

Baby Habs set for season

Gauthier's retirement leaves room for Bilodeau

by Luke Peterson
Assistant Sports Editor

October is here once again, and hope springs eternal for the Fredericton Canadiens. The local AHL entry were first round play off casualties again for their third consecutive season by virtue of their defeat at the hands of the eventual Calder Cup Champion Cape Breton Oilers. Depending upon your opinion of an AHL team's mandate, the 92-93 season can be termed as either a disappointing failure or a qualified success.

By local standards, the Baby Habs post-season performance was disappointing, but perhaps inevitable given the strength of their first round opponents. Led by playoff MVP Bill McDougall, who notched an incredible 51 points in 16 playoff games, the Oilers ran roughshod over their AHL competition enroute to their Calder Cup win.

In a broader context, the Baby Habs have certainly fulfilled their role in relation to the parent club. A dozen members of last season's Stanley Cup Champion Montreal Canadiens, were groomed here in Fredericton under Head Coach Paulin Bordeleau. If the key purpose of a farm club is to develop players for the NHL, then its success is that of the parent club. Of course, local fans are often unconcerned with the development role and are interested only in the Baby Habs' success in the win column.

On that note, the local AHL entry's on-ice success may well depend upon its young defensive corps. Defensive sparkplug Luc Gauthier has retired and taken on an assistant coaching role. The loss of Gauthier, and his plus/minus ratio of +51, leaves a huge void on the blueline. Further decimating the defensive ranks, is the loss of Gerry Fleming, who has been moved back to left wing.

The Baby Habs are left with converted forward Lindsay Vallis, Marc Laniel and Christian Proulx

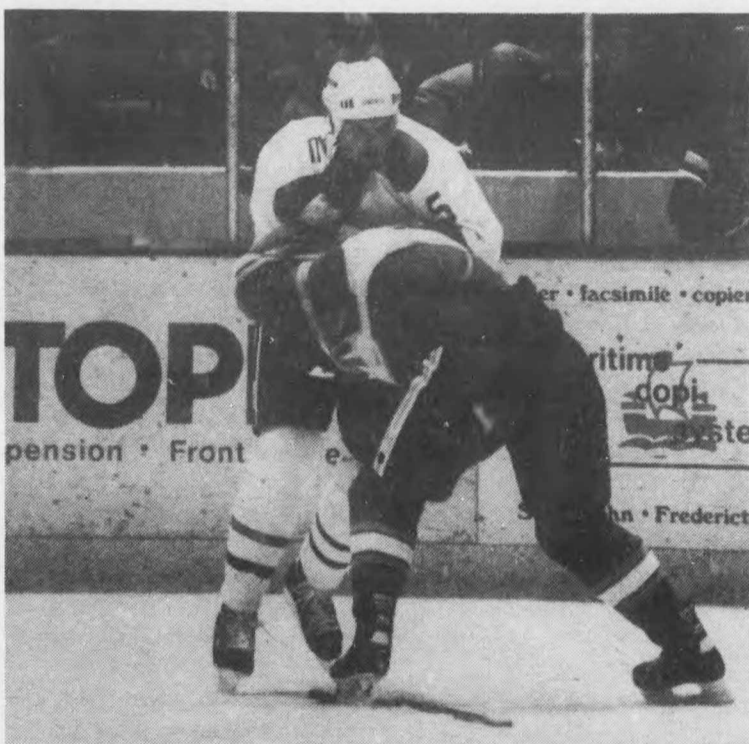


Photo Kevin G. Porter

Bilodeau (5) and Alex Nikolic do the two step Tuesday night.

as the only players with previous AHL experience on defence. Laniel and Proulx combined for a mere nine games played during the regular season last year. Along with these returnees, newcomers Christian Lariviere, Kevin O'Sullivan and Brent Bilodeau will all be given a baptism by fire on the blueline this season. Bilodeau - a hulking presence at 6'4", 220lbs. - was a first round draft choice in 1991 by Montreal.

The Canadiens have lost several key forwards from last year's squad including their top two leading scorers Steve Larouche and Pierre Sevigny. Look for Sophomore right winger Turner Stevenson to lead the offensive charge this season. Stevenson was in on all four goals, scoring two, in last Friday's exhibition opener against the Portland Pirates.

The Baby Habs prevailed as 4-2 winners in the contest played in front of 2,609 paying patrons at the Aitken Centre.

In exhibition play Tuesday evening, The Canadiens skated to a 6-6 tie with the Saint John

Flames in a rough and tumble affair that saw many solid hits and several spirited scraps. In a move that could only foster further animosity between the two squads, the Flames dressed several Saint John Senior hockey veterans including Mark Farwell, Scott Maston and journeyman tough guy Bob Kaine.

Although Farwell potted a goal and Kaine mugged Canadiens forward Donald Brashaer after Brashaer fed a Saint John forward five minutes worth of elbow, the senior players were otherwise unimpressive.

