

Weekender Entertainment



Youngblood: Hockey was never like this

By IAN BAILEY
YOUNGBLOOD: The point of this film about the world of Junior A hockey is likely to be quite painful for fans of the sport who believe in fair play on the ice.

Director and co-writer Peter Markle (a former member of the Team USA hockey squad). Markle offers the unpleasant suggestion that success at hockey doesn't just depend on how a player plays the game but how he uses his fists to handle the violence that is as much a part of the game as cold rinks.

The National Hockey League seemed to get this message from the movie and they allegedly urged their members to condemn the film because the organization believed that it would promote violence.

Youngblood doesn't really have the power to promote anything. But it does have a simplistic approach to hockey violence. The depiction of violence here seems to be used more to rev up the audience than to depict any truth.

The violence of the sport is shown here by the way it changes one player. Rob Lowe (St. Elmo's Fire) plays Dean Youngblood, a 17-year-old player from a small town in upstate New York. He moves into the Junior leagues as a member of a Canadian team, the Hamilton Mustangs.

Although Youngblood is fast on the ice, he realizes that his skill is no defense against Racki (George Finn), a player on an opposing team who victimizes Youngblood's fellow players. Eventually, Racki takes care of his best friend (Patrick Swayze).

This leads to a rather striking turn in the plot that has Youngblood return to his father's farm where his brother teaches him how to fight on the ice. The script suggests that Youngblood's training as a player has been incomplete because of his lack of skills as a gladiator.

The target of all this effort is Racki, whom Youngblood battles in a slugfest on the ice — even though the climactic game is over.

If it had the ring of truth, Markle's suggestion would be disturbing. But Youngblood's climactic sequences seem more like a desperate attempt to give the film an ending that's satisfying for audiences whose perceptions of sports films are conditioned by Rocky epics. It's as though Markle decided that having a

simple hockey game end the film just wasn't enough.

However, beyond this weird little twist, Youngblood has attractions that add a bit of slickness to its sickness.

Director Markle working with cinematographer Mark Irwin and visual consultant Vincent Crescimano squeeze some beauty of Canada's sport by exploiting all of hockey's cinematic possibilities. The games themselves are gracefully staged and there are some beautiful moments with Youngblood alone mulling over his sport on a misty rink.

The film also features some good performances from a subdued Lowe as the taciturn but determined player as well as from Patrick Swayze as his teammate and Ed Lauter as their tough coach. (AA) ** Markville.

MARKVILLE

THE JEWEL OF THE NILE: A flat and tedious sequel to the perky 1984 adventure *Romancing the Stone* that has little going for it except the charisma of stars Kathleen Turner and Michael Douglas. (PG: Swearing) **

101 DALMATIANS: A re-release of Walt Disney's 1961 animated film about two dalmatians who try to save their pups from certain death. Weekend afternoon matinees only. (F)

POWER: Richard Gere turns in one of the best performances of his career as a public relations whiz who packages political candidates for the voters (Gere's character Pete St. John is like a Senator Keith Davey for hire). Too bad the rest of the film is an erratic mess that flips from coast to coast to depict a tangled plot. The work of a terrific cast including Gene Hackman, Julie Christie, Kate Capshaw, and Denzel Washington (as well as the point of this film) gets lost in the puzzling shuffle. (AA: Course Language) **

WITNESS: One of the best films of 1985 returns just in time for the Academy Award nominations in which it will no doubt be noted. Harrison Ford stars as a Philadelphia cop who tries to elude some of his corrupt colleagues by hiding out in an Amish community. (AA) ****.

THORNHILL SQUARE

F/X: A special-effects technician is cajoled into using his talents to stage an assassination and then declared expendable by the government agents who put him up to the deed. Starring Australian actor Bryan Brown.

