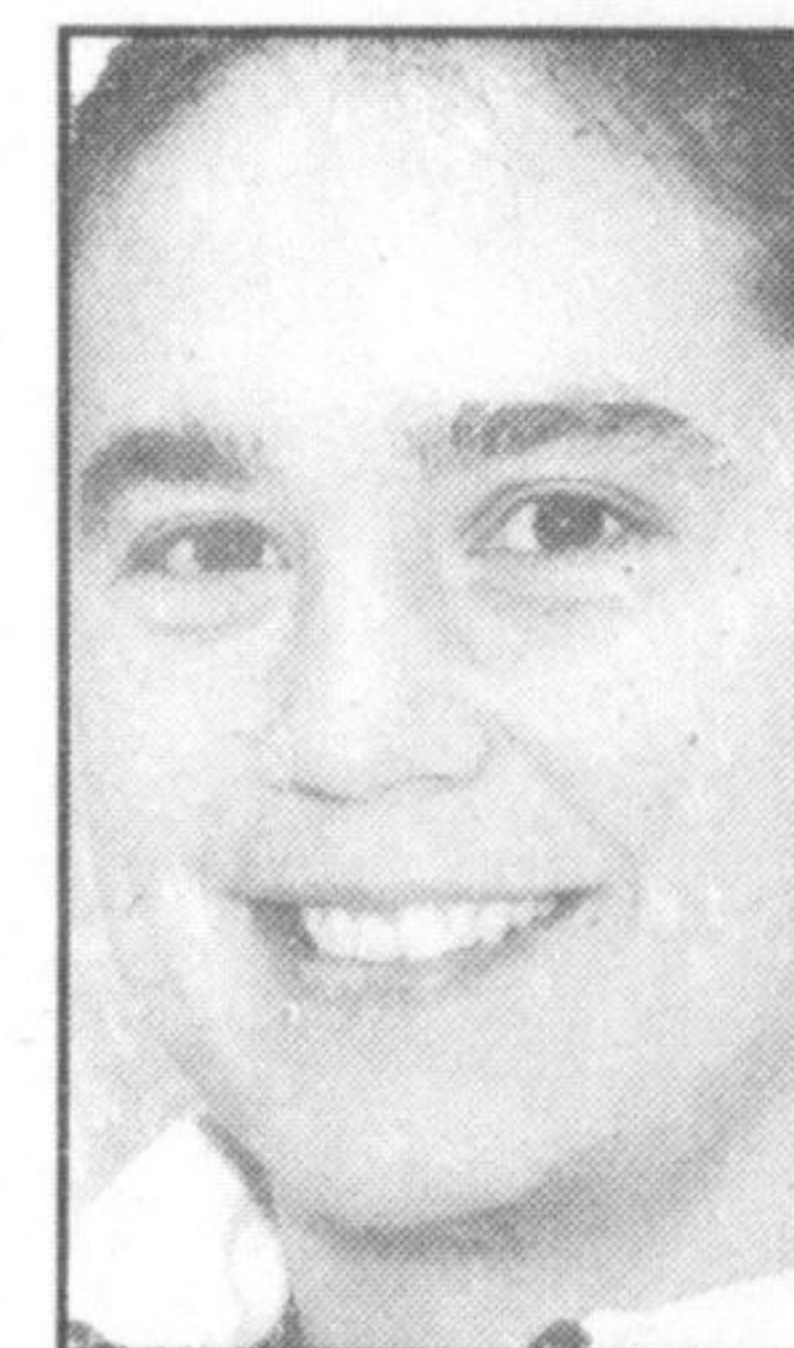
"Consistency will be the key. We've got to establish a balanced and continuous attack."

Being a paramedic in Toronto, she stressed, helps keep her well-conditioned for competition. And when she's not work-

