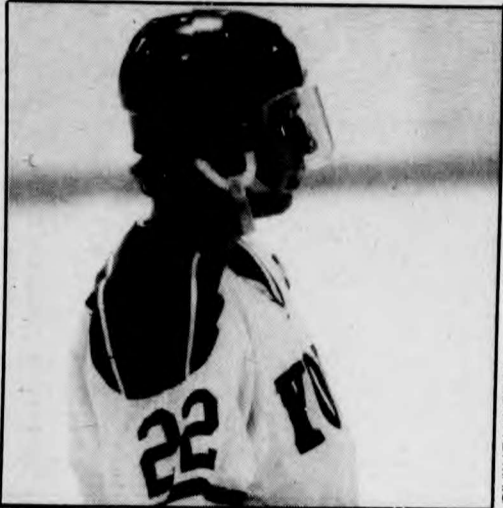


# Sharpshooter skating for Olympic berth

By LORNE MANLY

The first impression one gets from Don McLaren is that he is a hockey player with a difference. There aren't too many people who have been asked to sign their autograph on a Swiss fan's forehead—with a magic marker.



Don McLaren: Olympic bound?

McLaren is a hockey player who places a high value on education. He gave up an opportunity to play in the Edmonton Oilers' farm system this year in order to get a university education. He is also the leading scorer for the York Yeomen and a likely candidate for Canada's Olympic team in 1988.

McLaren is a 21-year old right-winger who was born and raised in Kitchener, Ontario. He chose York for its business program and because of Dave Chambers' good reputation as a hockey coach. He attends university with the help of a Hockey Canada Scholarship and to retain his eligibility for this scholarship, McLaren must continue his post-secondary education and be firm in his commitment to the Olympic team.

Last year as an overage junior, McLaren played with the Ottawa '67s of the Ontario Hockey League, where he led the team in scoring in their championship.

Making the jump from the OHL to the OUAAs requires that certain mental adjustments be made for players that are used to being in the spotlight.

"There's a lack of prestige and exposure (in the OUAAs)," McLaren said. "It's not exactly standing room only for the game."

McLaren also feels that the level of play suffers when the stronger teams are required to play the teams at the lower rung of the standings like Ryerson and RMC.

"It's hard to get up for games like that. It tends to put one's development on hold," McLaren said. "In this game you can't be static for too long, you have to keep moving forward."

McLaren may feel that some of the compe-

tion in the OUAAs can hinder a player's development, but his experiences over the Christmas holidays can do nothing but help him improve. McLaren played on the Canadian team in the Spengler Cup in Switzerland and after winning that tournament, flew back to Canada to compete against the Moscow Dynamos in five games, playing both of Team Canada's wins in the 10-game series.

McLaren's most acute observation from the tournament in Switzerland was the amount of respect Canadian teams are given overseas and, as a result, the pressure can at times be overbearing.

"Canada is still the place of hockey supremacy for the Swiss," McLaren said. "Just being Canadian is all that matters."

McLaren is modest when he talks about the most thrilling game he has ever played, against the Russians in the final game of the tournament. Canada was down 3-1 going into the third period, came back in dramatic fashion to tie the score with 1:40 remaining in the period, and then scored the winning goal with only 40 seconds left in the game, to become the tournament's victors. It's only after he's been asked if he scored any goals in that game that he mentions he had a hat-trick. But even then he's quick to point out that he didn't score the winner, only the first three goals.

After the tournament, McLaren flew back to Canada and played in five of the remaining six games against the Moscow Dynamo. The Russians were "just awesome, magical.



Coach describes McLaren as a superb goal scorer with great leadership qualities.

At times you felt they were just toying with us." But the series was good grounds for evaluation and also gave Dave King, coach of Team Canada and the Olympic team, a closer look at McLaren's considerable talents. McLaren is hoping to be a part of the Olym-

pic team that will assemble next year at the University of Calgary. A permanent Canadian Olympic hockey team is the first step, King feels, to strengthen Canada's contingent at the Olympics.

McLaren is not considering the NHL at this time. In his opinion, the "university and Olympic route is more viable." But he would still love to play in the big leagues one day.

"It would be a perfect progression if I could go to the NHL after the Olympics," McLaren said.

McLaren was drafted by the Vancouver Canucks in the ninth round of the 1982 draft and has been invited to both the Chicago Black Hawks' and Edmonton Oilers' training camps. It has been a story of bad timing each year, where each team had just come off very successful years and the chances of a rookie cracking the roster were slim.

This year he passed on the Oilers' camp because he would be sent to the minors anyway, and decided to concentrate on his studies at university.

His most memorable experience from these training camps came in Vancouver, when McLaren's abdomen was introduced to the stick of Tiger Williams. The blow floored him, but he got back on his skates only to have the Tiger threaten to poke his eye out if he got close to him again.

Don McLaren is the type of hockey player a coach loves to have on his team. As Coach Chambers says, "He works hard, practices hard, has great leadership qualities, plays

both shorthanded and on the powerplay, and is a superb goal scorer." Chambers also feels that with his excellent work ethic and hockey skills Don McLaren will be successful with the Olympic team of 1988 as well as the Yeomen team of '85.



ROBERTA DI MAIO

## Beating Soviet midgets almost as much fun as U of T win: Chambers

By EDO VAN BELKOM

While most of us were celebrating Christmas, New Year's, Hannukah, or just plain celebrating, York's Yeomen hockey coach Dave Chambers was busy coaching Canada's finest midget-aged players and European professionals.

Chambers coached the Ontario midget all-stars against the best 15-year-olds the Soviet Union had to offer, and thumped them soundly by scores of 13-2 and 12-1.

Happy with his team's performance, Chambers says that a win over the Soviets is almost as satisfying as a win over U of T. Chambers was a little disappointed with the performance of Russia's best.