Brashaer and Turner Stevenson each notched two goals on the evening, while Craig Ferguson and Oleg Petrov added single tallies. Ferguson also contributed four assists on the evening.

Next action for the Canadiens comes up on Monday Thanksgiving Day when they host the PEI Senators in their season opener at the Aitken Centre at 2:00 pm.

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THE FRONT ROW

by Luke Peterson
Assistant Sports Editor

I attended the federal candidates forum held on campus last Thursday. One particular candidate drew considerable fire - and rightfully so, in my opinion - for espousing disparaging comments about foreign students. This all has been duly noted in the Daily Gleaner, but for the benefit to those who missed it, it was reported that the candidate in question "received the most vocal reception - boos and calls for her to resume her seat. That happened when she said it's a 'disgrace' that Canadian students must go to the bank to prove themselves worthy of a loan when foreign students are 'so well taken care of.'"

It is not my intention to bring any more undue attention to the above comments, they are reprinted so that the reader can compare them to the following comments, made by a prominent Canadian sports figure. Hopefully the reader can draw his/her own conclusions.

"No, I'm not a racist. I'm pro Canadian. I'm very, very sick of Canadians not putting Canadians first. For instance, at the draft, I see Canadian boys down there having good years as juniors, but they never get drafted. They choose the foreigners."

The words belong to Don Cherry. Read the last two sentences again and digest their apparent meaning. They are a response to the question: "are you a racist?", posed by writer Linda Barnard from Modern Women Magazine. Excerpts from the interview, including the above, were reprinted in the Toronto Globe and Mail on Friday October first.

It would seem that Cherry's comments, which are of an incredibly similar nature to those made by the aforementioned Federal candidate, are not interpreted as being racist, because they are wrapped in the flag of his self-proclaimed "pro Canadianism". In other words, Don Cherry seems to deem it acceptable to rally against "the foreigners" (Cherry's words not mine), so long as it is done in the name of Canada and Canadian sport.

His desire to keep out so-called "foreigners", runs absolutely contrary to the principles of the "Canada" that I am a proud citizen of. Canada's commitment to toleration and its strong tradition of multiculturalism makes our country the envy of most civilized nations.

Student Union President James Van Raalte was quick to rebuke the federal candidate for the offending remarks. I would like to rebuke Don Cherry for his remarks. I do not subscribe to his view of Canada and find it particularly distressing that Cherry's comments might be misconstrued by Non-Canadians as reflecting the opinions of the general population of Canada.

On a different and far less serious note: Oftentimes the weekly format of the Brunswickan makes it impossible to write about events that have not already graced the pages of daily newspapers. Any sporting event that takes place after our Tuesday deadline cannot be reported in our Friday issue and must therefore be relegated to appear in the following Friday's issue. This rather common scenario often results in a gap of as many as ten days between the event's occurrence and the subsequent appearance of an article chronicling the event! Certainly one could argue that after a period of nine or ten days, some of our articles have begun to acquire considerable historical value. It is our obligation, nonetheless, to continue to report sporting results that appear to be somewhat antiquated, at least by daily paper standards.

Despite the obvious disadvantage of a weekly format, the *Brunswickan* is on an equal footing with the dailies when it comes to human interest stories and previews of upcoming sporting events. It is our department's hope to not just merely relate details of the games, but rather to acquaint the reader with the personalities of the athletes whose names grace these pages. Perhaps this approach will lead to a situation wherein the average student will find it easier to relate to the campus sporting scene and the coaches, athletes and support staff who comprise it.

The Fredericton Canadiens are back for another season in the AHL and while there is plenty of optimism in the air at the Aitken Centre, there will not be plenty of second hand smoke. Local hockey fans will no longer be doing their lungs a disservice by attending games this year, thanks to a long overdue new smoking policy which restricts smoking to the two bars and two designated smoking areas outside the building. Anyone having attended past AUC events can certainly testify to the often overwhelming levels of smoke in the corridors. Canadiens promotions director Russ Newton acknowledges that while some fans have voiced their disdain for the new smoking policy by cancelling season tickets, any loss of revenue has been mitigated by new customers who, because of allergies or asthma had been previously unable to comfortably attend Canadiens games.

The Federal election is just around the corner and while I cannot promise to cut any helicopters, it seems like an opportune time to issue a couple of promises of my own, regarding upcoming features in this column. Firstly, as a follow up to last year's plea for the resurrection of the UNB Red Bombers football team, you can expect to see another column devoted to this issue in the near future. To distinguish it from last year's "A Case For Football", we will dub this one "part two" (full marks for originality). Secondly, if our lawyers approve it, keep your eyes open for a blatant rip-off. Tentatively titled "Sportswump" this column would be somewhat of a digression from the sports scene, allowing us to gripe and complain about everything from the Student Union to a small town in Ontario. See you in two.

UNB Yeowomen Soccer

vs.

Université de Moncton

Friday, October 15, 1993

6:00 pm

Chapman Field

Come out and watch the Yeowomen kick some grASS!

UNBelievable!