

# Sports

Jack McLaren

## Ramblings



Recent decisions taken by the Ontario Hockey League (Junior A) will go a long way in changing the image of the hockey player from that of a dumb jock to that of a young man who is academically talented.

Last season the OHL initiated the Bobby Smith Award (given annually to the player who combines high standards of play and excellence academically). Along with the trophy went a \$2,000 scholarship. This year's winner was Doug Smith of the Ottawa 67's who in addition to the trophy received an all expense paid vacation for two to Florida.

This season the league took a giant step in ensuring that those players who are academically inclined are awarded for their efforts. The OHL is a very special league for advanced junior age players, talented performers with well above average skills. For many it is the time-tested route to a career in professional hockey. However, they do realize that hockey is a very competitive field and there is no guarantee that a NHL contract will be waiting at the end of a junior career. Therefore, education for life outside of hockey must be continued to keep other options and occupations open.

So this year they introduced an OHL Scholarship Program which provides tuition to any Canadian university or college, books, room and board for a single person living away from home. The maximum benefit under this program is \$3,200 per year. In order to qualify the applicant must have played at least two years of OHL hockey having exhausted his junior eligibility with a member team of the OHL. While in the league, the cost of the players education will be absorbed by the team — the scholarship program takes over once his junior eligibility has terminated. Should a player have the misfortune of sustaining a career-ending injury, he still remains eligible for the league scholarship program.

A recent study carried out for the league indicated that 79 per cent of the players are registered in school and regularly attend classes. The Ontario average for the same age group (16-20 years old) is only 52 per cent. So the league executive should be given full marks for encouraging total development — hockey plus formal education. It is about time they realized that they should be in the business of producing good citizens as well as good hockey players.

The brochure that I received tends to deal in general terms so there may be something in the fine print that may make the plan less attractive. Even so, they are headed in the right direction. Many boys will take advantage of the program while others won't want it. Combining the two will not be easy but the academically inclined athletes will now at least have the opportunity to acquire an education at the expense of the OHL.

It is difficult to say what motivated the league to initiate this expensive program but I suspect the fact that many players were opting for U.S. College Hockey Scholarships was an influencing factor. The league contends that they are acting in the best interests of the most important people in the game — the players — let's hope so.

## Curling Club plans building

A little over a year ago the Russell Curling Club was informed by the Department of Labour that their club building had been condemned. They would be permitted to operate in the existing structure for the 1980-81 season after which the building would be closed.

Engineers had determined that the structure would not support a heavy snow load. Club officials pointed out that the existing roof-line made it almost impossible for snow to collect there but to no avail. A number of other area Curling Clubs have also suffered the same fate because their buildings do not conform to modern building codes.

Having accepted the fact that this ruling was irreversible the club was left with two options — to carry out the necessary renovations to satisfy the current building code or to demolish the existing structure and construct a brand new curling facility.

Club spokesman Wendell Stanley stated that performing the necessary renovations would have been very costly, possible in the neighbourhood of \$75,000. The building would have had to be raised, new support jacks installed or additional rafters put into place. After all this expense they would still be left with a building almost twenty years old and which would continue to require additional repairs as time went on.

At this point the club decided that it would be in the best interests of the members to construct an entirely new building. Immediately, a building committee was formed with Keith Boyd as Chairman, Jim Campbell as Secretary and Wendell Stanley as Treasurer. With help from the 100 club members this committee has been hard at work designing the new structure and conducting fund raising events. A final design has been completed and the club has submitted tenders which close on March 2nd.

The present structure will be torn down but the ice plant and base will remain with the club room being enlarged. Plans call for a modernization of the basement including washrooms and it is hoped that the new design will also incorporate features to assist the handicapped. There will be two sheets of ice with the new structure being about four feet wider than the present one.

Provided everything goes as planned they hope that construction will commence in the Spring and be completed in time for the Fair in August. Cost of the new building could be as high as \$200,000 but Mr. Stanley hoped that the tender accepted would be somewhat less.

