

Wake up, Spirit fans

Never on a Sunday. Sixty years ago, my mother wouldn't allow us kids to watch hockey, let alone play the game.



Roaming Around

with Jim Thomas

Rest, she'd say, the Sabbath is a day of rest. A decade or so later, she relented somewhat, allowing us the joys of playing pond hockey or an afternoon of scrimmage at the pit, a worked-out gravel cavern on the Roy and Lorne Grove farm near Markham.

But that was pretty much the extent of our puck-chasing during those growing-up years when wintry Sundays often seemed tiresome and tedious.

Of course, on the farm, there were always chores to do. These activities were considered necessary work, so-called labours of love extending over seven days not just six. The cows had to be milked; the eggs had to be gathered and the horses had to be fed, no questions asked.

But hockey, especially pay-to-play hockey was a sport of a different domain. It could wait another day, even another week, it didn't matter. Sticks and skates stayed stored.

Would you believe, our illustrious hockey club of the 50s called the Peach's A.C., forfeited an opportunity to win the Ontario Rural Hockey Championship because the final game against Wainfleet was scheduled for a Sunday?

It's true. I, being the organization's secretary at the time, had the unenviable task of calling the league co-ordinator and asking him, even telling him to select another date. Or else!

He refused. Our rivals took the title by default.

My bet is, this decision caused this so-in-so some sleepless nights. But my mother, bless her soul, undoubtedly slept a whole lot easier. She would know with certainty, her edict had made an impact.

But that was then; this is now. Work and play ethics have changed a lot in the last half-century, some for better, some for worse. I'm still struggling for, last Sunday, I attended my first Jr. A, hockey game of the season.

It pitted the Stouffville Spirit against the Aurora Tigers in the second game of the north conference finals. Stouffville took the opener 3-1.

Despite mom's wee voice ringing in my ears, I ventured forth, arriving at the arena 30 minutes in advance of the opening whistle. Even

then, double lines of home-town spectators, with a few Aurora beaus and belles mixed in, circled the lobby like an extended snake's tail. Fans had come to see their multi-hued heroes beat up again on the favoured bengals or, from an Aurora perspective, watch the Tigers square the count.

The visitors went home happy. The final score was 2-1. They square off here again on tonight.

As an interloper, able to tell two teams apart only by the colours of their sweaters, I was the lone observer in the house with an unbiased view of the proceedings.

Here's what I liked:

- The golden voice of Jennifer Thunem and her unaccompanied rendition of our national anthem;

- The clarity of the public address system and ungarbled announcements rendered by gondola broadcaster Jim Mason;

- The Mr. Clean décor of the arena's interior, plus the smooth-as-glass ice surface perfected by Zarrboni operator Shawn Norton;

- The brilliance of both goaltenders;

- The face-off genius of Stouffville's Will Acton;

- Officiating excellence that kept the game mostly free of fights and mostly exciting to watch;

- The upbeat personalities of Spirit staff and refreshment booth employees;

- A time clock that's easy to read and understand and;

- The \$6 admission fee for seniors.

Here's what I didn't like: the lack-lustre display of support for the home-town team, weak applause instead of rousing ovations.

I've never seen a crowd, estimated at 800-plus, so quiet, especially with the score so close. Perhaps, because it was Sunday, fans thought they were sitting in church.

Jim Thomas is a Stouffville resident who has written for area newspapers for more than 50 years.

OUR SHEPHERD'S PIE

From our frozen section this week, we're featuring our Shepherd's Pie, which to some is comfort food at its finest. We use sautéed spanish onion, our medium ground chuck and freshly peeled Idaho or P.E.I. potatoes — mashed. You just need to warm it.

Reg. \$10.95
Serves 3-4

25% OFF THIS WEEK

FLORIDA STRAWBERRIES

For those of you who were not part of the human tidal wave south this week, we've brought you a taste of it. I've been very impressed with the quality of the Florida berries this year (and last), and the price has been a pleasant surprise too!

1.99

— OVERFILLED QUARTS —

W SEEDLESS WATERMELONS

We were able to get a good load of these really nice seedless watermelons — and at a good price.

From Mexico.

.79

G GUINNESS SAUSAGES

These sausages have a stout flavor that goes with just about anything — including a little more Guinness to wash them down!

Reg. \$3.99/lb.

25% OFF THIS WEEK

C CORNED BEEF

In keeping with our Irish theme, we'll be making copious amounts of our corned beef for this week. To make this we use brisket points that have been well-trimmed, cured and seasoned in the old-time way and they're ready to cook. If your wish is to make corned beef and cabbage, we'll not only have the recipe available, we'll give you the cabbage as well.

25% OFF THIS WEEK



WHAT'S BAKING? THIS WEEK

Everything is either green — or that sweet beige colour of Bailey's.

We'll be making

ST. PATRICK'S CAKES — these are white cakes with pastel green icing, nicely decorated with an Irish accent **\$13⁹⁵ and \$18⁹⁵**

BAILEY'S CHEESECAKES — these are made with Bailey's and milk chocolate, topped with, you guessed it, Bailey's whipped cream **\$14⁹⁵ and \$22⁹⁵**

BAILEY'S CREME BRULEE **\$3⁹⁹ ea.**

LEPRECHAUN NESTS — these are chocolate meringue nests which have been filled with lime mousse **\$4⁹⁹ ea.**

MARGARITA CHEESE CAKES — not really Irish but green — back from our tropical deal by popular demand **\$12⁹⁵ and \$20⁹⁵**

SHAMROCK SUGAR COOKIES — all iced up pretty **\$2⁹⁹**

IRISH ECLAIRS — these would be our chocolate eclairs that are piped full of mint chocolate mousse **\$2⁹⁹ ea.**

CREME DE MENTHE NANAIMOS **\$2⁹⁹ ea.**

— and to add to all the Irish excitement, all these creations will be

1/3 OFF THIS WEEK

OUR SPLIT PEA AND HAM HOCK SOUP

From our frozen soup section, we'll be featuring our green split-pea soup. To make this, we use copious amounts of sweet onions, celery, the beautiful stock you get from cooking the hocks, butter, the split peas and the diced, sweet meat from the hocks.

Reg. \$6.99 container
Serves 3-4

25% OFF THIS WEEK

THE HOSPITAL NEWS

As you have been forewarned, Kevin Thistle (of Angus Glen fame) and I have been appointed co-chairs of the auction committee for the upcoming Hospital Gala.

This little note is to let you know that we'll have not 1 but 4 mystery packages — and I'm going to give you a couple of clues. On the block will be a package which includes a wine fridge filled with GOOD wine (minimum 50 bottles), a BBQ which will come with enough steak to entertain the neighbourhood (and beyond), a beauty Henckels knife set, a Lord of the Rings pass for 4 including dinner at the CN Tower, a hand-made beauty poker table with chips and a 20yr. old bottle of Scotch, and a domestic set of snap-on tools for you more serious handy people — and more!

You can't bid if you're not there. Tickets are available at the foundation office 905-472-7373

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Sat. 9:00-6:00 ~ Sun. 10:00-5:00

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