



Sidelines

by Garry Forbes

Remembering who won that shooting match

By the end of this week, this column, this page, this newspaper will meet the same fate as hundreds of other columns, pages and newspapers across Canada.

That is, it will be used to wrap fish. At least, though, it'll be put to some use. That's more than can be said for the television broadcast coverage of last week's Canadian Figure Skating Championships; the voices of Johnny Esaw, Otto Jelinek and Debbi Wilkes are already rebounding off asteroids in the entirely useless vastness of space. It's all gone, never to be repeated, never to be heard from again, never to be used. Not even for wrapping fish. (Even if anybody videotaped the CTV production of the championships, they've probably worked diligently to erase the sound and "color" and empty-headed interview portions.)

Yes, it'll all be gone by the end of the week.

But next week, and the week after that, and for at least the next 50 more, Brian Orser will still be the number one figure skater in the land.

Nothing can change that. No amount of fish-wrap, no quantity of drivel from professional talking heads.

What were they seeing?

Locally, we all knew by Sunday latest that Orser had knocked off all challengers and protected his national senior mens' title.

Yet outside of our community, out there over the snowbanks, people seemed to somehow be attempting to wish into reality something other than what really happened.

Throughout the championship, and even after, many Canadians outside the borders

of the champ's home county of Simcoe seemed to join hands in a kind of media-induced trance in an effort to alter recent history in favor of one Brian Pockar.

Five exhibits

That's the charge. Here are the exhibits: - Last week, before the senior men hit the ice in Brandon, the Toronto Star ran a headshot of Pockar and claimed in the cutline that it was Orser. A simple mistake or a Freudian slip? Maybe all that was glanced at in the cutline was the word "champion" and Pockar's portrait was automatically, subconsciously, clipped to the copy.

If it was a mental goof-up provoked by wishful thinking, it wouldn't be the last over the next several days.

- Saturday afternoon in the CTV broadcast booth during of the taping of the critical and deciding senior mens' long program. Color commentator Debbi Wilkes announces that there's too much emphasis on triple Axel stuff and technical lah-dee-dah. (Orser is recognized as among the best - if not the best - technical skater in the world and can land the dreaded triple Axel virtually at will).

She then blurts out that if she had a vote she'd cast it for Pockar.

- CTV interview time after Orser's victory. How did you feel... were you nervous, Brian?

"Yes."

"Okay. Let's move along now and chat with runner-up Brian Pockar for awhile."

- The Toronto Star, Monday, Feb. 1. Topping a story detailing how he spiked himself during practice Sunday is a photo of Pockar. The cutline reads: "... the injury... is expected to keep the Canadian senior men's figure skating champion out

for six days."

- The Globe and Mail ("Canada's National Newspaper", for whatever that's worth), Monday, Feb. 1. Monday wrap-up of the championship. Headline reads: "Pockar proves he's still a force, but Orser retains senior crown. Ex-champ: 'I showed them I could come back'."

Pockar's name is mentioned more times in the story than Orser's.

It gives Orser credit for being "usually an expert in technique," being "perfect in his well-known triple Axel," but qualifies that by pointing out that "he lacked control on his triple Lutz and triple Salchow. He landed both, but both flaws were rare for him." No mention of Pockar's flaws.

It tells how Orser was scheduled to skate first in the long program, "and, while (Orser) delayed the skating while picking up arm-loads of flowers from admiring fans, Pockar stepped onto the ice and did a double Axel flawlessly."

It describes how Pockar wasn't nervous "at all", how his attitude has changed, and it details his Sunday injury.

And oh, yes, remember the headline? "... but Orser retains senior crown"? I guess they just thought they'd poke that in in case anybody was, you know, wondering about, well, by the way, incidentally, just who sort of who won this little shooting match.

The causes

I didn't see Monday's Toronto Sun (which paid Donald Jackson to step down from the clouds and examine these mortals) or any other of the country's major fish-wrap suppliers. And I don't like to listen to sports broadcasting unless I have a major bet down and I have to know the score immediately. I imagine, though,

that they pretty much ran with the herd. Orser won, but Pockar was the story.

What could have caused this media malady?

Let's see: Pockar won the championship three times before Orser bumped him off last year. He had a bunch of hurts after that (ruptured appendix, stress factors in his left leg), and, according to the Globe, "skated only six to eight weeks in the last six months."

He's the Comeback Kid. The Little Train that Could. He grits his teeth and makes wild, determined eyes, holds his head in his hands, comes close to tears. He's very dramatic, a good photo subject, and great for a quote.