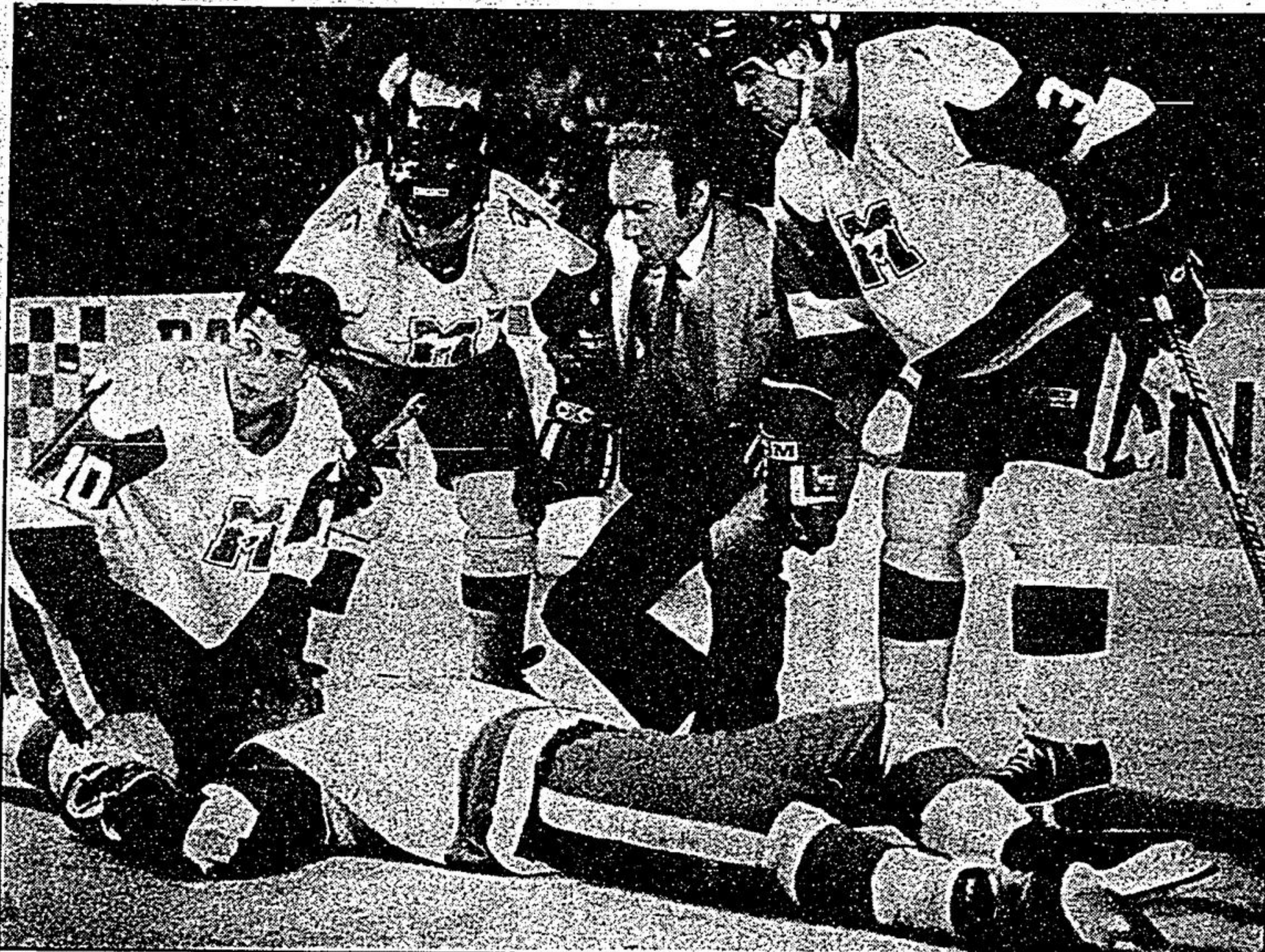
(AA: Coarse Language, Violence)

