

Sports/recreation

Carol doesn't dress in washroom anymore

By MARY FERGUSON
Times staff writer

The new goalie was blocking shots and working hard. But his teammates became suspicious when he kept dressing in the upstairs washroom with his mother.

Three days later a scrimmage came to an abrupt halt when the goalie's blond hair fell from her helmet. Hockey heresy — a girl on ice. Man the benches!

In 1973 Carol Moore, a 12-year-old goalie with two years experience, was an athletic oddity. Today she is one of 230 Mississauga Girls' Hockey League (MGHL) players tired of watching their brothers' hockey games from the bleachers.

Girls hockey is nothing new to hundreds of Mississauga players but most teams are still battling outdated attitudes which confuse biology and ability. Female Canadian hockey players got their start in 1892 when athletes from Barrie, Ontario challenged the men's national bastion of sport. Almost 80 years later female hockey players are still considered by many as figure-skating school flunkies.

The MGHL's tenth anniversary this year proves that female hormones and hockey are compatible. Spectators at the Port Credit arena October 15 will see two of 16 MGHL teams begin their 20-game season. Many won't realize one of the goalies is a slight 105 lb. high school student.

When the game is over and the pads are off, Carol is not the female facsimile of Attila the Hun but an attractive and enthusiastic athlete with incredible determination.

The MGHL is the largest organization of its kind in Canada today. Unlike many male leagues facing declining enrolments, the MGHL is financially solvent and growing with four well organized divisions of players seven to 19 years of age. Its ranks include the 1978-79 all-Ontario pee-wee champions and other experienced players who toured Finland in a seven-game schedule last February.

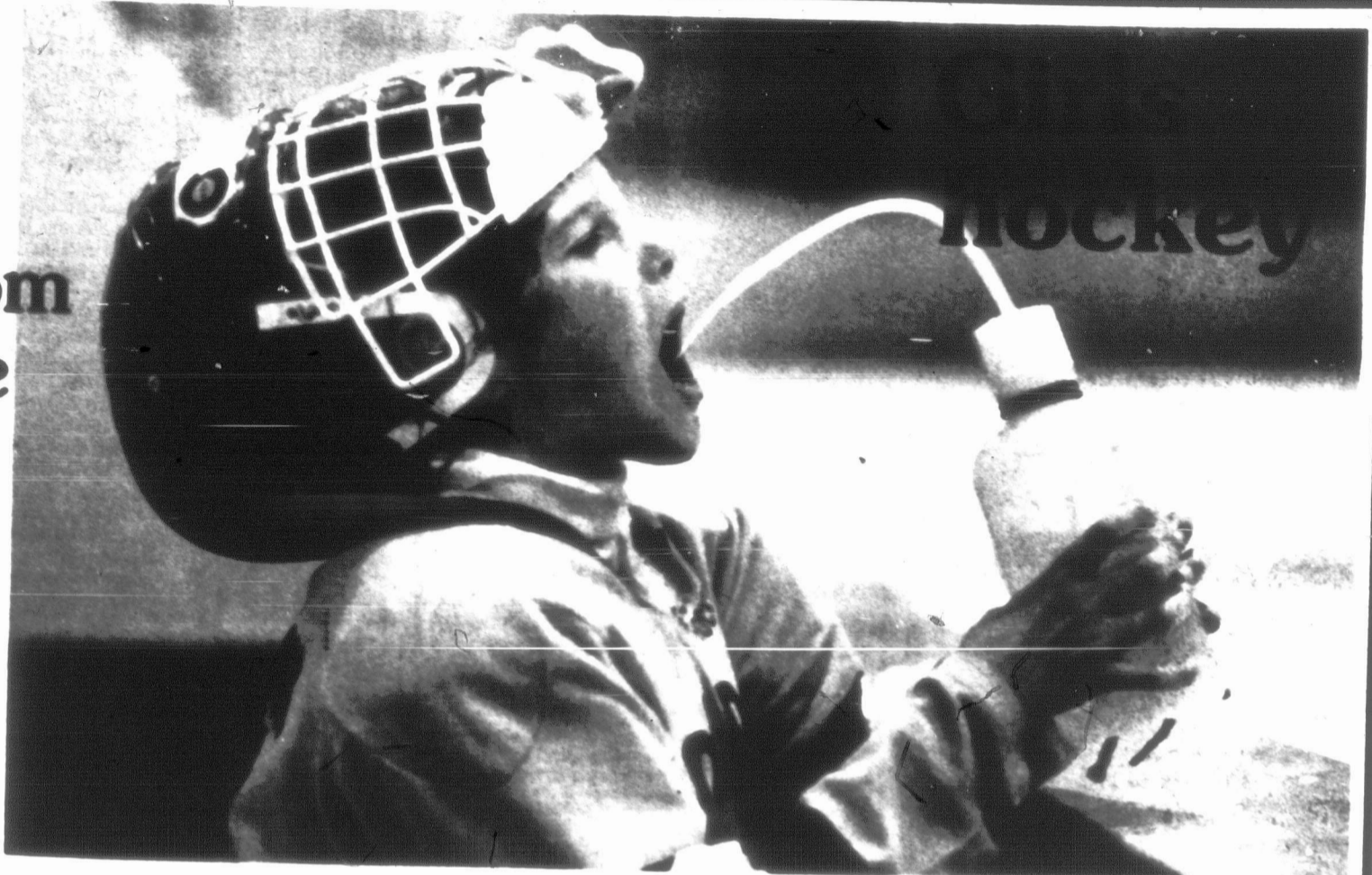
Marilyn Moore was reluctant to register her daughter Carol in the league seven years ago because she wanted her daughter "to be feminine." Now the fears of other reluctant parents anger her.

