



Excilbur Sports Editor Edo van Belkom took to the ice with the 1985 CIAU Champion York Yeomen.
Photos by Roberta Di Maio

I suppose it's the dream of every Canadian boy to play in the National Hockey league, but when you reach puberty and other boys are growing heavier, stronger and smarter, that dream quickly dissolves. Now in University that dream, although put on the backburner, is still real, and the league of a young boy at heart's dreams is the OUAA and the team to play for is the defending national champion York Yeomen.

Of course, I felt a little apprehensive about actually going onto the ice with the team, but in the interest of participatory journalism, I did it anyway.

Tues. Sept. 17

I had already missed the first week of skating so I was at a disadvantage in regard to my level of physical fitness as everyone else.

After we had our little warm-up skate we had to go through a number of formal stretching exercises that require a partner in order for them to be done properly. As everyone else went off into pairs, the one thing that I didn't want to happen happened. There was an odd number of men on the ice and since it was my first day I really didn't know anybody. As a result I was left by myself, an odd man out.

As everyone else went through their routines I did my best to look as inconspicuous as possible, but assistant coach Graham Wise found me out and sent someone over to my rescue.

Coming out of the stretch in one piece we went through what is called circuit training which is a series of 10 different drills and exercises designed to test strength and agility. These went well on the first day.

With the circuit training completed there was a full speed skate of four minutes. It was at this time that I learned the difference between being in shape and being physically fit. I may look as if I am in great shape, but as I lagged far behind the rest of the pack I realized that I am not very fit.

After the first hour there was a flood, time enough to collect my thoughts and regain my wind. The second hour consisted of a scrimmage where I ended up playing defense, a position as foreign to me as goaltender. Though the opposing team came close on a number of occasions I felt proud to be able to say that they never scored a goal while I was on the ice. What impressed me the most was the speed of the game and how easy it was to be caught out of position, which happened often.

With the scrimmage over, some of last year's players tried to humor me by saying, "You looked pretty good out there," but from their tone it was obvious that they found it all fairly amusing.

Wed. Sept. 18

I had to miss practice today because of my responsibility to the newspaper. Actually, it was a godsend because my body was one big knot of pain and I found it hard just to walk.



Van Belkom to Coach Chambers: "Whaddya mean I didn't make the team?"

Thurs. Sept. 19

The last day of circuit training. On this day I made the mistake of partnering up with a guy who was too big for me. As the drills progressed and I was pushed, pulled and knocked all over the place I began to realize that my partner was just a little bigger and a little stronger than I was.

I asked him how much he weighed. He said, "Oh, about 190-195." Considering that I'm only 160 lbs, I felt a little better.

In today's scrimmage I played left wing and felt more comfortable there. I even had a shot on goal. It wasn't much of a shot but it was something of a progression.

Since I changed in a dressing room other than the Yeomen's I was in a position to witness a number of hockey players desperately wanting to make the team. It was the general consensus that the men in the Yeomen's dressing room were all but officially on the team and those in the other room had an outside chance, at best, of making the team. After the day's scrimmage, the players on the outside began their count. They counted the number of players on the ice and tried to figure out how many 'he' would keep, placing themselves in the order of guys that would be cut, or kept. The 'he' in this case refers to Dave Chambers.

One of the guys was getting a lot of ribbing from the others, being called a brown nose, for talking to 'him' more often the others felt he should. The guy denies that he has anything but justifiable queries with 'him,' of course. It is all in fun.

Fri. Sept. 20

Fridays are optional days. I optioned to stay away and my body was grateful.

Mon. Sept. 23

With circuit training over, we began with informal stretches and went right to the scrimmage. The scrimmage, for me at least, began to get physical. On one occasion I was knocked heavily into the boards but it wasn't too bad because I saw it coming and was prepared. Later in the game I was accidentally caught in the back by a stick. It was quite a shock at first because of the pain but I told myself that it was purely part of the game. Later that night I checked the spot where I had been struck, the pain had gone but a welt had surfaced.

As the selection of the team came closer the games became progressively rougher and the hitting began in earnest.

Tues. Sept. 24

I had to go to class.

Wed. Sept. 25

I had to work on the paper.

Thurs. Sept. 26

As competition for jobs was becoming intense I began to feel a type of nervous tension. The fear of being creamed or wiped out made my stick feel heavy and my skates lead-filled.

This fear was somewhat justified by the fact that halfway through the scrimmage a teammate, playing the same position that I was, was cut across the bridge of the nose for five stitches. I thought, "Why am I doing this, that could have been me."

