



Russell A's

This is the new edition of the Russell A's. Unfortunately the new uniforms purchased by Johnston Holdings had not yet arrived at the time of the photo. Back row, left to right: Doug Hay, Gaye Ford, Greg McLaren and Don McLaren. Front row,

left to right: Mike Fleming, Kenny Sullivan, Todd McLaren, Ronnie Herwey and Paul Cochrane. Absent: Jim Gamble, Barry Cochrane and Bruce Cherry. (Photo by Rowsell).

Russell A's —

Fine debut in revived league

Russell's new entry in the South Carleton Fastball League, the Russell A's (Johnston Holdings), is off to a good start winning its first five games.

At first it was feared that the SCFL might fold this year due to lack of a sufficient number of teams. Three clubs, Richmond, Gloucester and Osgoode opted out of the league leaving only Metcalfe, Carlsbad and Embrun as surviving members. The league got a new lease on life when teams were entered from Kenmore, McVey's of Metcalfe, a second team "The Jockstompers" from Carlsbad, and the Russell A's.

While league officials readily admit that the calibre of ball will not be as high as in past years, they are quick to point out that one big advantage is that it will give young area athletes a

chance to develop. With this rebuilding program already underway it shouldn't be long before the league is once again competitive with other intermediate teams.

For Russell fans, the A's represent a return to a league which for many years was dominated by Russell teams although Osgoode fans might disagree. Those teams included such "stars" as Keith and Doug Russell, Tom Hay, Jim "Gump" Gamble, Bruce Cooper, Jack McLaren, Barry McVey, Gordie Quaile, Don McLaren and Dip Savage plus many others. Only a couple from that era are still around as active players and a lot of new faces have been added.

The A's, coached by Jim Gamble are relying heavily on youth to carry them through the year. Their pitching staff cur-

rently consists of Greg McLaren backed up by Todd McLaren, possibly the strongest in the league. So far, only one run has been allowed in four games. Mike Fleming is one of the finest young catchers around with veteran Doug Hay backing him up and sharing first base duties with "Gump" Gamble. Other team members include Gaye Ford, Ronnie Herwey, Kenny Sullivan, Bruce Cherry, Don McLaren, Paul and Barry Cochrane. Kevin and Bryan Cochrane are expected to be added when they return from Europe later in the summer, giving the club more pitching depth and hitting power.

Home games are played at the Lions Ball Park every Wednesday night starting at 8:30 p.m. Kenmore is also using the Lions Park and their home games are scheduled on Tuesday night.

Russell Minor Hockey —

Healthy financial picture painted

With only about 20 people in attendance the Russell Minor Hockey Association held its annual meeting recently and the reports submitted indicate that the association is indeed in a healthy position compared to the same period a year ago.

The meeting was brief and the highlight of the evening was the revelation that fund raising activities during the year grossed over \$27,000. These funds were used to pay operating costs in addition to paying off a debt of about \$5,800 which was a carry

over from the previous year's operation.

The outgoing executive headed by Pat Flynn has certainly worked extremely hard during the year and retire from their official duties with a great sense of achievement. The meeting ended with the election of a new executive: President, Gerry O'Reilly; 1st Vice Pres., Denis Ladouceur; 2nd Vice Pres., Sterling Sheldrick; Secretary, Eileen Hamelin; Treasurer, Merrill McVey; Directors, Gord Davis, Hugh Latimer; Past Pres., Pat Flynn.

Newly elected President Gerry O'Reilly spoke briefly and indicated that one of his aims is to get more parent participation in fund raising activities. The involvement of a few more would make it much easier for those who have been carrying the load over the past year or two. The Executive's first task will be to appoint a Referee-in-Chief as well as Division Co-ordinators.

Jack McLaren
Sports
Ramblings



Minor Hockey

The Canadian Amateur Hockey Association, much maligned for the action it doesn't take, has finally taken the giant step of recommending that body checking be forbidden at age levels peewee and below. Although they are leaving it up to the individual associations, some of which have previously adopted this rule, it is hoped that the ODMHA will go along with the recommendation and implement the change for the upcoming season, at least at the Atom level. A recent federal report on minor hockey was very critical of the CAHA's player development program and undoubtedly this led in part to the Association's recommendation.

What affect will this ruling have on minor hockey and what benefits, if any, will be realized from its adoption? Basically I feel it's a good move. It could produce better skaters and should put more finesse into the game, a facet which at the present time is seriously lacking. I certainly don't want to see all contact removed from the game but at the very early age the boys should be concentrating on learning the basics of the game and not have to worry about body checking — bantam age is probably soon enough for this.

I can recall watching a practice where the coach was putting 11 and 12 year olds through a drill which entailed nothing more than a defenceman hammering a forward into the boards as the latter was forced to go between the much larger defenceman and the cushion boards. It was quite evident that the only people enjoying this exercise were the defenceman and the coach. I have also been told that certain coaches keep a record of the number of good "hits" each player made during a game.

This leads to an aspect of the game which is probably far more important than any rule change or all the federal and provincial sponsored studies will ever do to improve the game of hockey and that is coaching. This is the most critical area of any minor hockey organization and yet I feel it is the most neglected.

The coach is the person who is going to have the greatest influence on his sons attitude towards the game and how he develops as he grows older. There are some extremely knowledgeable coaches in the game to-day for all the right reasons but unfortunately there are many who shouldn't be there at all. Referees must obtain a certain level of expertise before they can officiate and their performance is re-assessed from time to time. Coaches, likewise, must attain a certain level of instruction but where does the assessment take place? If you volunteer your services you have the job. For a position of importance this simply isn't good enough. Coaching is the most important and demanding position in a minor hockey organization. If we want to better our game particularly at the lower age level this is the area that needs the greatest improvement because it is here that hockey basics are learned or lost forever.

Russell A's

Having been a participant in the South Carleton Fastball League a few years back, I was most pleased to see the return of a Russell team to the league. Having watched their opening games I believe area fans will be pleasantly surprised by the overall league calibre may not be quite as high as previous years, the fine play by the A's is certainly well worth watching. They play at home every Wednesday night so why not visit the Lions' lighted ball park for a fine exhibition of fastball.



G. B.
POOLS

Sales — Service
Accessories
Chemicals

Gerry Bourbonnais

RUSSELL

445-2837

G. J. (Gerry) O'Reilly

TROPHIES & AWARDS

QUALITY AWARDS AT DISCOUNT PRICES



SEE OUR DISPLAY ROOM
50 percent off list — Free Engraving on
all trophies purchased

HEADQUARTERS FOR
Buttons, Crests, Hats and Novelties
Engraving done on jewellery, watches,
bracelets, etc.

16 Trillium Cresc.

Russell

Tel. 445-2008



PRODUCTS

Seamless eavestrough and awning manufacturer

Richard Lafrance Metcalfe, Ontario

Phone 821-1854