



# SPORTS



## Heartbreaker at Ice Palace as McGill knocks York out of playoff hunt

by Josh Rubin

In the usually bedlam-filled dressing room of the hockey Yeomen, there was only silence.

The Yeomen had just suffered the most devastating loss possible: their season was over.

The squad had played their last game like they had played their whole season — constantly on the edge.

In this one, they came back from a 4-2 deficit in their sudden-death quarterfinal against the McGill Redmen last Tuesday, only to lose the game in overtime.

One Yeoman said after the game that filling the gap normally taken up by hockey in his life will be hard to do after the heartbreaking loss.

"I feel empty. There's just nothing left," the player sighed.

McGill drew first blood on the scoreboard in a hard-hitting opening frame when Patrice Tremblay put one past Willie Popp from a scramble in front.

But OUAA scoring leader Brian MacDonald made it 1-1 just minutes later with the Yeomen's first power-play marker of the off-season.

The Yeomen opened up a 2-1 lead six minutes into the second period when Kevin Bonello capped off a three-way passing play.

But the York lead was a short-lived one indeed, and Willie Popp let in a rare soft goal to the Redmen's Martin Laquerre less than two minutes later.

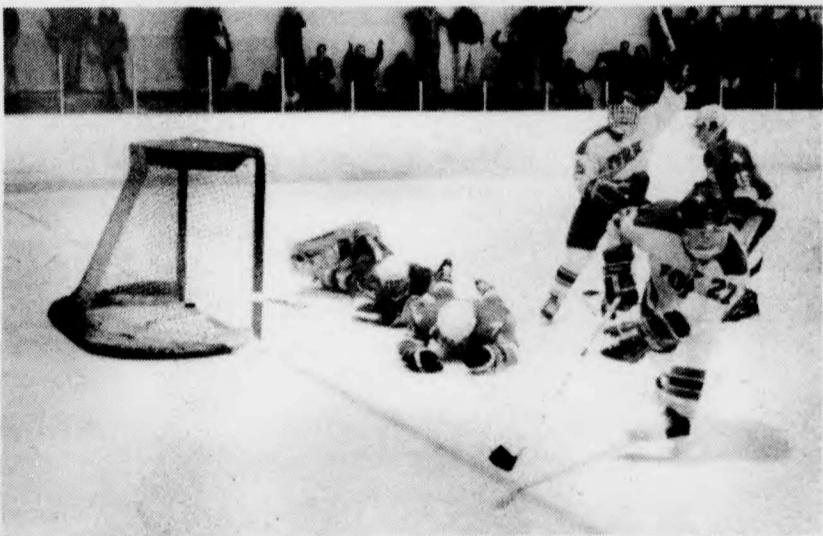
However what could have been a crushing blow came in the final seconds of the second period.

With the game tied 2-2, the puck was in the York zone with five seconds left.

But a sloppy clearing pass by the Yeoman defence allowed McGill's Paul Grech to give his team a 3-2 lead with just a second left on the clock.

An understandably deflated York team took to the ice for the final frame.

Another seeming nail in the York coffin was added less than a minute into the third when Popp let in another apparent softie, prompting coach Graham Wise to pull the third year veteran in favour of newcomer Mike Noonan.



ROB CABRAL

**TAKE THAT:** Yeoman hockey captain Mike Futa pokes one past the McGill goalie to bring York back into last week's sudden death quarterfinal at the Ice Palace. Mike Noonan (above right) gets ready for overtime, where the Yeomen lost a 5-4 heartbreaker.



But a powerplay maker from team captain Mike Futa let the Yeomen creep back into the game, narrowing the gap to 4-3 midway through the third.

Then pandemonium broke loose in the packed Ice Palace with a minute and a half left, as Yeoman sniper Luciano Fagioli tied the game at 4-4, sending the game into overtime.

The York squad got the first shot in on McGill goalie Scott Taylor in the extra period.

But the Redmen stormed back down the ice and Patrice Tremblay scored the biggest goal of his OUAA career, sending his team into a semi-final matchup with the vaunted UQTR Patriotes.

Afterwards, McGill coach Jean Pronovost suggested it was his team's effort which won the game.

"The key to this one was our intensity," said Pronovost.

He also added, however, "This is a game of mistakes, and we capitalized on their's."

A dejected Mike Futa said after the game that it was the way the Yeomen lost which hurt most.

"We gave it our all, but there's nothing worse than losing like this," said Futa.

Wise concurred, adding "They've [the York players] got nothing to be ashamed of; they put up a good fight."

## Bittersweet finish for hockey vet MacDonald

by Jim Hoggett

If this season was to be the swan song for Yeoman Brian MacDonald, perhaps someone should have told the McGill Redmen.

In a surprising 5-4 overtime victory, the Redmen ousted the Yeomen from the playoff picture and shattered any hope of playoff glory for MacDonald and his teammates.

"Sure the loss was very disappointing, but it wasn't detrimental to the team," said the 24-year-old left-winger from Stoney Creek. "Everyone came out to play and we gave it our all, so there was no shame in losing. The game was a close one, it could have went either way."

In his five years as a Yeoman, MacDonald has emerged as one of the squad's premier players, improving his point totals year after year.

This season, however, was undoubtedly his finest, as he more than doubled his point total over last season.

MacDonald racked up 22 goals and 31 assists, which placed him atop the OUAA scoring derby, a first for a York player.

"MacDonald was definitely an important player on our team," said Yeoman coach Graham Wise. "He brought maturity and a winning attitude to the team. He will be a tough person to replace."

MacDonald's success was not only limited to his on-ice performances but in education as well.

Currently finishing his Bachelor of Education degree, MacDonald will also be taking with him a bachelor degree in economics and math.

"It takes a special kind of person to excel in athletics as well as in the class room," Wise said. "The degrees that he has earned, shows what kind of a person he is. It shows that he has direction and discipline, and not everyone can do that."

To his fellow teammates, MacDonald was more than just another guy on the team.

"He was the type of guy who you could look up to for experience, both on and off the ice," said three-year



Brian MacDonald

veteran defenceman Guy Girouard, who first played with MacDonald seven years ago with the OHL's Hamilton Steel Hawks.

"He was always one to keep his composure," Girouard said. "If we had a bad period, he would put things in perspective and made sure that we felt good about ourselves before we went back out on the ice."

"He was an extremely classy individual who really showed you what he was made of," said Yeoman captain Mike Futa. "Whenever we needed a goal he would always come through, even if the other team put a checker on him. We could definitely use him for another five years."

As for MacDonald's future, he

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