

# SPORTS

**HOCKEY:** Four former National Hockey League goaltending greats paid a visit to York Region recently

## Stopping pucks was different when Hall tended goal



Bruce Stapley

giving him a decent income and extending his career.

An Edmonton resident who has worked as a part-time goalkeeping consultant with the Calgary Flames in recent years, Hall said he's disturbed by the trend today which sees so many goals called back due to video replays showing a skate in the goal crease.

"Sure the goal should be called back if there's contact with the goalie, but they're slowing the game down," Hall complained.

He also spoke of how his traditional willingness to sign autographs had lessened with the realization that the true fans were being replaced by money hungry opportunists looking to make a fast buck.

"I was fine with it until I started getting all those requests in the mail and I knew it was a scam."

### Crothers stingy in goal

Speaking of goalkeepers, Stouffville's Will Crothers is making his mark with the Aurora Tigers of the Provincial Junior A Hockey League.

The 18-year-old Stouffville District Secondary School student surrendered just 22 goals in his first seven games with the Tigers, posting a record of two wins, two losses, a tie and a pair

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I also had the opportunity to talk with Hall, who made his name while playing 502 consecutive games with the Chicago Black Hawks through the mid 1960s.

The frequent nemesis of my old Maple Leafs spoke of the pre-game routine he became noted for, that of bringing up in the dressing room before skating on the ice to assume his post between the pipes.

"I was always afraid of playing poorly," he told me.

Hall talked of how the players of his era would hang out with plumbers who were making as much or more money than they were.

"The NHL minimum salary when I broke in with the Detroit Red Wings in the mid-1950s was \$6,000, and lots of players were making that," he recalled.

Until he was drafted by the expansion St. Louis Blues in 1967, his salary had never surpassed \$20,000.

He credited the Blues with

Those of us with vivid recollections of the old six-team National Hockey League of the 1950s and 60s were faced with the reality of our advancing years last Tuesday in the banquet room of Markham's Crystal Fountain Restaurant.

For there on the dais at the Athletes in Action fundraising dinner sat an aging Johnny Bower, Gump Worsley and Glenn Hall.