You can't blame all that on him, of course. It's what he is. He tries hard, and he's emotional about it. He's also an excellent figure skater.

In sum, he's ready-mixed for the media.

Orser would tell

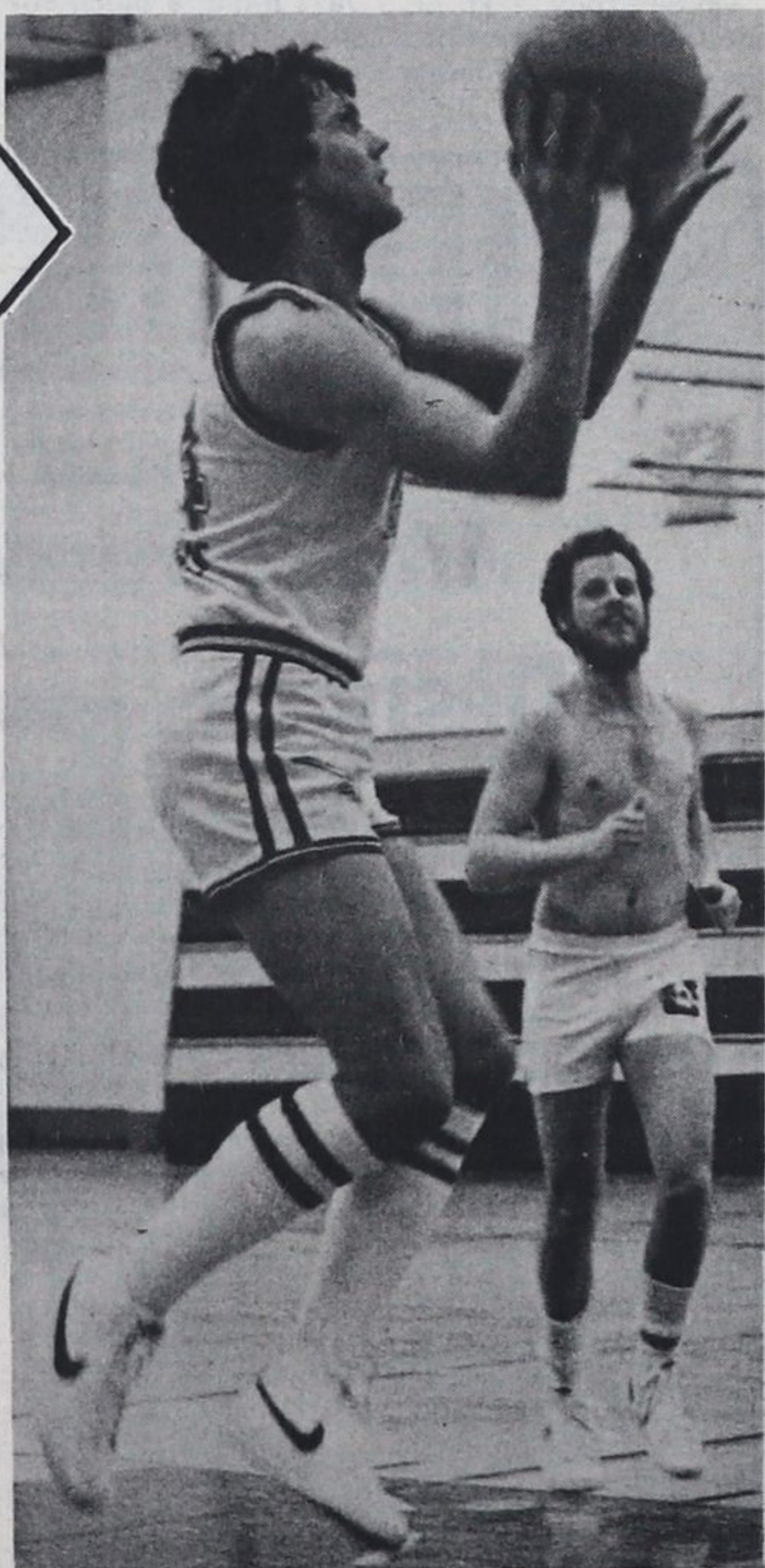
Orser, on the other hand, just accepts his gold, smiles a thank-you, takes a swig of Coca-Cola and wanders off to the next championship.

Yet no one in the national media seems interested in what makes this guy go. Not that he wouldn't tell them: Brian Orser has always been willing to give more than his share. He's bright, articulate, he'll go to all the fund-raisers, helps out the youngsters, sign all the autographs, pick up all the flowers, and tell you anything you care to know about his sport, from how scoring systems work to how his quadruple Axel is coming along.

