

# Citizen sports beat

## Talking Sports

by Tom Shields

CKMP Sports Director



### 'Athlete of the Year'

Just before 1974 made it's final exit, I once again selected an "Athlete of the Year" for the local area. In selecting this award, I disregard any person from our area who has moved to greener pastures, such as Don Tannahill, Mike Robitaille, and Wayne King who are now playing in the NHL and the WHA. It is kept strictly local and I look for someone who had a tremendous year at sports as well as leadership qualities, and good sportsmanlike conduct.

### Three way race

For 1974, I had it down to three people who had great years as far as sports achievement was concerned. Kenny Fox of Midland who had won in 1973 had a good shot at repeating as the athlete of the year. Ken has had a good season with the Midland Flyers in Junior "B" Hockey and also had a good year on the ball diamond with the Midland Indians. He batted around .350 for the year and had a lot of stolen bases to his credit.

Another local sports figure who had a good year is Kevin Timmons of Penetanguishene. Kevin won the South Simcoe baseball most valuable player award as well as winning the Most Valuable Player award for the Midland Indians. Kevin is also one of the mainstays on the Penetanguishene Garrison's defensive brigade. Here is an undisputed leader of a team with enough gumption to fire up a whole team if they are behind in the score. Perhaps Mister Timmons is one of the best examples of a "team man".

### 'The Winner'

The third candidate for "Athlete of the Year" award and my eventual winner was 12-year old Brian Orser of Penetanguishene. Brian is not in a physical contact sport, but in figure skating which is hectic as far as competition is concerned. Probably there was a lot of body contact involved, especially when the youngster had to practice all the jumps and spins, and landed heavily on the ice when they weren't executed properly. According to Brian, this happens many times in practice when a new move has to be perfected. And speaking of new twists, this figure skating whiz has more than a butterfly trying to make headway in a 25 mile an hour wind.

### Fantastic record

As far as selecting him for Athlete of the Year in our district, his record speaks for itself. In March, Brian came first in a competition in Sarnia. In April, Brian placed second in an event in North Bay, the only time in 1974 that he did not finish first. In the summer, Brian was first in men's singles, and first in men's inter-pretive in Toronto. That netted him a two week training seminar in Vancouver in August and September of which only 45 other skaters attended. Brian also skated his way to first in the Central Ontario Sectional Championships for Pre-Novice, and this leads us to his feat that clinched the Athlete of the Year award for Mr. Orser.

### Tops in Ontario

In the Christmas holidays just past, he won his event at the Ontario Winter Games held in Thunder Bay. Now the young Orser will find the going heavy as he will represent our Province at the Canadian Winter Games held in Lethbridge Alberta in February. We all hope he wins out west, but if he doesn't I know that the entire area will be proud of this Penetanguishene youngster. After all, to represent over eight million people on one shot out west has to be a tremendous weight on the shoulder of anyone, let alone a 12-year old kid who still hasn't seen his first razor blade. Congratulations Brian Orser on the job well done from yours truly.

### Going out on a limb

As a final note, I think I'll pick favourites. Seriously though, here's where I go out on a limb and make a fool of myself but with the Super Bowl on Sunday, I do like the Pittsburgh Steelers by at least a touchdown in not a high scoring game, but not a low scoring game either. The team with over 20 points will win the game. If you are a Minnesota fan, please, no applause as you end reading this column as I am picking Pittsburgh.

## Brian Orser's Ontario Winter Games triumph clinches CKMP area athlete of the year award



Brian Orser

1974 was a good year for Penetanguishene's prodigy on skates 12-year-old Brian Orser.

After five years with the Midland Figure Skating club and slightly over a year of active competition his 10 to 15 hours a week of practice skating is beginning to pay off and it looks like this area could have a serious figure skating contender in the 1980 Olympics.

Last March Brian won his first gold medal in the Men's Pre-Novice Division of the free skating competition in Sarnia. Four more golds and a silver medal later Orser was selected radio station CKMP's athlete of the year.

Brian's most recent gold medal triumph at the Ontario Winter Games in Thunder Bay on December 28 and 29 "salted away" the

local athlete of the year award according to CKMP's sports director Tom Shields. Two other area athletes, Ken Fox, and Kevin Timmons were in the running with Penetanguishene's figure skater until last week's gold medal which earned Brian the right to compete in the Canada Winter Games this February in Lethbridge, Alberta.

