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## Athlete Polly Minton recalls good old days

By BRUCE STAPLEY  
 At age 59, Gordon 'Polly' Minton still enjoys hockey as much as ever. And while he may have lost a stride or two, those whose task it is to keep him in check, claim he's still as tricky as ever.

He plays weekly in the Stouffville Amateur Hockey Over-40 League. The ex-Stouffville Red Wing and Clipper star says he's having just as much fun today.

"I enjoy getting out with the boys," he says, "I just wish I could take the old body back about 40 years. 'Still, I get a kick out of it," he admits, "we have lots of laughs."

No one knows more about laughs than Polly. Appreciated for his sense of humor, he recalls with delight the hijinks and escapades back when hockey was really fun.

"We usually had a team party on Saturday night," he recalls, "but there was never any beer in the dressing room."

"We had the best bunch of guys on that Clipper team," he reminisces. "We may not have been the most talented but we had spirit and cohesion."

Polly was a member of the great Senior B club of 1951-52 that won the Ontario Hockey Association Championship.

Born in Unionville, (where the Unionville House Restaurant is now located), he remembers how his involvement with sports led to his first full-time job.

"Any athlete could land a job at Frigidaire," he recalls. "Bill Apps, (uncle of Maple Leaf captain Syl Apps), was a foreman there."

Jack Watson, Bob Bangay and Lloyd Weatherall, all worked for the same company.

It was always the same nucleus of guys who made up the teams, whether softball, baseball or hockey. Although Polly didn't move to Stouffville until 1953, he was already a household name in town.

He played seven seasons with the Stouffville Red Sox, performing along side the likes of Earl Cook, Stan Miller, Ken and Lorne Schell and ex-Leaf star Bob Hassard.

"We won our league about six years in a row," Polly remembers, "we had great pitching."

Polly burst onto the hockey scene with the Stouffville Jr. Red Wings in the fall of '45. He signed with the Intermediate Clippers in 1950.

He still speaks with great pride of the team that won it all in 1952.

"That was a great club," he says. "Anyone who made that team could have played in the American Hockey League."

Despite the town's relatively small population at the time, the Clippers often defeated the likes of the Oshawa Truckmen and the Belleville McFarlands. Belleville later enjoyed success at the International level.

While hockey didn't have the 'goons' it knows today, Polly recalls the late Nick Bangay and Herbie Rose as two of the toughest guys in the game.

"I remember one night at Owen Sound when they both took on the roughest players on the Owen Sound club, all within a span of

about 10 minutes. "The fans couldn't believe it," he said.

As for Stouffville support, the town loved its hockey team with a passion, he remembers.

"You couldn't get near the old rink on game nights," he recalls, "cars were parked everywhere and people were lined up to get in."

"They even sold season's tickets back then."

Home games or away, the fan support was strong, remembers Polly. "The team bus would be packed with many going by car. Once, when we played Peterborough, there were more Stouffville spectators in the stands than Peterborough fans."

The Stouffville cheering section was never above getting physically involved, remembers Polly.

"One night, Les Wilson got so mad at the referee, he stuck his fist out over the boards and flattened the official as he skated by."

