

# Sports

Jack McLaren

## Ramblings



by Jack McLaren

Having watched hundreds of hockey games over the past few years from Atom C to Junior A level, I have seen many young players move up, some of whom will undoubtedly make it to the professional ranks, while others who seemed to have every ability never quite attained the heights for which they appeared destined.

It has always intrigued me why some made it and others failed. After watching about 50 games in the Central Junior Hockey League this season it has become quite apparent that if a young player wants to go on and play at a higher level there is one ingredient that he must have more than anything else and that is dedication.

He can't have any distractions. The higher the level the more dedication required. While ability is also a major requirement, it is his dedication to the game that will ultimately determine his future in sports. Players lacking this will eventually opt for a lower level of competition.

As an example, Junior B level hockey doesn't place the same demands on players as Junior A Tier II. Players practice once a week and play two games which are usually scheduled for the weekend.

Player discipline is fairly relaxed and generally low-key. The demands can usually be met by most young athletes.

Move up one level to Central Junior Hockey League Junior A Tier II and the demands increase. At least two and quite often three games are scheduled per week — in addition two practices each lasting two hours are held each week. A game in Pembroke means arriving home in the morning after 1:00 a.m. and meeting the morning school bus a few hours later. The discipline is more severe — you arrive at the arena at least one hour and fifteen minutes before game time or you don't play — if one misses practices without a valid explanation and without notifying the team in advance you will miss the next game. Players who give less than 100% will probably find themselves sitting on the bench.

Those who are fortunate enough to move up one more level to the Major Ontario Hockey League (Junior A) will find the game even more demanding. They are faced with a 68 game schedule, daily practices, long road trips by bus, arriving home in the early morning hours followed by school classes that day. The

players who have the ability and dedication to survive this rigorous program deserve a lot of credit. It isn't easy to reach the top and those who do have sacrificed along the way.

### Underwater Fantasy

On 30 March, the Metcalfe Figure Skating Club will be presenting its annual ice skating show at the Metcalfe Arena under the capable direction of Bev Meikle and Dawn Williams. This year's theme is Underwater Fantasy. Anyone who has attended their show in years past will be anxiously awaiting this year's production. They have always played to a packed house so everyone is reminded to arrive early for a good seat. The show will commence at 7 p.m. and is expected to last until 9 p.m. Tickets will be available at the door. Advance tickets can be purchased from Joyce Dooley at 821-2712 or Carol Budarick at 821-1675.

The Club also performed at the Metcalfe Ice Carnival with the presentation "Ship Ahoy" and three soloists in the Carnival Parade won first prize in the non-commercial class and received a trophy plus a cheque for \$15.00.

The Club will hold its annual parents' meeting early in April (date to be confirmed) and at this time a new executive will be elected and plans made for the 1981/82 season. Parents are urged to attend. Anyone interested in being involved either on the executive or as a parent helper, please contact Carol Budarick at 821-1675.

### RA report —

## Bad budgetting causes overspending

A 16-point plan to erase the Russell Recreation Association's \$230,000 debt has been drawn up by the finance committee which hopes its recommendations will be "seriously considered and acted upon."

Insisting that the trend of adding to the debt year by year must be reversed, the committee suggests everything from increasing ice rentals by \$5 across the board to placing a fee on public skating.

Such measures would be part of a "user-pay policy" favored by the committee which also calls for greater reliance on volunteer help.

A comprehensive report prepared by the three-member committee — Peter Romme, Diane Gustance, and Paul Wylie — makes no bones about the fact the association is seriously ailing financially.

It blames "very bad and misleading budgetting by previous boards."

The easy way out would be to raise the mill rate, the report

notes; "this, however, would not attack the main problem which is overspending."

Residents of Russell Village and the west four concessions of Russell Township must accept that with a small tax base they can't afford the same programs as enjoyed in larger centres, it states.

At the moment, residents supporting the Russell RA have a mill rate of 18.22 compared to 11 for residents of Embrun and the six easterly concessions who support the Centre Recreatif d'Embrun which has always operated more efficiently.

If the RA could run its programs on a break-even basis for the next four years, the debt could be paid off, the report says.

"After the debt is retired we can go ahead with new projects but until then the RA must hold the line on new expenditures."

"Council has lost faith in us and therefore has taken over the books."

Other measures suggested to put the RA on track include:

— Keep arena closed until first rental.

— Restrict minor hockey to 1 1/2 hours per team per week at subsidized rates.

— Restrict subsidized figure skating to six hours a week.

— Increase shop and canteen rentals.

— Sell advertising space in the arena.

— Attempt to stage more paying events in the community hall such as bingos, dances, card parties, darts, pool tournaments, etc.....

## Minor Softball

The annual election of officers for the Russell Minor Softball Association will be held at the Dr. Frank Kinnaird Community Centre, March 25, 8 p.m.

Don Empey and Nels Eggum, president and secretary-treasurer, respectively, for the past two years will not be returning. It is crucial to the success of the minor ball program that other residents emerge to help make up the vacancies.

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