

York wins first ever CIAU hockey championship

Fifth place team knocks off number one-ranked Alberta Golden Bears to win University Cup

By EDO VAN BELKOM

The York University hockey team has been looked upon as the underdogs all year long, but the Yeomen have certainly toppled a few mountains on their way to winning it all this year. Maybe now someone will notice.

It was only when York eliminated U of T that people began to notice the Yeomen, and even then it was only because it wasn't supposed to happen that way. It was seen as an upset. After all, a fifth place team defeating a first place team is nothing but an upset to anyone who looks only at statistics.

Even when York earned the right to be in the national finals by defeating the University of Western Ontario Mustangs they were still looked upon as underdogs. But being unheralded seemed to be a benefit to the team, keeping them out of the limelight, just where they had been all year long.

According to Yeomen coach Dave Chambers, the team was looser because no one expected them to win. "It was very gratifying to be a darkhorse team," he said. "I think no one wanted to play us in the playoffs."

But the Yeomen felt they had a chance to win it all. As they continued to win in the playoffs, disposing of one opponent after another, they began to feel that this could be the year. Eighteen new players began to gell as a team. Each individual came to realize his role on the team, from top goal scorer Don McLaren to goaltender Mark Applewhaite. Even players like Dave Simurda, Steve Avery and Kevin van Sickle who didn't play regularly did their share by keeping the bench optimistic and playing capably when they were called upon. By acting like a team, this year's Yeomen won a team title. No one individual can claim the CIAU championship by himself.

The CIAU championship was a three-day event with the Yeomen playing three games in that period.

The first game York played was Friday afternoon against the surprising Ottawa Gee Gees who won the Quebec league and defeated the number two-ranked UPEI Panthers to earn a spot in the national final.

York 5-Ottawa 3

The game began slowly with each team feeling the other out, not wanting to make any costly mental mistakes. Les Smith opened the scoring for York at the halfway point of the first period, and Don McLaren put the Yeomen up by two goals eight minutes later with a backhand that floated over the sprawled Ottawa goaltender.

The two teams traded goals in the second period with York scoring the first two and Ottawa getting their pair later in the period. Rick Morrocco and Rick Simpson scored for York while Jocelyn Bolduc and Guy Charbonneau replied for Ottawa. Though he didn't receive an assist on Simpson's goal, Carl Devine made the play possible by diving to knock the puck away from the Ottawa defenseman, giving Brian Gray and Simpson the two-on-one opportunity.

Good forechecking on the part of the York forwards produced another goal in the third period. York applied pressure on the Gee Gee defencemen in their end and subsequently the puck was coughed up allowing Gray to put York ahead by a 5-2 margin. Ottawa's Rick Voisine closed out the scoring, and the game ended with York on top 5-3.

With less than five minutes remaining in the first game, Ottawa's coach Michel Boucher called for a measurement of Brian Gray's stick and the curve proved to be illegal.

York 6-Ottawa 5

Coach Dave Chambers was obviously upset by the call. "I don't like it, but it's in the rule book. That's all I'll say about it," Chambers said.

The call gave Ottawa a two-man advantage but strong goaltending by Mark Applewhaite and a little luck kept the Gee Gees off the scoreboard. On that power play Ottawa defenceman Gaetan Pellissier hit the same goalpost three times.

In the second game York was scored upon first for the only time in the tournament. Ottawa's goal came with only seven seconds left in a York penalty at 2:12 of the first period, but McLaren tied the game for York on a weak shot that Gee Gee goalie Tony Martino had trouble with. Martino didn't look sharp on the play as the puck dribbled through his pads, and he looked shaky throughout the tournament.

York went ahead 2-1 when Martino gave out a number of rebounds to Hugh Larkin who put it into the net on his third opportunity. The Gee Gees tied the game on another power play with only six seconds remaining in the first period.

In the second period, as in the second period of the first game, the two teams traded a pair of goals. York opened and closed the scoring for the period as goals by Morrocco and Adam Parsons were sandwiched around two Gee Gee goals.

The score remained tied until the 18-minute mark of the third period when Gray's stick became the center of attention for the second night in a row. The Ottawa coach decided to



SAME PICTURE, DIFFERENT TROPHY: York's trio of Captains (l to r) Don McLaren, John Campbell and Scott Magder display the University Cup and national championship banner won at Varsity Arena.

call another stick measurement on the same stick Gray had used the night before. Gray was confident over the legality of his stick since he had repaired the illegal curve, but no one thought about checking the width; the stick was too wide. "I thought they were checking the curve but they checked the width. When you buy a stick off the rack you expect it to be legal," Gray said.