An application has already been submitted to Wintario and the club is optimistic that for every \$1.00 raised locally, Wintario will contribute \$2.00. Initial response from Wintario has been favorable. To take advantage of

this grant an ambitious fund raising program has been underway for some time. The club is selling memberships at \$100.00 each. It currently has about 100 members and is hoping to attract more with a new modern building. They currently are selling tickets at \$1.00 each with first prize consisting of \$500.00 worth of groceries which have been donated by the I.G.A.

store in Embrun. The Curling Club has matched this total with a second prize of \$300.00 and a third prize of \$200.00 worth of groceries also from the I.G.A. store. The draw will take place on

1 March at 4:00 p.m. and tickets can be purchased from any club member as well as local stores in Russell. Mr. Stanley emphasized that the Curling Club is used by

residents of the area for many events apart from curling and is hoping that the entire community will lend its support to this worthwhile project.

## Russell Minor Hockey News

RMHA President Barry Carscadden reports that Russell teams are now making preparations for the league play-offs and at this time it appears that every team will make the play-off scene.

Congratulations to the players and coaches for an excellent season. The first home date for play-offs will be Tuesday, Feb.

24, when the A Division teams will be hosting visiting clubs. The B Division teams will get started the

following week. The RMHA will be hosting their annual tournament during the March school break. Dates are as follows (all

games played from 7:30 a.m. - 6 p.m.); 21 March — Atom A; 22 March — Pee Wee A; 23 March — Atom B; 24 March — Pee Wee B; 25 March — Bantam B; 26

March — Bantam A; 27 March — Midget A.

They also have a dance scheduled for April 11, an Easter Bingo with hams and turkeys as prizes on April 13, the Banquet Awards night on April 28 and the Annual

Meeting is scheduled for May 5. All of these events will take place at the Dr. F. Kinnaird Community Centre. Just remember Minor Hockey needs your continuous support.

## METCALFE WINTER CARNIVAL

FRI. FEB. 20 - SUN. MAR. 1st

SAT. FEB. 21 —  
Queen Contest  
Old Time Carnival Jamboree Dance

SUN. FEB. 22 —  
Parade 1:15 p.m.  
Junior B Hockey 2:15;  
Log Sawing Contest 2:30;  
Dinner 4:30 - 6:30 followed by Comm. Hymn Sing

TUES. FEB. 24 — Carnival Bingo 7:45 p.m.  
WED. FEB. 25 — Euchre Party, Admission \$1

THURS. FEB. 26 —  
Teeny Bopper Dance — 7:30 - 9:30  
Teen Dance — 8 p.m. - Midnight

FRI. FEB. 27 —  
8:15 Metcalfe Jets vs. Winchester Jets  
Carnival Dance, 9 p.m. - 1 a.m.

SAT. FEB. 28 —  
Broomball Tournament 8 a.m. - 12 midnight  
Ski-Doo Rally — 12 noon  
Carnival Supper — 4:30 - 7:30 p.m.  
Carnival Wind-up Dance, 9 p.m. - 1 a.m.

SUN. MAR. 1 —  
Broomball Finals 8 a.m. - 8 p.m.  
Bean Dinner — 12 noon  
X Country Ski Outing — 1 p.m.

## NHL Trivia

The NHL maintains records on just about every facet of the game. Some recently released statistics included the following:

- the average height of an NHL Player is an even 6 feet
- the average age is 26.1 years and the average weight is 188.4 pounds
- every team in the league averages 6 feet with the exception of Boston which averages 5'11"
- the heaviest team is the L.A. Kings at an average of 195.6 pounds per player with the N.Y. Rangers next at 195 pounds
- the oldest team is the Boston Bruins with an average of 27.6 years per player followed by the Vancouver Canucks at 27.5
- the St. Louis Blues are the youngest with an average of 25.1 years

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