"I've seen teams of Soviet 15-year-olds play much better than that," the coach said.

One might think Chamber's involvement in coaching at the midget level (16- and 17-year-olds) might entice some talented hockey players to attend York University in the future.

"No, it certainly doesn't hurt, but it wasn't to be used as a recruiting tool," said the Yeomen coach.

Because of his Ontario coaching commitments, Chambers missed the training camp of the Spengler cup squad, but arrived in time to assist Olympic coach Dave King in coaching the Canadian team to victory in the Tournament.

"There are always things to be learned from coaching different teams in different situations," Chambers said of his varied experience.

There was a lot of media attention for both tournaments, on television and in print—the type of attention that might someday lead to a career as a coach in the NHL—but Chambers no longer has aspirations of coaching at the big league level.

"No, 10 years ago I might have considered it, but I'm happy here coaching the hockey team and co-ordinating men's athletics," said Chambers.

# Coaches insure athletes keep academic balance

By MEL BROITMAN

"The philosophy at York is that we should strive for athletic excellence within an excellent academic base. We believe in the student-athlete," states Stuart Robbins, Chairman and Director of Physical Education and Athletics at York University.

The focal point of this statement is the key phrase "student-athlete." This expression is reiterated time and time again by athletic officials at York. It is at the core of York's attitude towards athletics and education. The university is continually striving to maintain a balance in the two areas and it is not an easy task. "There is constantly a gray line," Robbins says, "and it may change from sport to sport and athlete to athlete."

There are minimum restriction levels that student-athletes must adhere to in order to compete at the CIAU level. Each ongoing student-athlete must pass the equivalent of three full courses in the preceding year to be eligible for the next. During the period of athletic involvement the athlete must be carrying the equivalent of three full courses, but at York the University attempts to do more than just abide by the set minimum regulations. The institution is constantly concerned with the deeper integration of both athletics and education.

If one wishes to see whether a university is serious about academic and athletic integration, one only need look at the full-time coaches employed by the institution. At York, almost all full-time coaches have academic appointments. This is perhaps the key ingredient of the student-athlete philosophy because these full-time coaches can help monitor the actual academic balance of the athletes. Conversely, there are a number of Canadian universities that hire many full-time coaches from outside the institution, whose responsibilities are exclusively oriented around athletics. Unfortunately, this practice leads to a segregated view of education and athletics. With full-time people (such as York's) the coaches are directly aware of what a university is all about, and, in fact, several coaches at York have their own academic criteria and system. The players on their team check directly with those coaches in

fulfilling their academic responsibilities. According to Robbins, the York coaching system accentuates its philosophy.

As with athletic scholarships, there is always a danger of tipping the balance away from education, but there are a number of checks that institutions can enforce to prevent academic abuse. Of course, the CIAU minimum regulations are one check point, but the university also has a responsibility to constantly reinforce the coaches' awareness of equally important academic programs. Other factors bearing heavily on the student-athlete include the length of the playing schedule, the time away from school, exhibition or tournament play, and practice time.

Concerning practice time, York has particular difficulties due to its lack of facilities. Consequently there is less time allotted to practice, and because of rotating teams, an uneven schedule is created, thus complicating further the student-athlete's timetable.

Athletes today require a tremendous commitment in both time and energy, and Stuart Robbins sees practice time as essential to the success of the student-athlete. "In order to succeed, you have to budget time and be goal-oriented. The coaches in university should be trying to think of and study effective practice times, weighing quality versus quantity and dressing organization and intensity," Robbins says.

A great deal of the university population is oblivious to the challenge that many of the student-athletes face. A common problem for the dichotomous student-athlete arises when they are perceived strictly as athletes. The problem is similar in reverse, when they are seen solely as students without any understanding for their athletic endeavors. York football coach Frank Cosentino is implementing a program with his team that will help to create better understanding between athletics and education.

Cosentino experienced previous successes during his tenure at the University of Western Ontario where he arranged for a Faculty Advisor to attend each home game. The advisor also attended practice on Friday night and was invited to the dressing room to watch the players go through their pre-game routines on game day itself. The advisor remained with the

athletes during the entire game, sitting along the sidelines and in the dressing room at half-time.

According to Cosentino there are many benefits to such a program. Quite often individuals connected solely with academics are unaware of the large commitment and dedication of the athletes. In this way a particular faculty member can observe first hand the athletes in action and their perseverance in the face of pressure. The program also sets up a future reference point for many of the players and helps to develop a greater rapport between athletics and education.

Is there pressure on the university to excel in athletics? If so, Stuart Robbins claims it is only internal. "Athletics are a visible product of the university," he says. "There is no pressure, but from ourselves. We would like to do as well as we can."

The football team is a good example of this point. A year ago there was some discussion of whether to cut the program altogether or upgrade it to the level of other schools. The University, conscious of its public image, wisely chose to improve the entire gridiron program.

York is also conscious of its responsibility to provide recreation for the entire university community. Once again another balancing act is underway, as any stress on athletics results in a loss of recreation and vice versa. "Athletics and Recreation are both university programs. We happen to have the privilege of delivering them both to the campus. We have a much wider responsibility than to ourselves," says Robbins.

When speaking with Stuart Robbins, it is difficult not to conjure up the image of him as a juggler. While constantly rotating athletics, recreation and academics, it is impossible not to have one of these categories hanging in the air for a time. Robbins himself admits that satisfying the majority is wholly dependent upon the good will of the people involved.

It is ironic that the Tait MacKenzie Athletic Center is located at the far north-west corner of the campus. It is a building that stands for and works toward York's commitment to academic and athletic integration. Symbolically, if not physically, it lies at the heart of York University.

(Last of series)