

# Gretzky and Howe, two of the best

"I was always awed by (Gordie) Howe when he would come on the ice. He was a legend, and acted like it. When he got a penalty he would go to the box without a word."

"Is Gretzky the best player I ever saw? That's hard to say, because he isn't as spectacular as many of his predecessors. As far as having a feel for the game, there has been no one better. There have been better skaters, better shooters, and better stickhandlers, but none of them have put it all together like Gretzky has. He does it all, both on and off the ice, and has been a great asset to the sport of hockey."

These words from my book, *Calling The Shots*, sum up my feelings about two fine athletes, Gordie Howe and Wayne Gretzky, and I'm sure those feelings are shared by most of you.

I suppose the difference for me was in being there on the ice with each of them and realizing just how magnificently they played the game. I have heard players say that just being on a team with one of them brought out the best in themselves. This is also true as an official when your own level of intensity moves up a notch. What a treat — to be on the ice and have a closeup look at their mastery of the sport!

I'm not sure of the total impact Howe had on the game of hockey, but I'm sure one of the aspects he introduced was to have opposing players remember to keep their heads up. He was so strong he never had to resort to any violent acts, but check him a little too hard and then you had better look out.

Many times I saw him get checked and then take that sideways glance that he was famous for, and I knew that the player who wronged Howe was in trouble and I, as a referee, had to be extra alert. Many times it didn't matter — he

Calling  
the Shots  
with  
BRUCE HOOD



could leave his famous elbow's mark or a short chop with the stick and continue on up ice as if nothing had happened while the player he checked would be lying on the ice wondering what happened to him!

This week both Howe's and Gretzky's many talents were allowed to come front and centre for all to acknowledge. Not just the all-time scoring mark Howe established in his 26 years in the NHL and Gretzky eclipsed in just 11, but also their qualities as human beings, both on and off the ice, were shown to all.

Big Gordie came from a small town in Saskatchewan and I remember reading how excited he was when Jack Adams, then general manager of the Detroit Red Wings, gave him a jacket with the Red Wing emblem on it when he first joined the club. He was a very humble lad then and remains so to this day.

As for "The Kid" as Gordie calls him, Wayne is from a similar mold and has proven his ability also goes far beyond the game of hockey. Wouldn't it be something to see him in action as a quarterback in football, sinking baskets in the NBA, or batting cleanup in the World Series?

If you compare his accomplishments to standards in other sports, it is obvious he would be head and shoulders above all others, as would

Howe. They say that Howe used to go and work out with the baseball Tigers in Detroit and could hit the ball out of the park with the best.

Then along came Wayne Gretzky, and it was as if he had arrived from another planet, or at least from European hockey, as he changed the way the game is played at the forward position. Now it seems as if every player that comes onto the ice is playing in a razzle dazzle fashion with the old saying "stay on your wing" now a thing of the past.

The first time I refereed a game he played in, I was amazed at his level of intensity. It seemed when he came on the ice for the faceoff he already knew what was going to happen during the ensuing play and usually he made sure he was right. There is a level of electricity on every shift he takes.

The game of hockey has gone through many changes over the years, but it's still a game played by grown boys with a keen sense of fun being their greatest attribute. Two great Canadians who demonstrate this best and have contributed to our great game and to our country, Howe and Gretzky, are both worthy of all the accolades heaped upon them.

Can you imagine Wayne Gretzky, not qualifying for Rookie of the Year when he first entered the National Hockey League because he had played in the World Hockey Association? He currently holds 51 records in the NHL and this makes a mockery of the ruling which applied back then. And what now with the Soviet players, all veteran pros, being eligible for the award this season. An oddity? Yes, but not surprising. More on this in another column!

*Calling The Shots* is now available in paperback.

## Mustangs skating but...

# E.C. Drury hockey team put on shelf

Is this the death of high school hockey in Milton?

The E.C. Drury hockey program has been taken off the ice, for at least this year, and Milton District's team is still alive, but not at full strength. One of the main reasons for the erosion of the high school competition is the introduction of Milton Minor Hockey Association midget and juvenile rep teams this year.

"We just had a lack of enthusiasm from our kids," said Craig Pritchard, the head of physical education at Drury. "We had poor turnouts and we just didn't have enough players to ice a team worthy of high school play."

Drury lost six players to the new juvenile team as well as last year's coach, Barrie Elliott. Last year's assistant coach, Steve Keane, implied he would have been prepared to take over the squad this year but it wasn't possible.

"We had lost a lot of our key players to the juvenile and midget teams," said Keane. "We just had too few seniors playing and too many juniors for that caliber of hockey."

"I think Milton has a lot of services for hockey, and kids now have a choice (between high school and minor). I think that high school hockey still has a definite future in the town of Milton, and I am very optimistic that we will have a team next year."

Over at Milton District there is concern but the results aren't as immediately disastrous as they are at Drury.

"We only lost one player to the rep team," said Milton coach Bob Pitt. "Although it looks like we don't have as strong of team we had last year we'll have to play a few games to tell for sure."

The problem is Shawn Hasselfeldt is the player they lost. Hasselfeldt would have been a key player to the Mustang's hopes this year.

"I don't think that this will affect high school hockey (in the long run)," said Pitt. "It's survived other teams in Milton, and it will survive this."