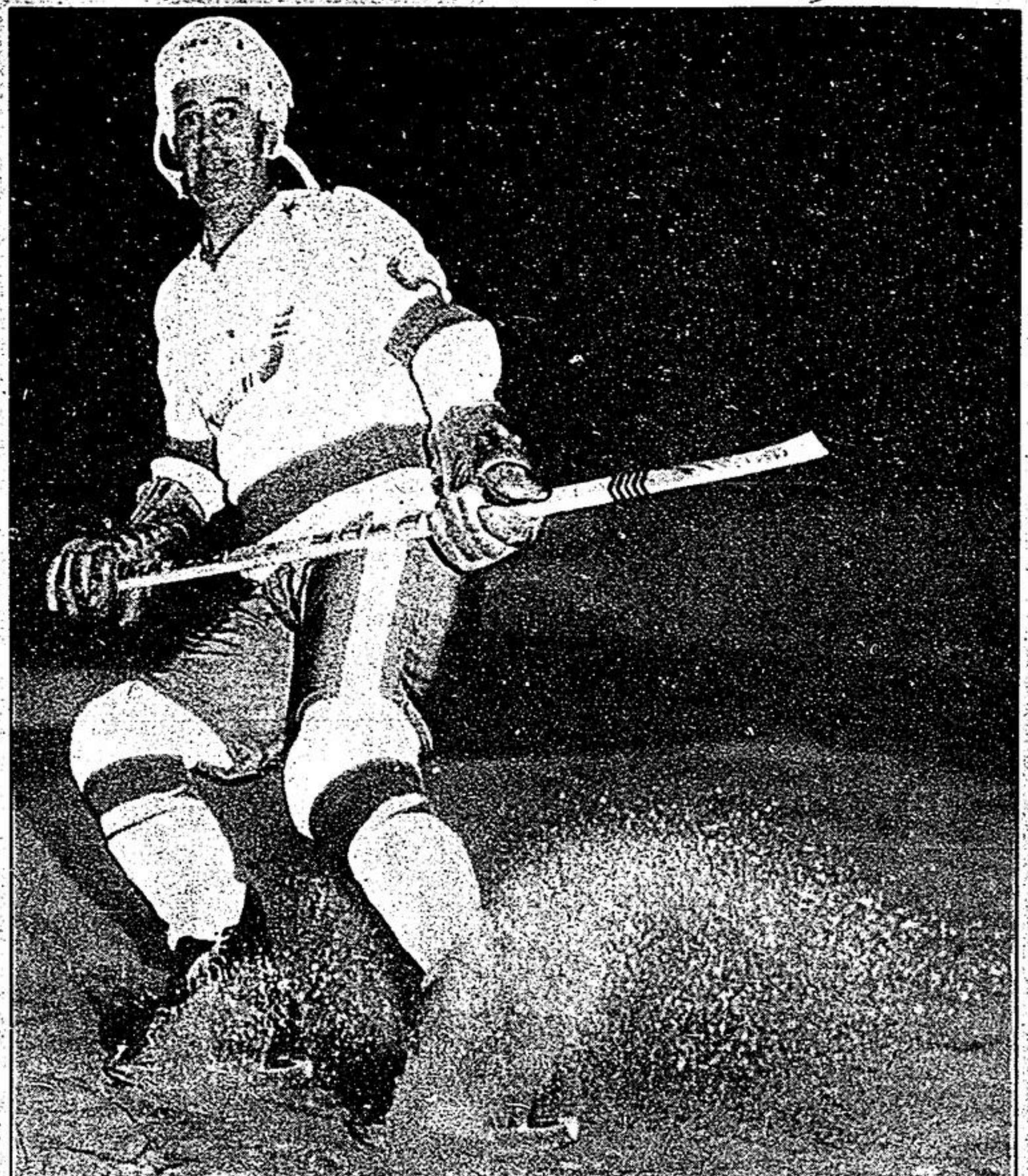
Polly spent six years as a referee, following his 'official' retirement. He was also active as a coach in the minor system through several seasons.

Polly admits he's looking forward to the Markham-Stouffville Hockey Oldtimers' Reunion in Stouffville April 29.

"Whenever the boys get together, it brings back memories and conjures up stories," he says.

"But I'm the only guy who's still playing now," he adds proudly.

Undoubtedly, there are games when defending goaltenders wish he'd retire for good — their good.



**Short stop**

Gordon 'Polly' Minton came to a quick stop during an oldtimers' hockey game in 1985. The Stouffville resident and veteran sportsman is looking forward to another oldtimers' reunion on April 29. —Jim Thomas

## Eric's life in the passing lane

By BRUCE STAPLEY  
 As you climb up into the cab of Eric Elliott's state-of-the-art Peterbilt transport tractor, you could be forgiven for thinking you had just walked into the cockpit of a Boeing 727.

The dashboard houses an endless assortment of gauges and the captain's chairs ooze comfortable elegance.

Eric's standard of cleanliness is so exact that his home away from home looks like it just rolled off the assembly line, although he bought it 18 months ago.

The Sandford resident spends five full days of most weeks either driving, or sleeping in the bunk of his \$130,000 'office'. A career trucker, he drives exclusively for Big Wheels Transport, a Prince Edward Island based freight company with a terminal in Toronto.



**On the road again**

Eric Elliott gets ready to roll in his Peterbilt home on wheels. The Sandford resident is a truck driver who hauls freight from Toronto to the Maritimes. His truck has a stand-up cabin, a clothes closet, cupboards and air conditioning.

**A good thing**

"I'm like a contract carrier for Big Wheels," says Eric. "The customer phones an order for freight to be moved and Big Wheels calls me."

Eric worked three years for Don Anderson Haulage before buying his own rig and signing on with his present company.

And as trucking goes, Eric has found a good thing.

"I usually leave the house on Saturday afternoon," he says. "All my runs are to either P.E.I., New Brunswick, Halifax or Newfoundland. My return load is always the same, flakeboard from St. Stephens, New Brunswick and I'm usually back home by Thursday. This is as ideal as you can get in the hauling business."

However, things don't always go according to plan. Delays in loading and unloading can cost him many valuable hours and it is invariably his family life that suffers.

