

Managers unsung heroes on winning team

Many dedicated individuals on campus doing valuable behind the scenes work

Chances are you've never heard of Jim Stambaugh.

For that matter, you'll probably never hear anything about him. Not knowing won't even bother you.

He isn't a noted athlete, scholar or even a fuzzy-faced radical. He's just the lowly manager of the Golden Bear hockey team—the guy who picks up the soiled towels.

If the team wins another national championship, it will bring campus and public recognition to everybody on the club—everybody, that is, but the manager.

It is only within the immediate confines of the team that his true value is appreciated. He is an integral cog in the wheel of success of any club.

Jim is one of a number of individuals on campus, male and female, who serve in the much beleaguered managerial positions. His job is typical of them all. Those that handle the other posts are as deeply devoted as Jim to this extremely challenging position.

... must have the firmness of King Kong

To be a manager you must have the insight of a mother, the patience of a mummy and the firmness of King Kong. You must be able to exist on a minimum of sleep and a maximum of work.

Jim served a two-year apprenticeship leading up to this year's senior position. Following in Jim's footsteps is his assistant John Blackwell.

They are the first ones out to the daily practice and the last ones to leave. This means arriving shortly after classes at 4:30 p.m. and sticking things out until the last tardy athlete drags his butt out of the dressing room at around 7 p.m.

In the meantime, Stambaugh and Blackwell perform a host of duties. First of all there are sticks to tape, laundry to be done and equipment to be mended.

Soon, the players begin to trickle in. The early comers are usually the walking wounded who need

various types of minor medical help so that they might participate in the practice.

Ice packs are needed and the hydroculator must be heated to prepare the heat compresses. There are gimpy knees to be taped and shoulders to be braced. And then there is always the hypochondriac whose main need is a swift kick in the constitution.

When the main crops of players arrive, the demands become almost unbelievable. "... Stambaugh I need a lace... Where's my underwear... hey, I need a new practice stick... do you think I should take out Mary Elles or Linda Sue on the weekend?"

A GATEWAY SPORTS FEATURE

Story and Photos by Bill Kankewitt

The helter skelter pace keeps up for nearly half an hour.

Ten minutes before ice time, coach Drake scurries into the madhouse to do his skates. While lacing up, he fires a volley of questions at his managers to gain awareness of the current situation. "Who's hurt... where's Wiste... did the new sticks come in..."

Once filled in, the coach is quick to respond with the plans for the day's practice and what help he will require from the managers. Sets of brightly colored practice jerseys are to be handed out to the assigned lines. Each line or set of defenseman is to sport a different color. Pylons are to be taken to iceside ready for use in skating drills.

Jim is informed that he is to play the role of referee late in the practice as Drake wants his centers to practice face-offs.

While Drake puts his charges through their warm-up exercises, the managers are busy folding towels, replacing sticks and filling the water bottles. During scrimmage, charts are maintained to keep track of the individual player's performance.

At 6:30 p.m. practice is over and the work really begins.

Jerseys are shed anywhere, equipment is thrown helter skelter and the boisterous shouts of the players drown out the managers' pleas for neatness and order.

There are players to untape and new hurts to treat. The floor must be cleaned of equipment or the janitors will refuse to do the floors.

Afterwards... well, a cold supper and an abbreviated evening at the books.

Jim, who already possesses a physical education degree, is a second year grad student in educational guidance. John is a second year science student from Kimberly who has designs on medical school. Both are top students.

... time taken up by studies and managing

Jim is newly married and finds the time taken up by his studies and managerial duties leaves him a minimum of time at home. But his wife, Elaine, is a secretary in the physical education department which gives her a good understanding of Jim's desire to help the team.

However, they will have plenty of time together next fall when Jim heads back out to his home country around Bruce, Alberta to embark upon a teaching career.

On the other hand, John is single, living in residence, and finds the demand on his time excessive. His marks must be A-1 if he hopes to make it into medical school.

The toughest times for the managers are the weekend road trips which see them perform the most important of their duties. Tight financing permits only one manager making most trips. The other must sit at home sweating out the final results of the game until the late sports news on the radio makes or breaks his day.

On the road, the manager must handle airline tickets, meal money, pay all the bills (ie. hotel and taxi), charter buses and in general be a sheep-dog to a flock of 18.

Bed checks must be made, lost players must be found, and hotel managers who fear their building will be destroyed must be calmed. Team meals must be ordered and wake-up calls must be placed. Rounds of the rooms are made to stir up players who would rather sleep than eat.

When the game is on, the manager takes his place at one end of the players' box and mans the gate. He has to be alert to the player changes and be able to provide instant first aid to players and equipment. Time is valuable when the game is in progress.

If the headaches of managing are so many, why then would an individual undertake the position?

The answers are simple and quick. A love for the game... a love for the team... and the feeling of being an integral part of a complex machine. While the concrete rewards of the position are few, the intrinsic values are many.

... satisfaction of a job well done

Great friends are made—there is the thrill of victory and the satisfaction of a job well done.



