

# S P O R T S

## Yeowomen take OWIAA crown

By JAMES HOGGETT

It was a long time coming, four years to be exact, since the hockey Yeowomen last won a championship. However persistence finally paid off for the Yeowomen as they captured the OWIAA championships last weekend by downing McMaster's Lady Macs 6-5 in the final game of their three game series.

The Yeowomen earned their berth into the OWIAA finals by defeating the Toronto Lady Blues in the semi-finals by a score of 3-2 in overtime. The goal scorers for York were Kelly Vanderhillart with two, her second being the game winner in overtime, and Bonnie McMaster with the single.

"It was a sweet victory for us beating Toronto," said York's co-captain Trin Pettingill. "I think beating Toronto was 50% of our goal for the playoffs." U of T had made it to the finals the nine previous years.

The first game of the finals was played at York's Ice Palace. The score was tied at three after three periods. In the overtime York's Vandenthillart scored her second goal of the game to give the Yeowomen a 4-3 victory and a 1-0 lead in the best of three series.

The series then moved to Dundas Arena, located in the town of Dundas just outside Hamilton, for games two and three.

In game two the Yeowomen did not fare as well as they did previously in game one as the Lady Macs dominated the game. The result was York losing 2-1 in overtime, their first defeat of the playoffs.

Game three was a different story however, as the Yeowomen, except for a few lapses, outplayed and out-hustled McMaster.

York jumped out to an early 2-0 lead on goals from Judi Gilbert and Kim Downard before the Lady Macs quickly tied the game up with two goals of their own, the second one coming while they were short handed.

Both teams then exchanged goals, York's goal coming from Debbie Maybury on the powerplay. The second period ended with both teams deadlocked at 3-3.

This set the stage for the climatic third period which saw the Yeowomen explode with three goals, one from Judi Gilbert and two from Kelly Vanderhillart in the span of six minutes.

Two minutes later McMaster answered with two quick goals of their own, 37 seconds apart from



**JAMMING IT IN:** York's Debbie Maybury (No. 18) pokes the puck past McMaster goaltender Kathleen Topolseck. The powerplay goal put the Yeomen ahead to stay.

each other, and the Yeowomen looked rattled as their play began to get sloppy.

"I think it was just that we were trying to protect our three goal lead and we let up on the pressure a bit," said York goalie Connie Wrightsell.

York coach Sue Gaston agreed adding, "Mac's a good team and you should never count them out, no matter how big of a lead you have. We just got too defensive and they took advantage of this."

Despite the late third period surge by McMaster, York held on to defeat Mac by a score of 6-5, thanks to some superb goaltending from Wrightsell.

Wrightsell, who was also selected to the OWIAA All-Stars along with teammate Jane Clegg, was very pleased with the team's performance throughout the series. "I think as a team we played really well," said Wrightsell. "It was a tough series and I think it could have went either way."

"It was a very tough series," said Vandenthillart who scored four goals in the three game series. "I think it was the hardest playoff series

I've ever had to play. You really had to work hard every minute of the game."

Lady Mac coach, Lois Cole, was understandably very disappointed over her team's loss. "It was a good hard fought series and it could have gone either way as both teams were fairly evenly matched," Cole said, "What hurt us the most was our slow start in the third period which caused us to fall behind 6-3, which proved to be too big of a lead for us to overcome."

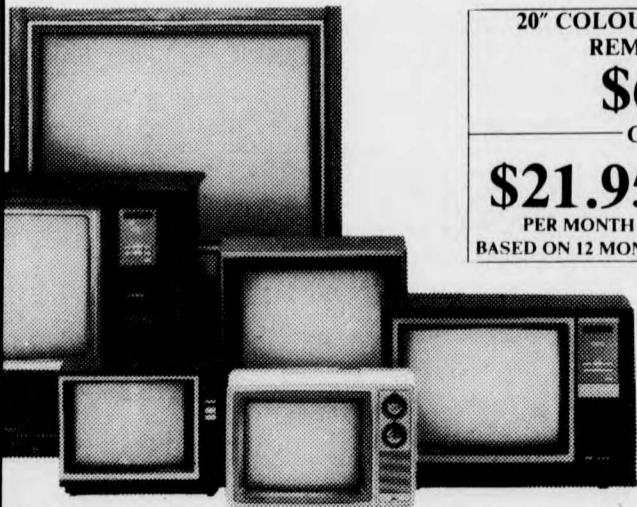
Sue Gaston summed up the series by saying, "we played well enough to win but I felt we had the potential to play even better. We slipped and got a little sloppy every now and then and that it something that you can't do against a good team like McMaster."

Next season will be a rebuilding year for the Yeowomen as they may possibly lose seven veteran players from this year's squad. "We'll have a fairly good nucleus to build from," Gaston said, "and we should make the playoffs but I think we will be hard pressed to repeat this year's performance."



**COME TO MAMA:** The OWIAA trophy is cradled by Yeomen co-captains Kim Downard (left) and Trin Pettingill.

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