



Sidelines

by Garry Forbes

Disappointment reigns supreme

It's the struggle, not the game. I can't remember who said that, but I should; I consider it one of the most important truisms in sport.

And it is, I think, something that should be remembered by everyone who comes to experience the inevitable disappointments which the sporting life offers so generously -- whether the disappointment is drawn, such as the painful, waning days of a professional career, or sudden, such as being cut from a minor hockey club.

This item is about the latter disappointment. I've touched on this subject before, but its importance, plus an unusual communication which came my way a couple of days ago, have prompted me to take another look.

The communication was a letter -- intended by the writer to be published as an open letter to the coach of a minor hockey team. I'm withholding names and associations to avoid unnecessary embarrassment to any of the parties involved -- especially the young player.

It went:

"May I say that my wife and I are very pleased that our son, after three years of Rep Team play, will now be playing House League. That is fact, not sarcasm.

"My son's feelings are another matter. He was fully prepared to play House League if he did not make the Rep Team, because he has been taught to take defeat in sports. The way it was done, however, is also another matter.

"For a coach who is apparently very knowledgeable in hockey, to tell a boy he has made the team and then a short time later tell the boy he has not made the team once again proves a point.

"Top knowledge of a sport of any kind does not give that person knowledge of a boy's feelings. My wife and I will certainly not miss the travelling to Owen Sound, etc. in wintery blizzards; therefore, we truly do thank you. As for our son's feelings, only you can imagine.

"Hoping you have an on-again off-again season -- for your sake, not for the rest of the

team."

Now, I'm going to take a look at this without consulting either the parent or the coach because I don't think it would serve any purpose to banter about who did what.

Perhaps the coach did change his mind. So what? Maybe I'm wrong, but I think coaches have as much right as anyone else to change their opinions, and unless he publicly humiliated the boy unnecessarily -- and cutting a roster down is not an unwarranted action -- I don't see anything wrong with the change.

The real sore point for the parent, it seems to me, the real frustration after you strip away the non-sarcastic sarcasm, is the simple fact that the boy wasn't asked to sign a card. It's rejection and it's tough for a young kid to swallow -- and the parent has displayed a real concern for the boy's disappointment.

So who's wrong? It would be easy to say the parent shouldn't have jumped on the coach. But it's a natural reaction. Ask any minor hockey coach about some of the incidents he's

experienced after trimming a roster. Compare. This parent has, in fact, been pretty civil about the whole thing.

Some coaches deserve it, of course. The odd dingaling will fly off on an ego jaunt and try to push Vince Lombardi tactics on a bunch of eight-year-olds. But most have both feet on the ground and don't ask much in return for their donations of hours and money in helping prop up our national game.

No, the coach isn't wrong for trimming his roster or for changing his mind in the process.

And the parent isn't wrong for expressing concern. The only one involved who stands a chance of being wrong is the boy -- if he doesn't swallow the setback, stand up and keep plugging.

It's an important and valuable lesson, and the only way it can be learned, unfortunately, is through a disappointment. And as we all know -- lest this boy think he's alone -- disappointment reigns supreme in sport.

As always, the struggle's the thing.

Centennials split contests

The Midland Centennials are not having a particularly shining season.

The club split a pair of games on the weekend to bring them to a 2-3 won-lost record -- good enough for sixth in the eight-team loop.

Friday's 8-3 victory home-ice victory over the Haliburton Huskies gave the club some encouragement, but not quite enough as they tripped on a 7-4 loss at the hands of the Parry Sound Shamrocks Sunday in Parry Sound.

The Centennials simply got too far behind the Shamrocks -- 3-0 in the first period -- and were unable to recover.

Centennials goals came from Brian Garner, with two, Craig Brown and John Walter.

Assists were had by Calvin Sine, Rob Greenlaw, Terry Cameron, Rick Reeve, Noel McEachern and Walter.

Brad Bumstead guarded the Midland goal for most of the contest, in which Midland outshot their opponent 42-35.