"Most of the girls come from hockey families or are the very independent sorts who bug their parents to let them play," she said. "Many parents thought they would eventually outgrow their crazy urges and conform. For some, allowing their daughters to play is like admitting defeat."

Because of these restricting attitudes most girls don't start hockey until the age of 12 or 13, when most male players have a six-year lead on them.

Summer camps and local clinics are now available across Ontario for girls willing to practice hockey with male teams. Mel Stevens, operator of Teen Ranch in Caledon, said his girls are never reluctant to join the

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Lesley Reddon, 8, is getting an early start in hockey

MORRIS LAMONT/THE TIMES

Girls are aggressive, determined

Today's female hockey player will never play for Toronto Maple Leafs but she could be more suited for the corporate boardroom than her male counterpart, according to a recent survey by Guelph University professor Evelyn Bird.

Questionnaires completed by 300 female hockey players last year show that girls with average personality variables are not found on the hockey bench.

Females who are more aggressive, determined, independent and am-

bitious tend to don hockey pants faster than their more passive, less assertive girlfriends, says Bird.

Male hockey players, who answered Bird's questionnaire, displayed fewer outstanding personality variables. Bird said the male hockey player is more likely to be your average Johnny and generally not as tough-minded or assertive as his female counterpart.

Girls had to be more motivated to encourage their parents to allow

them on the ice with stick in hand, according to Bird. Most girls playing hockey have brothers in the sport or come from larger families with athletic parents.

In testing female players from the ages of eight to 33, Bird found the younger player was more tough-minded than the mature woman picking up the sport later in life. Bird said this indicates a female hockey player has certain personality traits which are reinforced rather

than created by her activity in a body contact sport.

Bird's research was instigated by her affiliation with the Guelph University female hockey team which dominated its seven-team university league for 13 years.

The doctor claims that a winning team tends to have fewer players with outstanding achievement and assertive traits because extremes in these personality characteristics are not as beneficial in moulding a cohesive team. — FERGUSON

Bodychecking coaches are a problem

By MARY FERGUSON
Times staff writer

Celia Southward is out to find female hockey players in hiding.

As president of the Ontario Women's Hockey League (OWHL) Southward is trying to bring female hockey players off the pond and into the arena. The OWHL estimates its current membership of 6,000 represents only 10 per cent of women over 18 playing hockey in Ontario.

Two years ago the OWHL lost one of its most outstanding members, the Mississauga Indians. After several years of high calibre hockey, the team folded and all attempts to revive it have been futile.

Poor administration and lacklustre promotion have

prevented the OWHL from establishing more teams and becoming a strong leader in women's hockey, Southward said. During her second year as OWHL president she said she is "going to push forward even if it means stepping on toes" to make her league known.

Getting female players organized could mean getting men off their benches and into the stands, she said. The dominance of women's hockey by male coaches and referees has not only weakened its independence but has also caused dressing room exploitation which frightens potential players, she added.

While the OWHL doesn't allow body checking on the ice, the advances on the bench have been

worse than on the Hollywood casting couch, she said. The prevalence of young single coaches has encouraged this dilemma, she said, so the search is on for reliable, older, married men who can supplement the league's coaching needs until more women are capable of doing the job.

The OWHL's newly acquired affiliation with the Ontario Hockey Association, the governing body for male hockey, will provide the OWHL with more administrative expertise and financing for coaching clinics and publicity campaigns, she said.

"Joining the OHA will save us 50 years of headaches because they've already been through it," she said. The Ontario Hockey Council is

helping the OWHL's cause by publishing an elementary school reader illustrating the fun and fitness to be gained by girls and boys playing hockey.

OWHL members are also approaching municipal governments to provide female hockey teams with subsidies on an equal basis with male leagues, whose icetime is often cheaper. In Windsor, male teams pay \$26 an hour for ice while female teams are billed \$39, Southward said.

The OWHL's ranks have spread from smaller centres to a broader metropolitan base in recent years but 90 per cent of female hockey players are still located south of North Bay and mainly in the Golden Horseshoe.

Girls shouldn't be weighed down

Bundling up the young female hockey player for extra protection could be the most dangerous thing a parent can do according to hockey coach and researchers.

Fretful fathers, who remember their hard-hitting hockey days, could be inviting injury and discomfort for their daughters by weighting them down with extra equipment.

Guelph University researchers examining the biological differences

between males and females have found a female's body heat rises faster and is sustained longer during strenuous activity. Female hockey players should dress cooler than their male counterparts because sustained levels of excess body heat diminish on athlete's energy levels, impeding their performance and alertness, researchers said.

Female's lower centre of gravity gives them a better sense of balance,

said Guelph University's Dr. Evelyn Bird, the only researcher studying female hockey players.

While female players generally don't have the same upper body strength or muscle mass, they have greater leg flexibility derived from different tendon and ligament construction, Bird said.

Lung capacity for females is the same as males of the same body size, she explained, despite widespread

misconceptions among hockey coaches who may have confused breast size with cardiovascular capacities.

The timing, rhythm and accuracy of male and female players with similar training show little variance but the male's muscle mass often allows him the extra edge in stamina and endurance, Bird said. — Ferguson.