

Judge serves as 'ref' in hockey brawl

Faithful church member

STOUFFVILLE — Service was held from the O'Neill Funeral Home, Stouffville, last week, for Mrs. Isobel Stevens, following her passing at Green Gables Nursing Home, Bloomington.

Mrs. Stevens, formerly of O'Brien Avenue, Stouffville, was a kindly lady who took an active interest in the work of St. James Presbyterian Church where she attended for many years.

At one time, she served as church organist, also the president and treasurer of the Women's Missionary Society.

YORK REGION — A fight involving three hockey players back in April, that developed into a near riot with the fans, was settled in Newmarket Court with Judge McMahon playing the role of referee.

The game, that turned into a brawl, was between Nobleton and Forest. The location was the Nobleton Arena.

Crown Attorney Bruce Shilton described, what he termed, the "bad feeling" between the clubs before the contest started. Added to this was the fact close to 1,000

people were in the stands, many of whom had been indulging in alcohol.

Charged with causing a disturbance were Brian Kennedy and Paul Sheardown of Nobleton, and Stephen Bellyk of Forest. Kennedy and Bellyk, it was learned, had participated in the contest, an All-Ontario Final. Sheardown was a sub-netminder who had been sitting on the bench.

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Richardson, an official, said the fight began while the two teams were exchanging handshakes at the end. He said Sheardown took a swing at Bellyk and the latter tried only to defend himself. Then Kennedy entered the fray, he said, and everyone joined in. He told how he had been hit on the head with a bottle.

Referee Bruce

Bellyk was found not guilty. Sheardown and Kennedy each received a conditional discharge and were placed on probation.

According to evidence, it was Sheardown's punch that started the melee, which ended with all players out on the ice and spectators hurling beer bottles from the seats.

Patrick Wright, another OMHA official, said he was holding onto Bellyk when Kennedy rushed in. "That was the straw that broke the camel's back," he said.

Wright described the crowd as "unruly and belligerent with no respect for the authority of the referee or the police." He said the ice surface was littered with cans, beer and Coke bottles. He said there was no doubt that Sheardown threw the first punch and that Kennedy's entry into the skirmish was the catalyst for the remaining players to join in.

When defence counsel suggested that Kennedy had wanted to play the role of peacemaker, Wright replied, "no, certainly not."

Constable Bruce Vickers said "the crowd went wild" when Kennedy intervened. He said that while many of the spectators had been checked for alcohol, it was obvious that drinking was going on in the rink.

The officer said that it's the policy of the police not to go onto the ice unless called by officials. He told how ten officers rushed to the arena to get the situation in hand.

He said conditions were such, the championship trophy could not be presented to the Forest team on the ice. It was given to them in the dressing room.

Stong, attributed the disturbance to actions of the crowd rather than the players.

Arena manager Ken Clarkson said pay-duty officers had been hired that night because trouble was feared. He described feelings as "tense."

"When there's alcohol in the stands, any little thing can touch off something," he said.

D.A. Hemstock, a past-president of the Nobleton Minor Hockey Association, said the matter of extra police officers had been discussed, and it was decided to hire additional constables. He said a number of volunteer firefighters were also called in to stand at the exits. He described the crowd as "belligerent and loud."

At the conclusion of the case, Murray Sheardown, a King Township councillor and father of one of the accused, angrily criticized Police Chief Bruce Crawford. He said the Chief had refused to allow adequate police personnel to attend the game. "If that is justice, then I give up," he commented on leaving the court.

gave way to their emotions and tempers," he said, in granting each a conditional discharge. He ordered both to serve a six month term on probation.

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