Shields said that Timmons winning of the Most Valuable Player award in the South Simcoe Senior Baseball League and his play with the Penetanguishene Garrison's along with Ken Fox's .300 plus batting average for the Midland Indians and his goal scoring for the Midland Flyers would have made the choice of area athlete of the year difficult if Orser had not won at Thunder Bay.

Previous winners of the CKMP athlete of the year award were Ken Fox (1973), Dave Ogilvie (1972), Ken Edgar (1971), Bruce Guthrie (1970), Terry Moore (1969), and Earl Scott (1968). Orser and Guthrie are the youngest athletes to win the award. If Ken Fox had won this year it would have been the first time an athlete had won the award more than once.

Prior to his first gold medal last March Brian had placed fifth, fourth, and

third in three figure skating competitions in 1973.

Following his gold medal performance in Sarnia Brian earned a silver in the Men's Pre-Novice Division of the free skating competition in Thunder Bay last April. It was the only time Orser failed to win a gold medal in 1974.

In August in the Open Summer Competition in Toronto Orser really made his mark by picking up two gold medals against skaters from across Canada, the United States, and Europe. Both gold medals came on the same day; the first in the Pre-Novice Men's, and the second in the Men's Interpretive Bronze Division.

Orser struck gold for the fourth time in 1974 in the Pre-Novice Men's Division in the Central Ontario Sectionals on December 1. The meet was a combined figure and free skating competition.

Then in the last week of 1974 Orser won the gold medal for free skating in Thunder Bay and the right to represent Ontario in the Canada Winter Games.

Looking at Brian Orser, all four feet five inches and 65 pounds of him you have to wonder how he does it. A rundown of his practice hours provides part of the answer — hard work; the

quality of his instruction — training with top notch pros explains a bit more; and finally his obvious enthusiasm for the sport all work together to make him the exciting Olympic figure skating prospect that he is.

Brian trains six days a week for 12 months of the year although he occasionally will take three or four days off like he did after winning the gold in Thunder Bay. His skating schedule goes like this: Monday - two and a half hours in Elmvale, Tuesday - seven hours in Midland, Wednesday - two hours in Midland, Thursday - two more hours in Midland, Friday - four and a half hours in Midland and Saturday - an hour and a half in Penetanguishene.

In addition to his regular training in this area Brian puts in special out of town training. Last summer he left school three weeks early and went to North Bay for nine weeks of concentrated skating. He boarded with a family there and averaged six hours of skating each day.

Last September Brian travelled to Vancouver where he and 46 other hand picked Canadian figure skaters ate, drank, slept, and generally, absorbed figure skating for two weeks.



Dancing on ice

Cindy Mandley and Brian Orser pair up for a rhythm and blues number at the annual skating carnival presented last March by the Midland Figure Skating Club. Orser won double honours during the past week. He was

selected this area's athlete of the year by CKMP radio officials and won a gold medal in figure skating at the Ontario Winter Games on December 29.

Photo by Jim Dalziel

The seminar was sponsored by the Canadian Figure Skating Association and attracted such greats as Toller Cranston, Ron Shaver, Lynn Nightingale, Carol Ann Simon, and Kathy Ostapchuk. Brian was chosen by the association to attend the seminar on the basis of his skating ability and achievements in figure

skating competitions.

Ellen Burka, a coach of Canada's figure skating team was also at the Vancouver Seminar.

The special training, the endless hours of practice, and the \$3,000 to \$4,000 the Orser family spends on Brian each year to enable him to figure skate makes it obvious he's aiming for the

Olympics.

His coach Doug Leigh feels that Brian has the ability and the potential to make the grade, if things keep going as they have. That's what Leigh said in an earlier interview in January 1974 before Orser had won his first gold medal.

Now a year later it looks like the dream is coming true.



Before the loss

Pierre Belcourt signals a goal for the Penetanguishene Hurons. The Hurons fell behind 3-0 in the first period on Sunday against Stayner and then led by Belcourt started to come back. However, they fell short and dropped another game, this time by a score of 10-6. Greg Quesnelle, the Hurons latest addition put on an impressive display

by scoring two goals. Brian Duquette also scored a pair for the Hurons while Pierre Belcourt and Gary Hansford notched singles. Greg Conn led Stayner marksmen with a hat-trick. The best news for the Hurons was the return of Murray Guthrie to the lineup after an absence of five weeks due to injuries sustained in an auto accident.