HEAD MANAGER JIM STAMBAUGH

... arranging the Bears' uniforms

One aspect of the manager's job that usually goes unnoticed is the close liaison they provide between the coach and the players.

The managers are aware of the players' problems and at times can give the coach a better feel for the situations at hand. If players are hampered by scholastic, personal or injury problems it is best that the coach is cognizant of them so that he is able to act accordingly.

... managing does have its lighter moments

All is not blood, sweat and toil for the managers as they too can have their lighter moments. None of the managers the Bears have had over the past ten years have been whiz bangs at the sport of hockey.

However, every once in a while a manager will suit up for practice and try to match licks with the players. A classic incident occurred four years ago when manager Art Hooks donned the blades for a practice.

He jokingly asked coach Drake that if he managed to pot a couple of goals in scrimmage, would the

coach let him play the coming weekend in Denver.

Hooks scoring two goals in scrimmage was about as likely as Tiger Goldstick winning the world heavyweight boxing title. Coach Drake agreed and the rest of the story is history. People in Denver to this day are trying to figure out what that fat bow-legged skater was doing in a Bear uniform.

Stambaugh and Blackwell got their big chance to take to the ice lanes two weeks ago in Victoria. The team was shorthanded for the series against the pushover coast squad so Drake decided to dress the dynamic duo for a taste of action. Although hockey scouts aren't breaking down their doors, it is said that the two turned in a credible performance.

It can't be said that the managers are without a sense of humor.

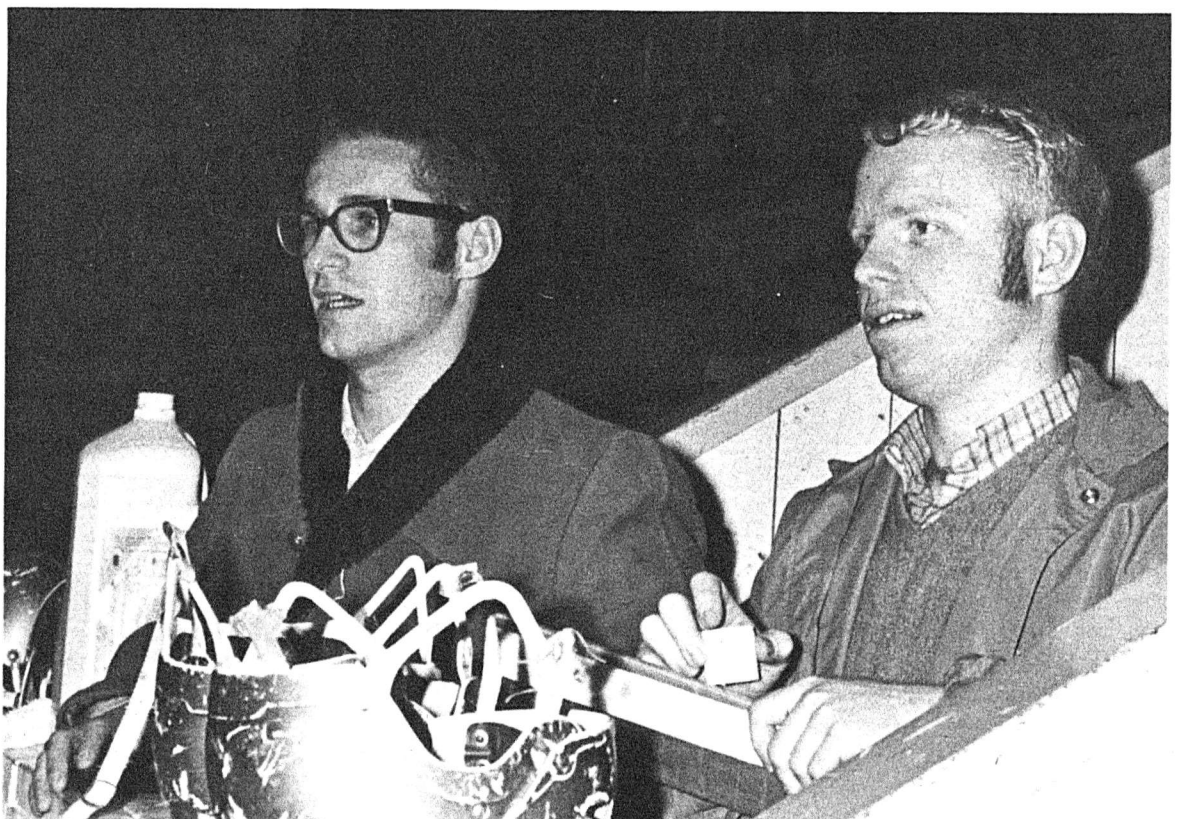
Bear defense star Mike Ballash who had just got married at Christmas received a telegram from John who was home in Kimberly for the holidays.

Read at the reception, the telegram said, "... this is one time you will have to manage by yourself Mike."



JOHN BLACKWELL

... taping up



A BRIEF MOMENT OF RELAXATION FOR STAMBAUGH AND BLACKWELL

... one of the few they manage to get