MURPHY'S ROMANCE: A subdued comedic drama that's as soft, sweet and unfulfilling as a mouthful of marshmallows. The fact that it's watchable comes from the serviceable performances of stars Sally Field as a plucky divorcee, Lance Kerwin as her shiftless husband and,

especially James Garner as a smalltown eccentric who falls in love with Field. The problem is that the filmmakers have smoothed out the rough edges on all the characters. At least the world-weary, easygoing Garner adds a welcome touch of cynicism to this gooey brew. (AA) **

OUT OF AFRICA: Robert Redford plays Denys Finch Hat-

ton, a British hunter in Kenya in 1914, who fell in love with Karen Blixen (Meryl Streep), a Danish woman who managed a coffee plantation for 20 years and later wrote about Africa under the pseudonym of Isak Dinesen. This majestic epic from director Sydney (Tootsie) Pollack moves slowly at times but it's an intriguing drama where length depth instead of tedium. (PG) ****



Youngblood (Rob Lowe, far left) and Coach Chadwick (Ed Lauter, second from right) rush to aid Derek (Patrick Swayze) after he is viciously attacked by Racki, a henchman from an opposing team. The film is currently playing at Markville.

Marc Barrie wildlife prints offered in group's draw

Two framed limited edition Marc Barrie wildlife prints are up for grabs in a fund-raising draw sponsored by Thickson's Woods Heritage Foundation.

Thickson's Woods, located in Whitby near the Corbett Creek Water Pollution Control Plant, is the last of a thick forest of white pine that used to blanket southern Ontario.

But when the property was to be logged by its owner in 1984, a group of concerned naturalists banded together and purchased a 16-acre parcel. They established a heritage foundation to manage the woodlot's plant and animal life.

Mr. Barrie donated the two recent releases — 'Out For The Afternoon - Red Fox' and 'On The Tamarack - Red-Breasted Nuthatch' — to help the group pay off a \$55,000 mortgage on Thickson's Woods.

Tickets, at \$2 each or three for \$5, are available at the Goodwood-raised artist's Gallery Brougham or from members of the Pickering

Naturalists. For more information contact Thickson's Woods Heritage Foundation at 725-2116.

The draw will be held Saturday, March 22 at Gallery Brougham, located on Hwy. 7 west of Brock Road.

The 24-year-old Barrie, who began painting while a student at Uxbridge Secondary School, is featured in the spring issue of Art Impressions magazine. On the cover is the artist's painting 'Royal Visit — Mute Swans'.

Some of his work can also be seen in the next edition of Wildlife Art News, the largest U.S. publication dedicated to nature art.

Square dancers ready for Valentine's party

Treat your sweetheart to an old-fashioned good time.

The Canadian Olde Tyme Square Dance Callers Association is holding its fifth dance of the season in honor of St. Valentine's Day.

The dance takes place Saturday, Feb. 15 at the Buttonville Women's Institute Hall at 8:30 p.m. Live music, a variety of cal-

lers and a good time will be provided at \$4 per person.

It would be appreciated if each couple would bring a refreshment like sandwiches, cookies, cake or pickles so all can enjoy a potluck snack at the dance. Tea will be provided.

For more information call 249-0147 or 225-9606.



LIZ WYATT
 Directing play

Meet MLT's cast on opening night

Rehearsals are progressing well for Markham Little Theatre's production, *The Dining Room*, directed by Liz Wyatt.

Opening night, Wednesday, Feb. 26, will feature a wine and cheese. Meet the Cast reception after the performance.

On Thursday, Feb. 27 admission for seniors and students will be half price.

Because *The Dining Room* is an entry in the 1985-86 drama festival of the Association of Community Theatres, Friday will be adjudication night. Paul Eck, official adjudicator for ACT will be present on Friday evening to judge this entry and present public remarks following the performance.

The Dining Room will run Feb. 26, 27, 28 and Mar. 1 at Markham Theatre at Hwy. 7 and Warden Ave. Curtain time is 8 p.m. Tickets are \$8 and are available at the box office, 479-0201. Visa, Master Card and American Express accepted.