

Vees' rise no shock to Shutt

By RON HEALEY
Last Thursday night at Dixie Arena was one of the few times Bill Shutt got any recognition for his hockey accomplishments.

The veteran Venture defenceman scored the first goal in Dixie's 4-2 win over Brampton. The announcement over the P.A. system, "Dixie goal by number four, Bill Shutt" put him momentarily in the spotlight.

He then returned to his usual workmanlike, steady defensive game. His type of consistency is rarely appreciated by the fans, but is certainly a source of comfort to coaches like Ventures Norm Dowdall.

Whenever Shutt's name is mentioned in a post-game interview Dowdall says something to the effect that Shutt played his "usual steady game". Dowdall also points out that he can always count on Shutt for a 110 per cent effort.

Most of the attention in hockey goes to the offensive players, the goal scorers. Players like Shutt, who excel at preventing goals, often go unnoticed.

It doesn't bother Shutt that he gets little attention. He just gets pleasure out of doing his job.

"I used to always be bigger than everyone else," he says, "and now everyone has caught up to me and I just go out there and try to prevent goals from being scored."

Shutt says the Ventures' recent surge (19 games with only five losses) is really not a

surprise to him. "I figured before the season started we'd do well this year," he says. "We had a good nucleus of players returning and some promising young players and I was really eager to come back this year. I expected the team to have a good season."

He feels the recent surge that has carried the Ventures to fourth place in the Central Ontario Junior B League standings is due to the players becoming familiar with one another's style of play.

"The team just sort of jelled a while back," Shutt said. "It was just a matter of time. The defence pairs got used to each other's moves and the lines starting working well together. The young guys have really come together and we have a good combination of veterans and younger players."

Shutt also gives credit to goalies Grant Sloane and Peter Lennon for a large part of the improvement over last year's sixth place finish.

"With Grant and Peter we know we have two good goalies and we're really a lot stronger there than we were last year," he says. "The spirit on the team is great and we're really looking forward to tonight's game against Streetsville."

Mike McElroy's emergence as a goal scorer is another reason for the Ventures' recent success. After a five goal outburst in back-to-back games last week, McElroy connected for two of the four Dixie goals in the victory over Brampton, giving him 19 for

the season. The fourth goal came from captain Robbie May.

The Ventures had a three goal lead and Lennon had a shutout midway through the third period before Brampton scored a powerplay goal and followed 20 seconds later with another score to suddenly make it 3-2. May's goal with five and a half minutes left iced the verdict.

Dowdall said he expected the team to suffer a letdown after the previous game, a 5-4 victory at Streetsville. "I thought they would probably sag a bit after that game," he said. "Also, they were looking ahead to the two games with Oakville and then the return game with the Derbys."

The Ventures lost the first of their two games in Oakville, dropping a 3-2 decision to the Blades at Maplegrove Arena Friday night.

Steve Leggett gave Dixie a 1-0 first period lead, but Blade Brian Marvel scored near the end of the period which ended 1-1. Blades got the only goal of the second period. Leggett connected for his second goal late in the third period after another Oakville score, but the Ventures came up one short.

The Ventures gained revenge for that loss Tuesday night by beating the Blades by the identical score of 3-2.

Mike McElroy's second goal of the game gave the Ventures

a 3-1 third-period lead in a rare penalty-free game. Oakville scored later in the period but could not get the equalizer.

Ross Belcher scored the other Dixie goal while Rory Carroll had two assists.

NOTES: Ventures host the Streetsville Derbys tonight at Dixie arena at 7:45 p.m., then travel to Acton for an 8:30 p.m. game with the Sabres tomorrow. Dixie is the second highest scoring team in the league averaging five goals a game. The Ventures also have the second best goals against average, allowing just slightly over four goals a game. Burlington leads the league in this department with an average of 3.60 while Streetsville leads the league in scoring.

Buys, Thomson skate way to national meet

By CHRIS ZELKOVICH
A year may not make much of a difference to some people but Nancy Buys is hoping it does.

The 16-year-old Cawthra Park Secondary School student qualified for her second Canadian Figure Skating Championships Sunday with a second-place finish at the Eastern Canadian championships in North York.

She's confident a year's experience will help her improve on last year's fourth-place showing at the national finals.

"I think the experience will help," she said after skating to second place in the Novice Ladies category. "Last year I was pretty nervous because I'd never been involved in a national competition before."

"This year I don't think that nervousness will affect me as much. At least I hope it won't."

Buys, who skates out of the New Oakville Figure Skating Club, presented a strong performance Sunday at North York Centennial Arena. She scored 113.52 points, less than three points behind winner Michelle Simpson of Elmvalle Figure Skating Club. But she was not overly pleased with her performance.