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Scrim shot

Bill Hartman of the Commodores goes up for a shot during a scrimmage against the Dock Lunch squad last Thursday at Midland Secondary School. Monday in Barrie, however, Hartman and company were in a more serious mood, winning their tenth straight Simcoe County Mens' Intermediate Basketball League game, an 84-64 hammering of the Barrie Brookdale Stars.



Deer hunting results have been analysed

The 1981 gun hunting season for deer is now finished and the results have been analysed. The year's hunt again included Dufferin and Simcoe Counties.

The season however, was one day longer, four days rather than three, as in 1980.

Another special feature was that all hunters were required, by regulation, to submit a "Mandatory Report" describing their hunting activities.

In total, 2,355 permits were issued and only 99 did not return a report. About 88 per cent, or 2,082 hunters, actually entered the field to hunt.

The number of hunter-days enjoyed in pursuit of deer was 6,654. Surveys indicate that 504 deer were harvested for a success rate of 24 per cent.

In other words, one in four hunters shot a deer. Success was similar in 1980.

Hunters again had the choice of either shotguns or muzzle-

loaders; most chose shotguns (96 per cent), while 1.4 per cent chose muzzle-loaders and about 2.6 per cent tried both firearms.

Check stations were again operated throughout the district and cooperating hunters brought in about 300 deer, more than half of those harvested.

The check stations are extremely important in providing deer managers with information of the condition of deer and age

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NOTICE

THE COUNCIL OF THE VILLAGE OF VICTORIA HARBOUR hereby declares FEBRUARY 5, 6 and 7, 1982 as **Mini Bonhomme Carnaval Weekend**

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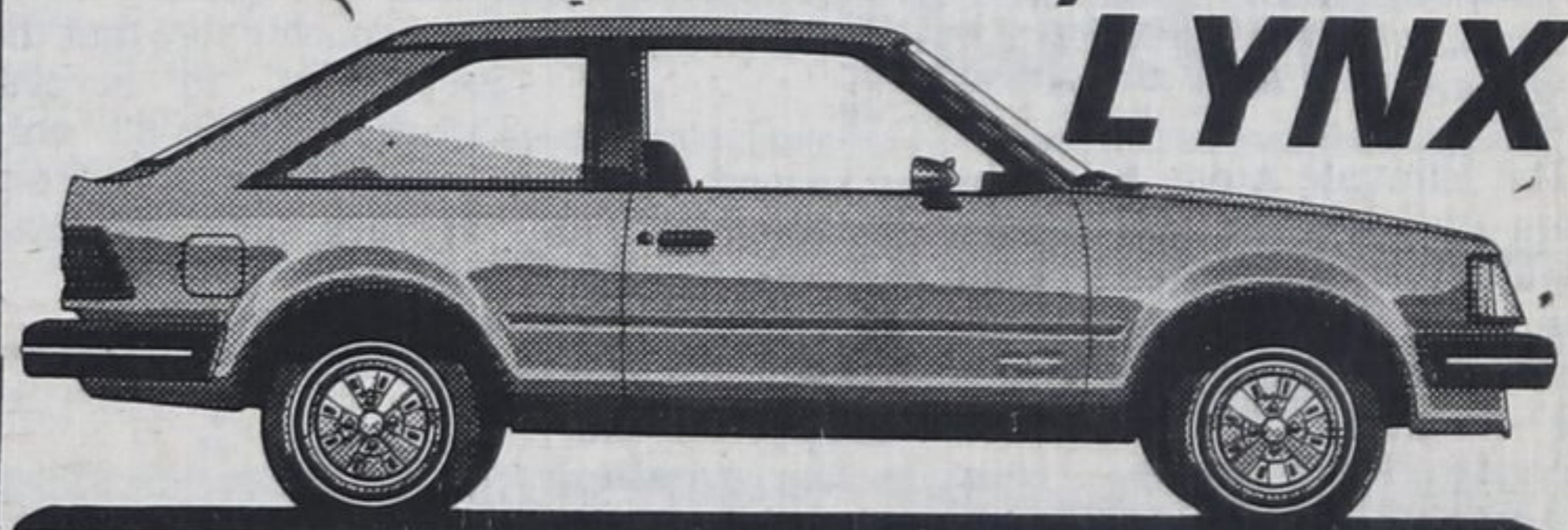


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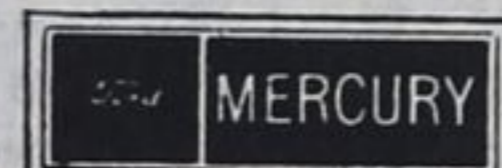
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