**Adapted schedule**

His wife Darlene has managed to adapt both her work schedule and her home maintenance routine around the uncertainties of her husband's profession.

She works for a Newmarket plastic surgeon Monday to Thursday so she can spend Friday with her husband. Darlene has accompanied Eric on his Maritime runs on occasion as has son Jason. Daughter Sabrina has never accompanied Dad.

"I'd be a little concerned if she came along," says Eric. "Truck stops weren't designed for little girls." Eric insists there is a discipline required as a trucker and when he is on the road, he is all business.

**Little socializing**

"I don't mind a little fellowship with the other truckers when I'm driving," he says. "But it's easy to eat up a lot of time if you start stopping together and socializing."

Eric is particularly proud of his Peterbilt and says it is among the best on the road.

Built in Nashville, Tennessee, it is powered by a 425 horsepower Caterpillar engine and it has a 13 speed overdrive transmission.

**Fully-equipped**

And it is equipped with all the goodies — chrome package, aluminum wheels, full air-ride suspension, full stand-up bunk, air conditioning, clothes closet and cupboards.

"It's very, very comfortable," Eric admits.

He does as much of his own maintenance as possible in an effort to cut costs.

"Basically, I'm in business for myself," he explains. "Every thing comes out of my pocket, what I'm paid for each run." It can be risky business he says and it's not hard for a trucker to find himself up against the wall.

**Bidding wars**

Adding to the woes of today's trucker is the fact the freight business has become extremely competitive and bidding wars have resulted in a less than healthy rate of return for both companies and contract truckers.

"Today, the trucking industry is quite depressed," he claims. "It is so competitive that you'll see loads going down the road at rates that were in effect eight years ago."

"It will change, but there will be a lot of people hurt before it does, especially the independents and small companies."

**Time limits**

Also complicating matters is the new government legislation that came into effect January, limiting the time a trucker can spend behind the wheel.

"We are limited to driving 10 hours before we are required to

take a rest," he says. "It's definitely going to cramp my style, especially when I start at seven o'clock in the morning and have to stop at 5 p.m. I can't sleep at that time of day."

The new laws will also put a strain on truck stops already running at full capacity.

"We don't have the number of truck stops in Canada that they do in the United States. There just aren't enough shower facilities, lounges with televisions and the like," he says.

## Submit photos for baby contest

STOUFFVILLE — The Strawberry Festival Baby Contest increases in popularity each year.

The Markham Fair Baby Contest attracts dozens of entries. Out of all these 'tiny tykes' the Markham-Stouffville-Uxbridge area should have qualifiers for the Johnson & Johnson Adorable Babies Photo Contest.

Johnson & Johnson Baby Products Company is a sister firm of McNeil Pharmaceutical (Canada) Ltd., Stouffville.

Here's all you have to do: Submit photos of your child (three years old and under), along with a clever, descriptive caption under each picture. Entries will be judged on 'adorableness' of the photo and the charm and originality of the caption, not on the professionalism of the photography. Judges will select the 12 best received.

The grand prize winner will receive a \$25,000 post-secondary school scholarship. He or she will also appear on the cover of the 1989 Johnson & Johnson Adorable Babies Calendar.

The eleven runners-up will be featured in the calendar as Babies of the Month. Each will also receive a \$10,000 scholarship towards post-secondary studies.

Contest entry forms are available wherever Johnson's products are displayed. Additional information is available by calling 1-800-265-8383.

The deadline for entries is May 31, 1988. The Johnson & Johnson Baby Products Company is located at 890 Woodlawn Road West, Guelph.

## Outstanding holsteins

PICKERING — For the second time in four years, Tim O'Connor, R.R. 1, Pickering, has won the Ontario County Holstein Achievement Award.

The presentation was made at the annual Holstein Banquet, March 5 at Sunderland.

The family farm operation includes Maurice and Marilyn O'Connor along with sons and daughters-in-law, Tim and Laurel and Pat and Patti.

It's the sixth family generation on the property.

The O'Connor milking herd consists of 110 pure-bred Holsteins; 260 in total. They have 600 acres under cultivation.

Tim joined the family partnership in 1982 following graduation from the University of Guelph. The dairy herd is a main pride and joy. They grow some corn and wheat as cash crops.

As a result of the honor received March 5, Tim will advance to the East Central Ontario finals at Peterborough, and if successful there will win a trip to the World Dairy Exposition in Madison, Wisconsin.

Other recipients of Uxbridge Bank of Commerce production awards were — John Leask of Seagrave; Clarence Wilson, Uxbridge; Maurice O'Connor, Pickering; and Bill Roman, Leaskdale.

## WHAT'S INSIDE



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