"I guess you always go into these things thinking you should win," she said. "My compulsories, which are usually my weak point, weren't too bad. But my free skating was terrible. I fell and missed two elements."

"I don't know what happened. I felt pretty confi-

dent in the warm-up but something happened."

Buys showed good composure and the benefits of experience in her free skating. She fell half way through her presentation but picked herself up and finished strongly.

Buys won't be the only Mississaugan present at the Canadian championships, scheduled for Jan. 31 to Feb. 6 in Calgary.

Kay Thomson, a member of the Mississauga Figure Skating Club, placed third in the Novice Ladies' event with 107.77 points, and qualified for the Canadian championships.

The top four in each event will go to Calgary.



Best Buys

Mississauga's Nancy Buys completes a move at the Eastern Canadian Figure Skating Championships Sunday in North York. The 16-year-old skater finished second and advanced to the national finals in Calgary.

Mississauga hosts Olympic gymnasts

Karen Kelsall Canada's premiere female gymnast fresh from a tenth place finish at the Tsuchi Cup International Meet in Japan, will head the list of Canada's top women gymnasts taking part in a national clinic sponsored by the Canadian Gymnastics Federation at the Mississauga Gym Club this weekend.

Approximately 25 to 30 girls from all over the country and their individual coaches will take part in the clinic, that runs Friday to Monday.

The purpose of the clinic is to introduce Canada's top

flight gymnasts to the new compulsory exercises that have just been announced. "By having this clinic we can get everybody in the country working together and doing the exercises the same," says MGC coach Dean Berry.

The clinic is doubly important due to the fact that five of the six female gymnasts that competed in the Olympics have retired. Only Kelsall remains from the Olympic team.

"Our 25 best are super, super young and inexperienced," says Berry, "Only

Kelsall and Elfi Schlegel have international experience." Schlegel is coached by Mississauga's Geoff and Mary-Lea Palmer.

The clinic is to reflect a cooperative nature. The pressures of competing will be left outside. "It's not going to be a case of my girl against other girls," explains Berry. "We hope to be able to share knowledge."

The club does not have room for spectators but coaches from neighboring clubs have been invited to the clinic to observe the proceedings.

"I think the experience will help," she said after skating to second place in the Novice Ladies category. "Last year I was pretty nervous because I'd never been involved in a national competition before."

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Derbys replaced, rebuked

By PAUL WILLIAMS
The Streetsville Derbys have enjoyed many triumphs this season as they loped over the Central Junior B hockey league, but fate caught up with them this week.

The week started off badly as the upstart Dixie Ventures

rudely beat the Derbys 5-4 in their own rink. Streetsville then had to sit back and watch as the Oakville Blades, riding an eight game unbeaten streak, occupied first place three points in front of the Derbys.

Then Ontario Hockey Association (OHA), which is the governing body of junior hockey in Ontario, got into the act. The Derbys' recent habit of attempting to make dogmat of their Central league opponents has resulted in a rap on the knuckles for the club.

The OHA has sent a "letter of warning" to the Mississauga club advising that disciplinary action against the club may result if the Derbys are involved in anymore donnybrooks.

The letter followed a penalty-ridden game between Streetsville and Brampton Logans in Brampton Jan. 2. Nine players, including five Derbys, were ejected from the game and 27 minutes in penalties were assessed by the referee.

In December the Derbys were involved in two other games that resulted in over 200 minutes in penalties and player suspensions. The Derbys have already broken the league penalty minutes record. As of Tuesday, the Derbys had amassed 1678 minutes in penalties in 33 games — an average of 51 minutes a game. The Derbys set the record last year with 1,503 minutes in 36 games.

The Derbys have 629 minutes more than Brampton

— the second highest penalized club.

According to OHA secretary-manager David Branch, the letter sent to the Derbys states that in the OHA executives' opinion the players "were not properly controlled."

"For the remainder of the season the Derby game-sheets will be scrutinized to make sure the situation does not get out of control," Branch says.

The letter of warning is a normal reaction by the OHA to this particular problem. "We have sent out about a dozen this season," says Branch. "In cases where the problem isn't cleared up we have suspended the coach."

