

'I've been lucky in real estate and unlucky in hockey'



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November.

It has left her wondering what might have happened.

"I've had a few ups and downs in my hockey career and I've thought about it

(the injuries) a lot," she said. "I was right up there in making the Olympic team in 2006 and my chances in making the team were good until I had that head injury in 2005. It was hard to watch the Olympics that year knowing I could have been on the team that won the gold medal."

Hockey has been a big part of Perks' life. A grandfather, Bun Kingdon, had an audition with the New York Rangers.

Playing AAA minor hockey with the Quinte Red Devils boys' teams until her bantam year, Perks was noticed by Canada's junior women's team.

At the age of 14, Perks was the young-

est member on the squad that won the gold medal at the inaugural junior women's world tournament in Lake Placid, N.Y.

A member of the national team under-22 program until her eligibility expired, Perks was also a member of Team Ontario that won gold at the 1999 Canada Winter Games in Corner Brook, Nfld.

As a member for the Toronto Aeros for 13 seasons, Perks was on 10 provincial championship squads.

At Wilfrid Laurier University, where she earned degrees in geography and sociology in 2004, Perks made her long-awaited debut with the senior women's national team in 2002 that won the title at the Four Nations Cup in Kitchener.

Undergoing physiotherapy to cure her ailing back and doing what off-ice training she can, Perks is aiming for a return to the ice this month to see if she can resume her career.

"Hopefully, my back will hold up. If not, maybe it's telling me something," she said.

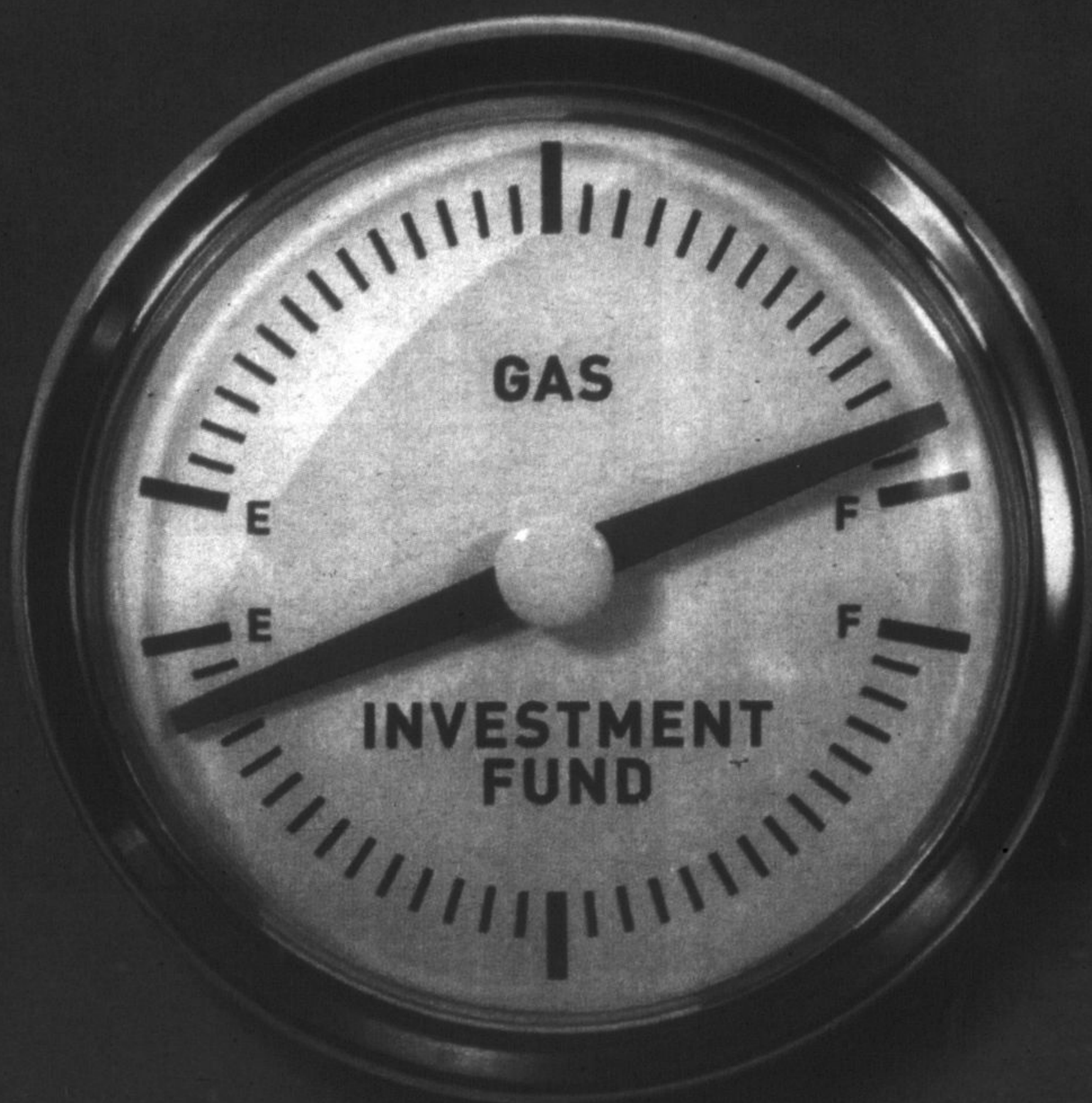
Should Perks' comeback attempt fail, she would like to coach with the Markham-Stouffville Stars organization.