Elliott thinks the juvenile team is a special case.

"The kids on the juvenile team this year are guys who've been playing together for a long time. They realized this would be their last chance to play together so they decided to go for it," he said. "We have taken a few key players from the Milton high

schools, and it's unfortunate Drury doesn't have a team, but this is a special case.

"We've taken a lot of criticism about our team and there is some skepticism about our future but I don't think it's killing high school hockey. I think it's going to be a fun and interesting year."



## Milton Figure Skating Club

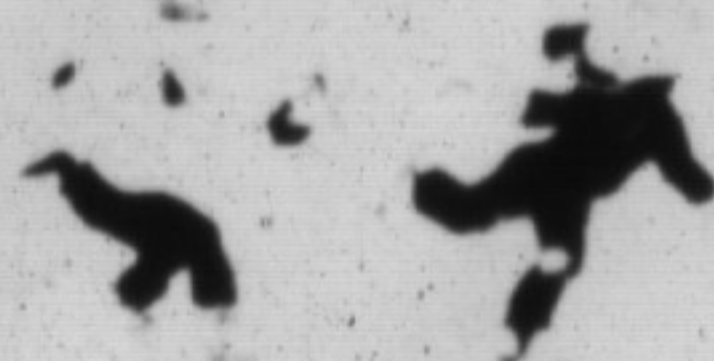
P.O. Box 103, Milton, Ontario

### ADULT SKATING PROGRAM

DATE: OCTOBER 31 to DECEMBER 19, 1989  
TIME: TUESDAY, 7:00 TO 8:00 P.M.  
PLACE: MILTON MEMORIAL ARENA — Thompson Road  
FEE: \$40.00

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## OPEN HOUSE LISTINGS

SUN. OCT. 28, 1-4 P.M.  
624 Elliott  
Yvonne Gawig in attendance  
Royal City Realty Ltd.  
876-1156

SUN. OCT. 29, 1-4 P.M.  
688 McCall  
Gladys Cranford in attendance  
Royal City Realty Ltd.  
876-1156

SUN. OCT. 29, 1-4 P.M.  
914 Laurier Ave  
Joanne Van Singerland in attendance  
Royal City Realty Ltd.  
876-1156

SUN. OCT. 29, 1-4 P.M.  
911 Birch  
Carol D. Budworth in attendance  
Royal City Realty Ltd.  
876-1156

SAT. OCT. 28, 1-4 P.M.  
SUN. OCT. 29, 1-4 P.M.  
230 Commercial St  
Wayne Casson in attendance  
Royal City Realty Ltd.  
876-1156

SUN. OCT. 29, 1-4 P.M.  
254 Woodward Ave  
Paul Kerley in attendance  
Royal City Realty Ltd.  
876-1156

SUN. OCT. 29, 1-4 P.M.  
790 Frobsher Blvd  
Sharon Kerley in attendance  
Royal City Realty Ltd.  
876-1156

SAT. OCT. 28, 1-4 P.M.  
790 Frobsher Blvd  
Sandra Bailey in attendance  
Royal City Realty Ltd.  
876-1156

SUN. OCT. 29, 1-4 P.M.  
889 Woodward Avenue  
Ron Funk in attendance  
Royal City Realty Ltd.  
876-1156

SUN. OCT. 29, 1-4 P.M.  
528 Beaver Court  
John J. Pears in attendance  
Royal City Realty Ltd.  
876-1156

SUN. OCT. 29, 1:30-4:00 P.M.  
582 Beaver Court  
Teresa Mills in attendance  
Royal City Realty Ltd.  
876-1156

SUN. OCT. 29, 2:00-4:00 P.M.  
889 Anderson  
Stella Hall in attendance  
Remax Milton/Realty Corp.  
871-2365

SUN. OCT. 29, 1:00-4:00 P.M.  
5184 900  
416 Kingsleigh Crt  
Wendy Constante in attendance  
Realty World  
876-1133

SUN. OCT. 29, 1:00-4:00 P.M.  
5289 900  
Townline Milton, Hwy. 25 No. to 5  
Sideroad West (Campbellville Rd) to  
Townline, north on Townline to property  
Derya Sine in attendance  
Realty World  
876-1133

SAT. OCT. 28 1:00-4:00 P.M.  
Whispering Pines Estates  
(Guelph Line & 10 Sideroad)  
Nova Sparks-Austin in attendance  
Century 21 Golden Real Estate  
878-8495

SUN. OCT. 29 2:00-4:00 P.M.  
609 Joyce Blvd  
Ivy Darbin in attendance  
NRS Millpond Realty Inc., Realtor  
875-2677

SAT. & SUN. OCT. 28, 29  
2-4 P.M.  
Lot 23 Crawford Cres. Campbellville  
Guelph Line South of 401 to Crawford  
Dianne Robinson  
Countrywide Campbellville Realty Inc.  
854-2294

SUN. OCT. 29 1:30-4:00 P.M.  
623 Sunnyvale  
Mark Symonds in attendance  
Royal Lepage Real Estate Services  
878-8101

SUN. OCT. 29 1:30-4:00 P.M.  
584 Woodward  
Joyce Hagevik in attendance  
Royal Lepage Real Estate Services  
878-8101

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