Two Centennials were ejected from the game for being the aggressor in fights, and club officials say both will be out for at least the team's next outing in Huntsville Friday.

Bumstead saved a penalty shot by the host club after the referee claimed defenceman Mike Leo fell on the puck in his own crease.

Brian Cadeau scored twice to lead the Centennials to victory Friday, with singles going to Calvin Sine, Noel McEachern, John Walter, Craig Brown, Rick Reeve and Dwayne Story.

Dwayne Latondress and Bumstead shared the netminding duties in that matchup, with Haliburton outshooting Midland 40-36.



Ice throw

Marnie Moffatt of the Midland Ladies' Afternoon Curling League concentrates as her rock sails toward its target during

opening-day play at Midland Curling Club. Mens' practice and instruction week continues through Friday and regularly-

scheduled activity Monday.

is slated to begin

Two weekend losses

Collingwood sends A's backward

by Garry Forbes

Tim and Tom Colley came calling on the Midland Athletics Sunday night, pummeled them for two points and left them bleeding back in the basement.

The Colley brothers, brand-new pride-and-joy of the Collingwood Shipbuilders, scored a total of nine points between them as the league-leading club sailed to a 9-3 victory over their helpless Athletics hosts.

It was the second loss on the weekend for the Athletics, a weekend which left them with a 1-6 win-loss record and a tie for last in the OHA Intermediate A Hockey League. The Owen Sound Greys also have only one win, but have played only five games.

The Athletics had a chance Friday to move up the ladder (last week they were sixth of seven, a position they never saw last season) but some hot third-period goaltending by a former teammate messed up those plans as host Barrie Flyers came up with a 7-4 victory.

Sunday, it was all Colleys and Collingwood. The brothers are Tom, 28, who last season finished up his seventh successful year in the American Hockey League, and Tim, 21, who came straight to Collingwood with his two high-powered wingers from the Major Junior A Brampton Warriors.

Tim scored the first goal of the game from brother Tom at 8:31 of the first period and that set off a spree which ended three quarters of the way through the second period, five Collingwood goals and seven Colley points later.

Midland's opening marker was an unassisted effort by Larry Cowan, and Terry Spiker notched one from Paul Robillard and Doug McMann three minutes later to make it 5-2.

But Collingwood wasn't done with the middle frame yet, and team captain Les Burgess scored his second of the game from Tim Colley to make it 6-2 with 19

seconds to go.

The third was all Shipbuilders, with Midland's only goal coming from Robillard, assisted by Captain Ken Knapton and Andy Zurawski, at the 19:17 mark.

Collingwood goaltender Brad Steel, described as "pretty secure" by Athletics manager Shawn Stewart, managed to turn back any serious threat by the Athletics while Craig Watson did the duty for the home club at the other end.

It was a relatively quiet game, with Midland picking up only 12 minutes in penalties and Collingwood taking eight.

The Barrie game was even quieter, with only three minor penalties assessed throughout. Midland got two of them, and the first one proved to be costly as Barrie broke an early 1-1 tie with a power-play goal from Wayne Dusome.

Midland's first-period goal was had by Wayne King, who eventually scored two

more--one in each of the second and third periods--to count for three-quarters of the Athletics scoring. The other goal came from Wayne Dixon, and assists were had by Cowan, with two, Zurawski, Knapton, Robillard, McMann, and Doug Gillespie.

The Athletics actually led 3-2 a quarter-way through the second period and came up with a lot of good chances to put it away.

Unfortunately for the ever-unfortunate Athletics, however, their former net-minder, Dunc Brownell, had other ideas.

Brownell, a Midland native, stopped 17 Athletics chances in the final frame and a total of 44 throughout the game. Midland goaltender Watson stopped 35 drives.

The Athletics will try to get even--and get out of the basement, when they meet the Flyers Friday at Midland Arena. The evening is the club's special Dollar Night, which provides a \$1 admittance to all persons and \$1 drinks at the booster club afterwards. Game time is 8:30 p.m.