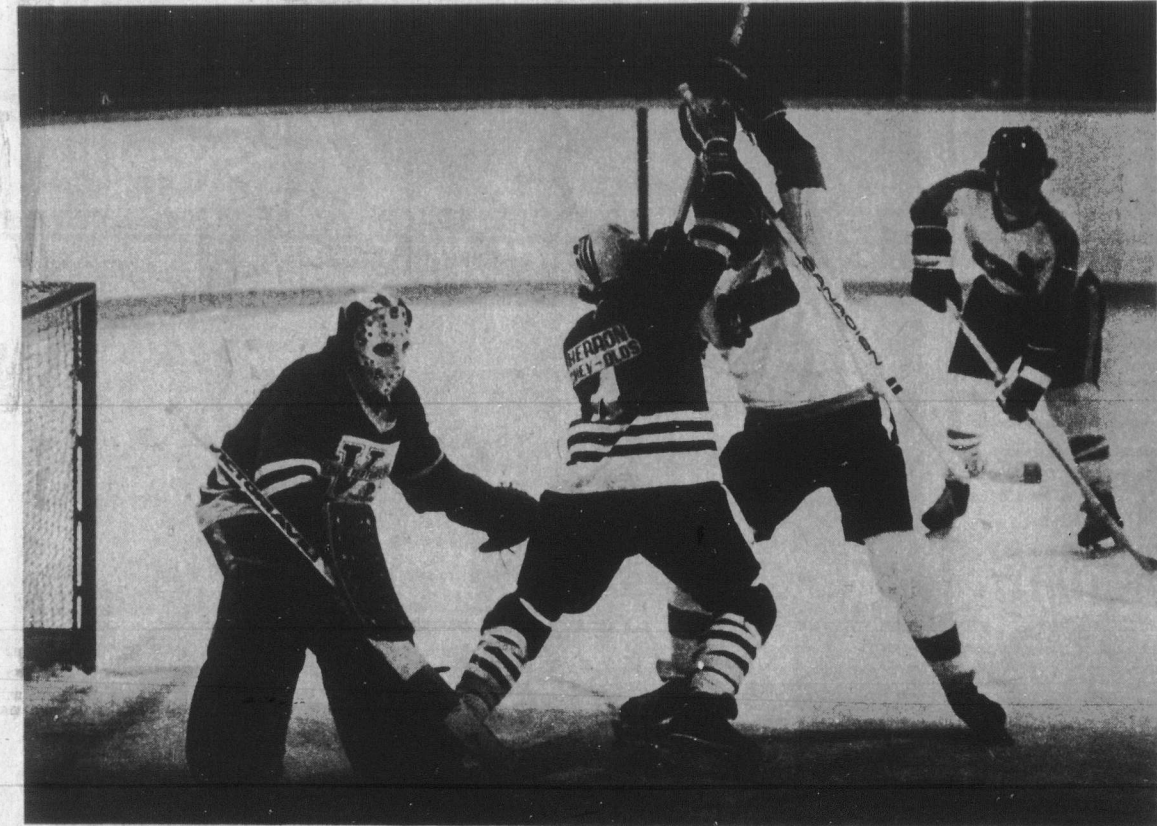
Branch refused to name any players who were under special scrutiny. "Some players are more difficult than others but it isn't fair to tag them in public," explains Branch.

The OHA letter has not reached the Derby club according to Derby coach and general manager Tom Barrett. "We haven't acted on it yet," says Barrett, "but we won't let a letter intimidate us."

The Derbys play a rugged style of hockey but they proved last season on the way to the league championship that their version of mayhem on ice can be turned on and off at will. Barrett promises that when the playoffs roll around and each game begins to count for more, the Derbys will still play tough hockey — without the suspensions.

Tuesday night the Derbys moved to within a point of the Blades by tripping the last-place Acton Sabres 7-5.

A 5-4 loss to the Ventures was the Derbys' only action this week. Despite hot



Crosstown square-off

Dixie Venture defenceman Bill Shutt (4) fends off a Streetsville Derby attack in last week's Central Ontario Junior B hockey game at Streetsville. Shutt and goaltender Grant Sloane were standouts as the Ventures defeated the second-place Derbys by a 5-4 score.

Bruins triumph in Switzerland

The Sheridan College Bruins are currently leading the Ontario Colleges Athletic Association hockey league, but they proved over the Christmas holidays that they would fare well in European league as well.

The Bruins won three of five games in a two week span in Switzerland.

The Bruins opened their series with a 5-4 victory over Lugano on Dec. 28.

John Falcon led the Bruins in that game with two goals and two assists. Steve Cronkright added a pair of goals and Randy Robbins one. Phil Hoffman assisted on three goals.

The following day the Bruins took their toughest loss of the tour as they were dumped 10-1 by Ambr-Piotta. Nine of the Swiss team's goals

came in a period of eight minutes. Bill Barnes scored the lone Sheridan goal.

The next day Sheridan suffered its second loss of the tour as they were edged 6-5 by La Chaux-de-Fonds. John Woolley, Falcon, Cronkright, Rich Kells and Chris MacMillan handled the Sheridan scoring. Mike Serre had two assists.

The Bruins bounced back on New Year's Day to edge Villars 6-5 thanks to three goals by MacMillan. Falcon, Serre and Mike Rickard scored the others.