At the same time though, Perks is satisfied by what she's accomplished in real estate since becoming a licenced agent in January. The flexible hours work well with hockey.

"So far things are going quite well. My goal is to make one sale a month and I'm ahead of that."

Regardless of what transpires in Perks' hockey future, she holds no regrets. Only the intrigue remains of what could have been," said Perks, who joined Royal LePage Your Community Realty in Stouffville this year.

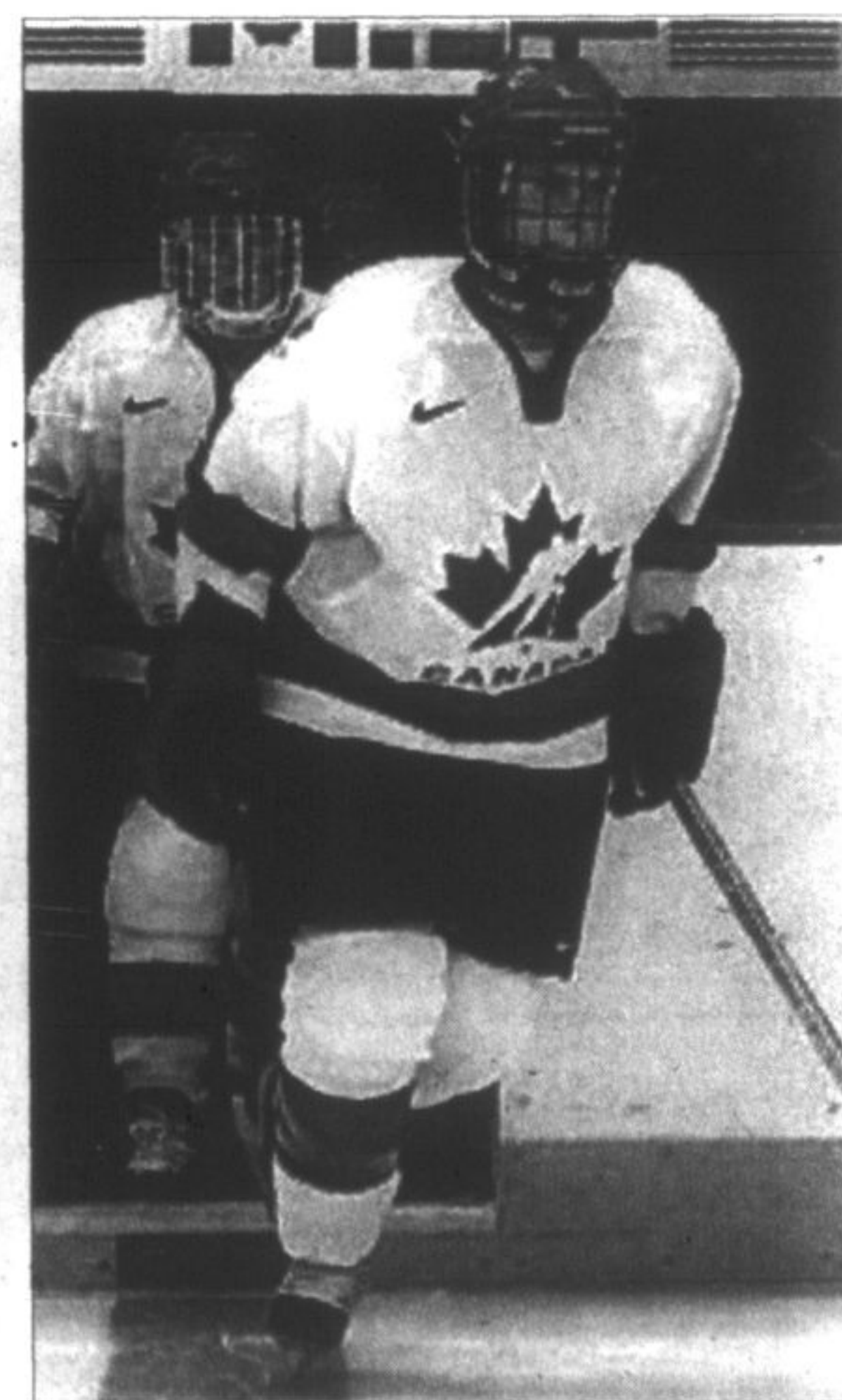
"So far I've been lucky in real estate and unlucky in hockey. But I've had a lot of opportunities in hockey and I'm satisfied. But I sometimes wonder what would have happened?" she said.



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Lara Perks skates with Team Canada before injuries sidelined her.

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