

Ex-Olympian suits up for Yeomen while attending Osgoode

by Daniel Naccarato

It may not earn him a gold medal, but Alex Ketrzynski still wants to win it all.

The 6'5" 32-year old Ketrzynski, a member of Canada's 1984 Olympic Volleyball Team, will play the position of substitute power hitter on this year's York Yeomen volleyball team. He'll be the first to admit that it won't be easy.

"I can't play a physical game anymore. I have to play more of a finesse game," says Ketrzynski. "I'm in a supporting role, but I have to work just as hard and be just as intense or I won't be able to compete."

It will take just as much hard work this year as it did when he was chosen to play in the Olympics in 1984. He had a lifelong goal of winning a gold medal and did a lot of competitive swimming and other training to prepare for the opportunity.

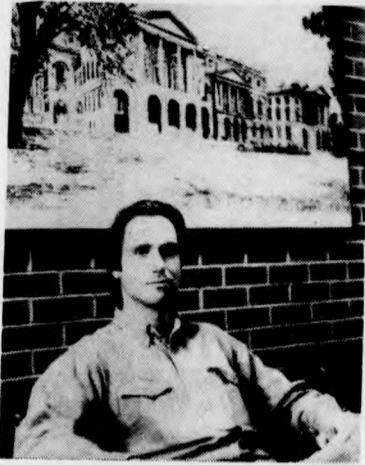
"I had an idea I'd make it, but it wasn't through natural skill. I had to work extra hard and play a no-holds-barred style to make up for my technical incompetence. My happiness had begun to be realized, but I also felt fear and anticipation of the hard work ahead. You have to be willing to push yourself."

The Canadian volleyball team finished fourth that year — out of the medals — which Ketrzynski considered a disappointment.

"I'm personally not satisfied with (our finish). We weren't well organized. It was a good experience in learning the challenges I could undertake," recalls Ketrzynski.

Ketrzynski has been busy since then. After the 1984 Olympics, he played professional volleyball in Italy in 1985. He sustained a serious knee injury and, after the operation, was told to quit volleyball. Ketrzynski wasn't about to give up that easy.

"It's hampered me, but I enjoy the



Law student Alex Ketrzynski at Osgoode. photo by Dan Nedelko

game too much and have too much of an ego to let it stop me," said Ketrzynski.

This was when he came to York for the first time, receiving his administration degree at Atkinson College in 1986.

When his knee had healed sufficiently, he returned to volleyball, playing AA volleyball for Ontario for two years, and helping his team to a second place finish in the Nationals in one of the seasons.

Amidst all this, he also had various jobs to keep himself going financially, even moving to Calgary for a few years to test the employment possibilities. In the past couple of years, when he wasn't playing volleyball or going to school, he sold computers and learned carpentry and plumbing while renovating his home in downtown Toronto.

Of utmost importance to him, however, was his marriage to Michelle Wassenaar, who is a U. of T. law school graduate.

Ketrzynski is in law school as well. "My prime focus right now is the law degree. Volleyball is a diversion. Maybe I can help the team out. I'm looking for something that will be meaningful and useful in my life."

Nevertheless, he is still looking forward to playing volleyball this year.

"It's the last time I'll have a chance to play good organized ball. It's getting harder to control middle-age drift. I consider it fun exercise."

Yet he doesn't see himself as a volleyball coach in the future, stating there are many people who are better suited for the job. He would prefer to be totally involved in his legal work, which he feels would yield greater benefits.

Focusing on the near future gives Ketrzynski a good feeling. He has high expectations for the Yeomen this year.

"I believe we will be top three in Canada. I'd like to win the CIAU Nationals (the Canadian volleyball championships). I also see two or three players making significant strides towards making the National Volleyball team."

Ketrzynski's desire to win hasn't changed, even though his priorities might have.

"My goal (in 1984) was to be on the court always. Alex was number one. Here, I just want to be in the CIAU's. I want to win it as a team. My ego's still there — I want to be a significant part of it, but it doesn't work out that way. Whatever it takes to win, I'm happy to do."

There's no doubt that the Yeomen have the talent to win games this year, but with Ketrzynski's leadership and experience, they may be able to win the big ones too.

Yeowomen prepare for 92-93 season

Hockey Yeowomen get new coach

by Haniff Nana

Once again, the York Yeowomen hockey team has a new coach.

Once again, the new coach says the Yeowomen will be one of the hardest working teams in the league.

Once again, the Yeowomen have spent the off-season making a minimum of personal changes.

Are the Yeowomen fated, once again, to have a puzzling middle of the pack finish?

There is a difference this time and her name is Chris Harron. The Yeowomen are banking on this coach's organization, her motivation — and yes, experience to put them near the top, if not over it, in the Ontario Women's Intercollegiate Athletic Association east conference.

Coach Harron, who has nine years of coaching experience, will replace Deb Adams as head coach. With Adams' resignation in August, Yeomen hockey coach, Graham Wise approached Harron with the suggestion of coaching the Yeowomen. As they say, the rest is history.

The Yeowomen are strong in a



New Women's hockey coach, Chris Harron. photo by Jim Shaver

number of areas. The high number of returnees from last year's squad being one of the main attributes to the Yeowomen's success. The Yeowomen will have twelve players

returning from last year's third place team. Some of the key veterans returning include Marni Barrow, Michelle Campbell, and goalie Jill Garred.

Gauging the Yeowomen this early in the year could be difficult. Harron feels their strengths will be the team's physical size and quickness.

It has been difficult for coach Harron to assess the team's weaknesses, as they have not played a regular season game. Harron did suggest that, "...timing and getting to know each other," could be a problem.

Harron would like to utilize the team's strengths to the utmost. Based on her assessment, the team concept will be similar to that of the Boston Bruins. She would like to develop a team concept which will be based on being, "...aggressive, hard checking, and on the puck all the time."

After finishing in third place last year, the goal, according to Harron, will be to improve on last year's record. "our goal is to finish second, and strengthen the team in many ways," says the optimistic coach.

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