## Paul Robillard impresses Flyers

Flyers learned this week that Paul Shaw faces two more games on the sidelines. His suspension for arguing with the referee December 27 will last two more games. He sat out both of last weekend's encounters... Judging by the comments about young Paul

Robillard, Shaw may have a fight on his hands working back into a starter's spot on right wing... Flyers have just 11 games left in regular season play. Unofficial statistics show Owen Sound with 41 points, Collingwood with 39 and Flyers with 37. The Flyers have one game in hand on Collingwood, two on

Owen Sound. So with two more wins... The squad's next home game is this Friday against Orillia at the Midland Arena Gardens. Game time is 8:30 p.m. Sunday at 7:30 they play in Barrie. Let's hope there's no repeat of the last match between these two clubs.

## Garrisons keep winning



Kevin Timmons

Some things remain the same. That's how it was for the Penetanguishene Garrison's on December 29 at Bracebridge for their last hockey game in 1974.

The Garrison's won as they have been doing since the start of the current campaign. And this time it was veteran team captain Alvin Robillard, the old man who keeps rolling on leading the Penetanguishene's Intermediate C team to a narrow 5-4 away from home victory.

In addition to scoring the game winning third period marker Robillard picked up an assist.

So while most Penetanguisheners would probably prefer to write 1974 off as a year of bad times which saw inflation and rising unemployment hit the Huronia Area at least this town's hockey fans had some good times and can look

forward to a possible championship at the end of the season.

Peter Bressette continues as the Garrison's highest scorer on the strength of his two goals against Bracebridge. Bressette made the score 3-1 for Penetanguishene. Kevin Timmons from Peter Dubeau and Tom Gignac increased the Garrison's lead to three goals. Alvin Robillard from Peter Dubeau made it 5-1 Penetanguishene and then Bracebridge caught fire drilling home three goals to pull within a goal of Penetanguishene with just under three minutes left in the game.

But on December 29, the night of the last Garrison game in 1974, things remained the same — that is Penetanguishene won again.

Unofficial statistics at the end of the halfway mark in the current hockey season show the Garrison's are in first place with 27 points.

To date Penetanguishene has lost only three games, two against last night's opponent, Bradford, a team which is floating around fourth or fifth place. Bracebridge holds down second or third place either tied with Fenlon Falls or two points back of Fenlon. Fenlon is within four points of Penetanguishene.

# sports calendar

## LORNE RANCE GULF STATION

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**Bush League Hockey**  
Thursday, January 9, 7:30 p.m.  
Elmvale vs Perkinsfield

**Industrial League Hockey**  
Sunday, January 12, 9:30 a.m.  
Penetanguishene Marine vs Arbour's Esso  
11 a.m. Emery's Electric vs Penetanguishene IGA

**Junior C Hockey**  
Friday, January 10, 8:30 p.m.  
Penetanguishene at Alliston  
Sunday, January 12, 2:30 p.m.  
Huntsville at Penetanguishene

**Garrisons Hockey**  
Wednesday, January 8, 8:30 p.m.  
Penetanguishene at Bradford

**All-Star Hockey**  
Minor Atom  
Saturday, January 11, 11 a.m.  
Penetanguishene at Stayner  
Sunday, January 12, 6 p.m.  
Thornbury at Penetanguishene

**Major Atom**  
Saturday, January 11, 6:30 p.m.  
Collingwood at Penetanguishene

**Pewee**  
Sunday, January 12, 7 p.m.  
Collingwood at Penetanguishene

**Bantam**  
Sunday, January 12, 8:15 p.m.  
Collingwood at Penetanguishene

**Midget**  
Saturday, January 11, 8:30 p.m.  
Penetanguishene at Owen Sound A

**House Leagues**  
Junior B  
Saturday, January 11  
10:10:50 St. Kitts vs Barrie  
11:11:50 Newmarket vs Weston

Junior C  
Saturday, January 11  
12:12:50 p.m. Tigers vs Panthers  
Lions vs Bears

Pewee B  
Saturday, January 11  
7-8 a.m. Oakland vs Minnesota  
8:05-8:55 a.m. Vancouver vs Pittsburgh  
9-9:50 a.m. Buffalo vs Philadelphia

Bantam B  
Thursday, January 9  
5:30-6:25 p.m. Toronto vs New York  
6:30-7:25 p.m. Montreal vs Boston  
7:30-8:25 p.m. Chicago vs Detroit

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