

SPORTS

Hot goalie burns Bears

From page one.

While being outshot 10-5 in the first period, the Bears actually outplayed the Stingers and took a 2-1 lead. Goalie Ken Hodge made several hard saves and it looked like goals by Bill Ansell, Parie Proft and John Reid, in the second period, would be enough offense to hold off Concordia. But, as the Stingers became stronger the Bears wore down, making mental errors in their own zone and making errant passes that resulted in better-than-average scoring chances for the Stingers.

A Mark Kosturik goal in the fourth minute of the mini game proved to be the final blow that put the Bears down and out for the count. The speedy little (5'8") left-winger made an end-to-end rush while shielding off defenceman Tim Krug and letting the puck roll off his stick and through Hodge's pads as Hodge moved to his left to avert a deke.

In an attempt to tie the game, the Bears pulled Hodge in favour of the sixth attacker, but forward Greg Cater flipped a long shot that found the net.

While the Bears lacked in many areas of their usually well-balanced play, coach Bill Moores felt it was just a matter of "not being able to get on track."

"We weren't stopping on the puck, but it wasn't for a lack of effort," explained Moores. "Usually we are pretty good at protecting a lead, and we usually pull away in the third period. But in this series we didn't. In terms of execution, it was the worst series all year."

Combined with the fact that the Bears outshot the Stingers so badly in the first game (47-24), it probably was the worst series of the year. Even more so than the two losses the Bears suffered to the Saskatchewan Huskies earlier in the season at Varsity Arena. At least in that series, there was a clear winner; in this one the Bears came close to winning both games so many times that the defeat became magnified to sever. 'times its size.

Like virtually every other game they had this year, the Bears outshot their opponents, but unlike the other games, their scoring touch around the net was



And that's the way it was. Stephane Heon of Concordia stopped the Bears at every turn.

photo: Bill Ingles

missing. In part, Stinger goalie Stephane Heon had a pretty large say in whether or not he was going to be scored upon. Heon faced 58 shots in 90 minutes, and was named the most valuable player in the first Bears-Stingers game.

The Bears did manage to get two goals past him in the first game on shots by Rick Swan and Denis LeClair. Swan's goal, a long shot from the blueline, seeped through Heon's pads and crept into the net.

LeClair's marker came after he had several good chances and finally batted a knee-high rebound past a sprawled Heon.

"We wanted to shoot as much as we could on him (Heon)," explained Swan. "And the blueline is so close in (because of rounded corners), that it's a good

shot (his long shot) if you take it."

While it was disappointing to see the Bears lose it was not the fact that they lost, but rather they way they did it. The discipline and team effort that were so evident during the season were lacking, especially when the Bears were ahead in that pivotal second game.

Bears' coach Bill Moores wasn't offering any excuses for his team's performance. Asked if the long trip from Alberta hurt his team in the final and lengthy game, Moores replied simply that they had been in Trois-Rivieres since Wednesday (14th) so there was ample time to recover from the flight.

Added Moores, "I feel disappointed for the players. We've worked hard all year long. It's frustrating not to play as well as we know we can."

Concordia coach Paul Arseneault, who has over 500 victories in his 20-year coaching season, felt his team could play well against the Bears but needed a great deal of discipline to do it.

"We had a good record against the type of style that the Bears use," explained Arseneault. "Their western style is intimidating. And I felt we threw them off their game by offsetting their aggressive play and by not taking too many penalties. They play an aggressive style so discipline was a factor. We had to handle that pressure and not retaliate."

That decision to 'not retaliate' obviously worked as the Bears took five more penalties than the Stingers.

Bears' coach Bill Moore also added that his team did not play as well as they usually do when they have the lead.

"Usually we are pretty good at protecting a lead," said Moores. "We usually pull away in the third period but in this series we didn't do that. Also, the goals we goe, we didn't earn them the way we usually earn them."

It would probably be enough to say that the Bears simply did not do the things that got them all those wins this season, but it is not. In a season where there were more ups than downs it would be easy just to say that the Bears failed in the finals - when it mattered the most. But that isn't enough either.

While they did not win the championship, the Bears did something that in time will seem just as important. They reestablished themselves as a hockey power in Canada - something that after a mediocre three years was a welcome sight. That is anything but a disappointing way to finish the season.

Happy New Year!

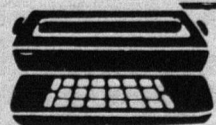
The first day of spring conjures up images of renewal, rebirth and new beginnings. These are some of the reasons the Baha'i Faith celebrates Baha'i New Year on March 21st.

With the coming of Baha'u'llah, Baha'is believe, the religion of God has been renewed once more, this time to culminate in the Zenith of its achievement with the unification of the entire human race in one common faith.



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