I related this fear to some of the others and was told to relax and take my time. Following this instruction, I did settle down somewhat and as a result made some good passes that actually connected. At one time I was put on my rear in the process of making a pass, but it didn't bother me much since the pass was completed.

Practice time ended with a skate of six minutes, full out. I did my best to keep up but lagged far behind. The best I could do and as far as my personal pride could push me was to stay ahead of the goaltenders. It is a bit embarrassing to skate as fast as a goalie who was the handicap of cumbersome equipment, but it was the best I could do.

Fri. Sept. 27

Another optional day. I optioned to practice but not many others did. The coaches weren't even there to be impressed, so I left after a short skate.

Mon. Sept. 30

This was the final scrimmage for me. I had been told that once the team was selected, I could no longer skate with the team. I was a bit disheartened by this, not because I had expected to make the team, but because the goal of this experiment was to have me play for at least one shift in an exhibition game. Since my ability was not up to the level required, 'he' told me I had to stop.

This knowledge relaxed me in a way and I began to have fun. Up until then I had dreaded the thought of stepping on the ice with players so much better than myself, but now I enjoyed the fact that I had the opportunity just to play the game.

This new playing atmosphere did wonders for my game. I scored two goals during the scrimmage, the first on a blind backhand and the second on a breakaway. After the first goal went in no one was more surprised than myself. There were cheers from both benches. "I don't believe it," was all I could say. The second goal was even sweeter. As I circled across the blueline, the puck took a funny bounce and landed on my stick with no one between me and the goalie. There was no panic, no tension, I just shot the puck and it went in. Everyone roared. If



the first goal was a fluke, the second was even more of a surprise. Even 'he' noticed and had a good laugh. When I got back to the bench, some of the guys were kidding me. "He wants a spot on the team," they said.

I didn't recall much of what happened after that, only that the guys who were cut would be told immediately after the practice. It was hard to read the faces of the guys as they spoke to the coaches and then returned to the dressing room. Some said "See ya later" with quiet reserve while others said "See you guys tomorrow" with suppressed exuberance. Others just kept to themselves or muttered, "It doesn't matter," and "It's not the end of the world" to anyone who heard or cared or listen.

I spoke to Chambers afterward and he jokingly remarked that he had to take a second look at my name on the list of players 'to be cut' after I had scored the two goals, but on that list it stayed. And that was the extent of my brief but colorful Varsity Hockey career.



Just another (bearded) face in the crowd.

Basketball Yeomen in good shape for 1985 season

By GARY SCHOLICH

At this time last year, the York Yeomen basketball team had undergone a major facelift. With many new faces in the lineup, York proceeded to win 24 of its last 25 games. In the process, the Yeomen claimed the Ontario title by upsetting the then number one ranked Waterloo Warriors, before dropping the Far West Regional tournament to the eventual (CIAU) champion Victoria Vikings. This year's team remains virtually intact, with four of the five first-

stringers coming back. If there is a problem, it will be replacing (OUAA) East All-Star centre John Christensen. Reserves Jim Flack and Pete Luik opted not to return, while Bill Manos is academically ineligible.

6'1" Mark Jones will be the point guard once again, while 6'3" Ron Hepburn returns as the shooting guard. Sophomore Mike Sherwood, an impressive athlete, is also back in the lineup.

6'7" Tim Rider returns to lead the forward line along with defensive

specialist Wayne Shaw. 6'6" Jeff McDermid and 6'7" Stuart Levinsky, two newcomers who provided immediate help off the bench last year, also figure heavily in coach Bob Bain's plans. 6'6" leaper Doug Kerr also returns, and will be looked upon to carry a heavier load of playing time this year.

Levinsky is seen as a possible replacement for the graduated Christensen at the pivot. However 6'8" sophomore Louis Karkabasis is also in the picture.

Two of the four newcomers on the team are Calgary native Paul Rosenberg and Todd Singleton, son of McMaster Assistant Coach Harvey Singleton and nephew of ex-baseball star Ken Singleton.

"I expected Paul and Todd to make the team," Coach Bain said, "but we also have two futures in Dave Anderson and George Skrba.

"We are going to change our style by running and pressing a little more. We plan to use our depth and

mobility," Bain said, adding, "we will have more of a perimeter game, with Stu (Levinsky) and Tim (Rider) shooting a little more from the outside. We had a strong finish last year with 24 consecutive wins. We want to keep that cohesion going."

Before their first regular season game against Carleton, January 11, York will face many other (CIAU) playoff teams in the pre-season. Seven tournaments are on tap, five of them in western Canada.