What looked to be a shrewd maneuver on the part of Ottawa backfired, however, as the Yeomen broke loose with two shorthanded goals. The penalty killing pair of McLaren and Simpson not only successfully killed off the penalty but each player netted a goal as well. McLaren scored what can only be described as a pinball goal. Taking the shot from an impossible angle, the puck hit the post and bounced off an Ottawa defenceman into the net. Simpson put the game out of reach only a minute later with an empty net goal.

Although Ottawa scored with only five seconds remaining in the game it was just too little, too late, as the Yeomen had already earned their spot in the national final. The final score was 6-5 in favor of the Yeomen.

In the final game—the game for the national championship—York's

Yeomen were the underdogs for the umpteenth time in the season. Not many people expected the Yeomen to win the Ontario championship, never mind the national title against the number one-ranked team in the country, the Alberta Golden Bears, but the force that guided the Yeomen of 1985 through so much adversity all year long was with them once again on Sunday.

York 3-Alberta 2

York's leading scorer through the course of the season and throughout the playoffs, Don McLaren, was spectacular in the first period as he scored the purest hat trick possible. The Yeomen right winger scored three uninterrupted goals in a single period to give York the margin they needed to win the University Cup, emblematic of university hockey supremacy.

The first was an even strength goal, with All-Canadian goalie Ken Hodge down on the ice. McLaren simply took his time and lifted the puck over Hodge and into the net.

The second and third goals were both power play goals. On the second goal McLaren was set up on the left side as he switched wings on the power play, and converted the pass from defenceman Rob Crocock to beat Hodge on the far side. The third goal was just a matter of being in the right place at the right time as the puck was centered, hopped over the stick of Brian Gray and McLaren found himself with the puck and an open net to put it into.

Even though McLaren scored three goals in the first period, he felt a little nervous about Alberta coming back. "I didn't think three was going to be enough," the Kitchener native said. "They came back against Toronto from two and three goal deficits. They could have got the three goals on us just as fast as we got them."

Crocock deserves special credit for playing both the OUA final against Western and the national championships with a cast on his right wrist. The cast is a temporary one that could be taken off and put on, but one that still made his wrist immobile.

Crocock said his wrist didn't bother him that much, but added, "Every now and then when I took a slap shot it hurt. I couldn't move my wrist at all; direction was the main

thing. I would just try to shoot the puck at the net or make a pass on the stick. I had no power at all."

There was no scoring in the second period. Although Alberta had numerous chances, spectacular goaltending on the part of Mark Applewhaite, who has been rock solid during the playoffs, kept the Bears from Alberta off the board.

Dave Chambers called the goaltending of Applewhaite a key factor in the success of the Yeomen and says that goaltending coach Steve Knish deserves all the credit for turning Applewhaite's early misfortunes around and making him a solid net-minder.

"We saw that he had all the tools; we had to make him realize his potential," Knish said. "His confidence might have been weak in the early part of the season so we emphasized a mental game plan and improved the technical part of his game as well."

Alberta scored two goals late in the third period, the second coming, according to the referee, at 19:59 of the period, but even that gift was not enough to take the championship away from the Yeomen.

Notes: The Yeomen were undefeated this season in Varsity Arena. York defeated U of T there twice and won all their games in the CIAU tournament. . . . All the games were televised. The semi-finals were carried by TSN while the final was broadcast by CTV. . . . Don McLaren and Rick Simpson were the leading scorers of the tournament with eight points each. They had six goals and two assists, and two goals and six assists respectively. . . . Brian Gray had five points and Adam Parsons had four in the three games. . . . Most Valuable Players for York were Don McLaren, Rick Morrocco and Mark Applewhaite respectively for the three games. . . . Coach Dave Chambers said that he was pleased by the support of the fans, saying, "We got great fan support at the end of the year. We have to earn support and now that we have a winning team we look for good support for next year. . . . One of York's greatest fans donned Alberta's mascot costume during their matches with U of T. The identity of the fan will remain a secret but the mascot was often referred to as the Roberta Golden Bear.



C-R-U-N-C-H: York defenceman Dave Andreoli introduces an Alberta Golden Bear to the crossbar.