

# CarStory

with Bill Sherk  
The Old Car Detective



## John Squirrel's 1939 Mercury Convertible

John Squirrel of Okanagan Falls, B.C., still remembers his first convertible, purchased in Toronto in 1952:

"In those days Danforth Avenue was used car alley and the further east you went, the lower the quality of cars got. East of Victoria Park were a series of these lots, and on the worst of the worst I found a 1939 Mercury convertible.

"The body was not rusted but had its fair share of dings and dangs. The windshield header for the top was made of wood and was



almost totally rotted away. The engine smoked so bad, there were no mosquitoes

left in Scarborough.

"The price of \$25 (knocked down from \$40)

was all I could afford. I asked about a warranty and the salesman said: 'I guarantee it will get off the lot.'

"It didn't make it! Front wheels over the curb and it died. True to his word, the lot man installed a new fuel pump, about \$1.25 in those days. I slowly drove it to a rented garage.

"I already had a souped-up flathead engine just waiting to be dropped into something. I'd never done an engine swap before, but a couple of weeks later, I started the old Merc and took my first real ride.

"Did this thing ever go! Sadly, the brakes were not up to the new engine (they weren't up to the old one either). I rebuilt master and wheel cylinders, turned drums, and relined all wheels. Yahoo! Now I can go and stop.

"What's this violent shimmy at above 50 mph? King pins and tie rods - what the heck are they?

There is much to be said for safety checks on vehicles before they are sold. Once again, back to my rented garage.

"I learned real fast how a hot wrench works. Thank the Lord for where I worked as I could borrow most of the tools I needed. Finally, this thing goes down the road quickly and safely but still looks like heck.

Then a Hertz Rent-a-Truck rear-ended me at a downtown stoplight. The driver insisted I take the Merc into the Hertz body shop for repairs. Two days later, from the doors back, I had a new 1939 Mercury convertible - new taillights, bumper, trunk handle, and shiny black paint. Wow!

"The front end now looked so terrible, I was shamed into doing it too. Six months later, and barely keeping out of debtor's prison, the car looked good

and ran really well.

"Then I traded it in for a '51 Plymouth hardtop. Bad move! I wanted another ragtop. With help from Mom, I bought my first of seven 1951 Mercury convertibles.

"Lots of cars over the years, but your first convertible, like your first sweetheart, holds a special place in your heart."

Do you have any car stories to share with our readers?

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## Atom AE Ram Contract Carriers

January 5th the Ravens travelled to Elora for their second tournament of the holidays. The first game played was against Mooretown who they had faced in a tourney early in the season and knowing they were a good team the Ravens came out flying. Aidan Garant won a face off in their zone and passed it to Alex Stevenson who made no mistake and scored the first goal. In the second period Gerard Busko scored a beautiful goal from Zack Prentice and Tyler St. Pierre. The defense shut down Mooretown and the game ended 2-0 for the Ravens. A shutout for Kane Gagnon.

Elora was the Ravens' second challenger. Matthew Zelko, Clay Kraynack, Colton Kitchen, Alec Robillard, Carter Sherk and Danielle Dent did an awesome job defending our end, allowing the offense to do their job. In the first period Alex opened the scoring with a pass from Anthony Iacobini, Tyler gave Zack a nice pass in front of the net for goal two and Busko took a pass from Zack ending the first 3-0. Second period was just as amazing. Carter Sherk scored from Eric Rawlins and Zack and Tyler gave another

er pass to Zack ending the second 5-0. Cody Cooper, Eric Rawlins and Luke Tremblay opened the third period with Luke burying one in the net from his partners. Tyler ended the third with a nice goal from Zack and Colton. Final score 7-1. Awesome goaltending from Kane and Rod Summerfield who played the second and third periods.

The third game proved to be against the toughest team of the tourney, Mt. Brydges. Mt. Brydges scored the first three goals of the game. The Ravens knew they had to step up their game. Busko put the Ravens on the board in the second period. Mt. Brydges scored again. Colton shot the puck out of our end and Zack picked it up giving us our second goal. Minutes into the third period Zack buried one on the goalie from Carter and Tyler making the score 4-3 Mt. Brydges, but lots of time on the clock. Even with all that time we were unable to score again and with the chance of making the game a tie the goalie was pulled and Mt. Brydges scored on an empty net. Final score 5-3.

Despite their upset, the Ravens were still in the finals. The challenger - Mt. Brydges. Only one minute into the game Alex came

out flying and scored the first goal. Just before the end of the first period Mt. Brydges scored on the Ravens who answered right back when Tyler, Zack and Busko worked their magic and Tyler scored. Mt. Brydges ended the second period with a goal, making the score 2-2. Both teams played awesome defense leaving the third period scoreless sending the game into overtime. Playing three-on-three hockey in the fourth period the Ravens played hard and tough but Mt. Brydges were able to score on us. The Ravens each received

a trophy for their hard work and talent and a banner to hang in the Essex Memorial Arena. Special thanks to the parents and coaches for taking the Ravens to the tourney and to the players for showing their sportsmanship skills win or lose.

This past weekend the Ravens played their final games in the Bluewater League. Friday they played LaSalle. Rod Summerfield played the entire game and did an awesome job. The first period ended 1-0 LaSalle. The second was all defense from Clay, Carter, Matthew, Alec,

Colton and Danielle. 1-0 going into the third was short lived and LaSalle scored on the Ravens three more times. Zack came out of the penalty box and kept the puck in, passed it to Alex then to Eric to end the game 4-1 LaSalle. Saturday the Ravens played the Junior Spitfires. The first period ended 2-0 Windsor and they fired two more quick goals in the second. Aidan turned things around and with a lot of hard work out front, scored from Cody and Luke. Going into the third, down 4-1, the Ravens did not give up. They kept

working hard to get three goals. Zack from Eric and Busko, Anthony jumped on a rebound from Alex and Eric and one more from Zack just under the crossbar. Final score 7-4 Windsor which did not reflect the hard work all the players did especially Kane and his defenders


For more sports, please turn to page 22

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