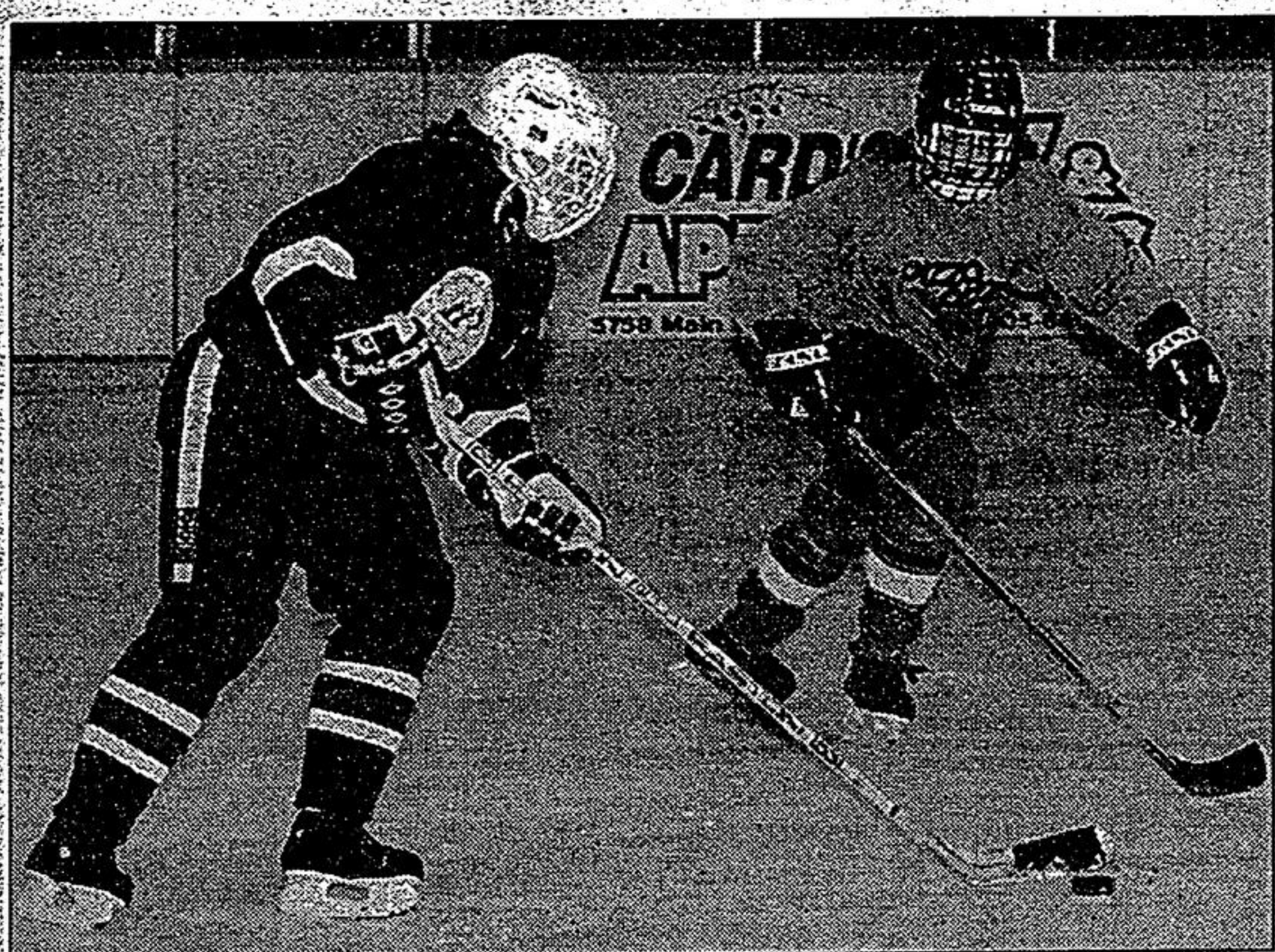
Gerry Cheevers, who made his mark after the first NHL expansion in 1967, rounded out the quartet.

Sitting around a table with a couple of young guys in their 20s, it became clear that I had become one of those old school hockey fans who would bore kids with tales of King Clancy, Teeder Kennedy and Howie Morenz back in 1961.

These young followers of Mats Sundin, Jaromir Jagr and Pavel Bure just smiled politely as Bower and his old buddies spoke of how the game was played during their time.

Back then, players earned tradesman-like salaries. As well, goalies had to be near invincible as they had no back up netminders. And back then, their faces were subject to be carved up by pucks and skates as the goalie mask was just being developed.

Like many of the old hangers on from the Maple Leafs glory days of the 1960s, I approached Bower for an autograph.



PHOTO/LORI EMMERSON

### PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

Robyn Sullivan (left), attempts to move the puck up ice while Natalie Hulshof tries to impede her progress during a recent Stouffville-Markham Girls Hockey League open practice at the rec centre on Sunday.

## Spirit left feeling Blue in Collingwood

The Spirit of Stouffville will be looking to end a four-game losing skid while regaining fifth place when they take to the ice against the Wexford Raiders Thursday at the rec centre.

The Spirit fell 6-2 to the Collingwood Blues on the road Friday in a Provincial Junior A Hockey League contest.

The fourth-place Blues built up a 4-0 lead before Kevin Edgar finally



KEVIN EDGAR Leads Spirit in team scoring

scored his team-leading 15th goal of the season for the Spirit with just seconds to go in the second period.

Mike Tucciarone cut the lead in half with his eighth of the year on a Spirit power play five minutes into the third.

But the Blues added a pair in the late going to clinch the win.

Dave Zelasko had two assists for the Spirit. Edgar also had a set up with his two points leaving him with 36, four shy of the Central Conference lead.

The Blues, who held a 43-27 advantage in shots on goal, collected four power-play goals.

The loss left the Spirit with a season record of seven wins, nine losses and

See INJURIES, page 19.

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