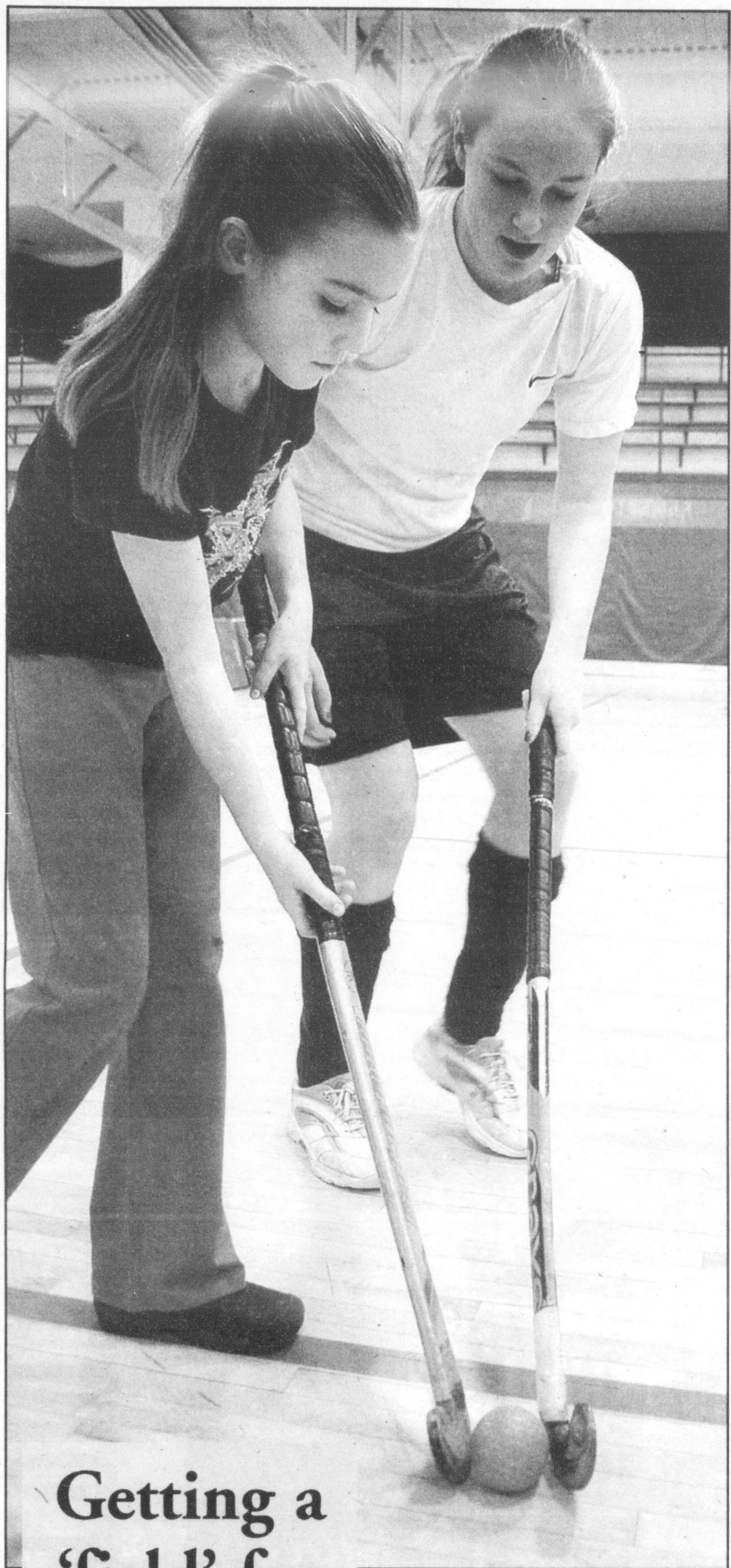
ing or training, Forbes serves as an assistant coach at her alma mater, York University — as well as with the Team Ontario program.

That no doubt adds to her leadership skills, which will be as important as ever in Australia — with Team Canada sporting eight first-timers.

"Us veterans have got to keep the young players' confidence high and really get them focused on why we're there," said Forbes. "We're in a tough pool (for Commonwealth Games), but if we play like we're capable of we should be okay."



Sarah Forbes



## Getting a 'field' for the game

Grade 12 student Lisa Brown, who was recently named to Team Ontario U-19 B team for nationals in Calgary, explains some of the basics of field hockey to Rhyann Smith at E.C. Drury's annual 15-hour field hockey-a-thon Friday evening.

Photo by SABRINA BYRNES

## High schools back in action

The Bishop Reding Royals will have a chance to capture first place in the Halton North Division when they host the Georgetown Rebels in senior boys basketball today.

The undefeated Rebels (8-0) beat Bishop Reding 54-43 in their previous meeting this season. That is the only loss suffered by the 7-1 Royals. Game time is 3:30 p.m. at Bishop Reding.

E.C. Drury hosts Milton District in boys hoops while E.C. Drury is at Milton District in girls volleyball. Both are 3:30 p.m. starts.



### Annual General Meeting of the Halton Learning Foundation

Monday, February 20, 2006 • 5:00 p.m.

Georgetown Room  
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## No place like home for IceHawks

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"I think that shows how confident we are at home," said Dubbin, who assisted on both overtime goals by his former Sudbury Wolves teammate. "We just believe we can score when the game's on the line and once we get that momentum we're tough to stop."

Although the IceHawks haven't exactly been on close terms with defeat this season, they have had a few losses as of late in terms of personnel — with top scorer Matt Read bothered by a strained leg muscle, veteran blueliner Josh Saywell still nursing a bad back and both rookie defencemen Cody Goloubeff and assistant captain Dan Falbo out with hip flexers.

Read, Falbo and Saywell could

all return to the lineup as early as Thursday, but Goloubeff will likely be sidelined until at least the latter half of the first round.

Equally concerning these days is an overall lack of intensity and occasional discipline breakdown, like the one Friday that nearly cost the IceHawks their unbeaten status at Memorial.

But as Washkurak is quick to point out, the regular season champs have had little to prove since the holidays — having essentially clinched top spot in the Western Conference with a 7-0-1-0 December run.

"We've kind of been coasting since Christmas, but then that's probably because we had first place locked up so early," said

Milton's temporary bench boss, who's still unsure if George Dupont will be back from suspension this year or if another coach will be brought in to help out. "We've been a little complacent at times, but we'll be ready to answer the bell on Thursday."

The IceHawks put the finishing touches on an impressive 41-3-4-1 regular season with a 3-2 overtime win in Burlington Sunday. Luc Dubbin scored twice for the IceHawks, including the winner 1:56 into the extra period. Chase Langeraad had the other marker.

They caught out the year with just 97 goals against, shattering the previous club record of 127 set by the 1997/98 All-Ontario championship squad.



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We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.