The Bruins closed their tour Jan. 4 with a 6-5 victory over Langenthal. Woolley scored three goals while Kells, Cronkright and Rickard added singles.

Sheridan resumes its league play this week.

goaltending by Venture net-minder Grant Sloane the Derbys managed to whittle the Ventures' three goal lead in the third period down to one goal with four minutes left in the game. However the equalizer never came as the Vees upset the then first place Derbys.

The Derbys spent the rest of the week idle as Blades moved into first place.

The Derbys take on the Ventures in Dixie arena tonight. The game should be hotly contested as Streetsville is looking for revenge. Barring the two teams meeting in the playoffs, this could be the last game between the two Mississauga teams this year.

Centre Jim Baker sat out the contest with Dixie Tuesday. Baker broke his hand against Burlington a couple of weeks ago and is playing with a cast.

Chris Costello one of Barrett's new recruits scored three times against the Ventures. Jim Gibson, in his first game since a two game suspension, got the other.

The Derbys host the Blades Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. at VW Johnson Arena. A victory by Oakville would all but assure the Blades first place.

CENTRAL JUNIOR B STANDINGS
(INCLUDING JAN. 12 GAMES)

Team	GP	W	L	T	P
Oakville	28	21	7	0	44
Streetsville	24	20	11	2	43
Burlington	21	15	6	3	38
Dixie	23	17	12	3	37
Georgetown	23	16	14	3	35
Milton	21	13	17	1	27
Brampton	21	10	12	2	23
Acton	22	2	20	2	6

SCORING LEADERS
GP G A P

Jim Gibson, Str.	25	18	39	57
Don Twiss, Milton	25	28	26	54
George Chandler, Str.	25	25	25	51
Bruce Elliott, Milton	25	23	27	50
Paul Gooding, Milton	26	23	27	50
Bill Barnes, George	129	29	19	48

Canoeists get indication of help to come

Back in July when Canada was still in the afterglow created by the four silver medals our athletes won at the Olympic Games, health and welfare minister Marc Lalonde announced that the federal government would increase aid to amateur athletes.

Not surprisingly, no one believed him.

Canadian athletes, at least those not earning \$100,000 a year for taking slapshots, have learned to be a bit skeptical of politicians' promises of financial aid. That's not surprising, either. They've had a lot of practice.

In the past the government has thrown around promises of aid the same way they hand out senatorial posts. Fulfilling those promises has been a different story, though.

Canadian amateur athletes must

still be either independently wealthy in order to survive or must be willing to make a sacrifice or two — such as food and clothing.

John Wood, Mississauga's man of

ing part of his future by turning down career possibilities in order to continue his training. The sacrifices paid off when Wood won a silver medal in canoeing at the 1976 Olympics.

That medal also is playing a part in why some people are starting to believe Marc Lalonde.

There are no indications that major changes are afoot, but there are indications that the status of the amateur athlete in Canada might be changing for the better.

The first hint came last fall when Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau created a new post in his cabinet, one dealing exclusively with fitness and amateur sport. That didn't necessarily mean the government was taking a serious look at improving the lot of

Canada's amateur athletes. But it was a start.

Another indication of a change for the better came recently when directors of the Canadian Canoe Association received a letter from the fitness and amateur sport branch of the government.

The letter wasn't an announcement of federal plans for aid and it wasn't another promise. It was simply a form asking canoe association directors to list any requests they had for research grants.

To someone not familiar with the weird and wonderful workings of the federal government, that may seem like another insignificant piece of propaganda. But canoeing directors consider it to be a good indication of a change of heart in Ottawa.

It's not that the federal government has been particularly insensitive to canoeing in the past. It has been insensitive to all amateur sports.

There have been token efforts to assist amateur sport, but the federal government has basically followed the overall Canadian attitude — that sport is something little more than play, something done in leisure time.

But with the attitudes towards fitness and amateur sport changing in Canada, the government has been forced to follow. In the past few years Canadians have begun to take a new look at the pursuit of fitness.

Wood has played a large role in the changing attitude towards canoeing.

The sport of canoeing has never been considered one of the major pursuits in Canada. Prior to the 1976

Olympics few Canadians were even aware that it was a competitive sport.

But all that changed in two minutes at the Olympics. Before millions of television viewers Wood paddled to a silver medal in the C-2 500 metres race — Canada's first canoeing medal in 24 years.

The medal pushed both Wood and canoeing from anonymity to fame.

Members of the Canadian Canoe Association and athletes like Wood, Jeremy Abbott and Gregg Smith aren't expecting great changes in their lives because of the government's new interest in amateur sport. But all realize that any improvement will help their lot as canoeists.

All are no doubt thinking that Canada's canoeists will never again be stranded up a creek without a paddle.



Chris Zelkovich