

# Bountiful supply of quality athletes provides York with balanced team

by Sharon Creelman and Pam Serkowney

**T**hey've come in numbers. And nothing could please York field hockey coaches Marina van der Merwe and Kathy Broderick more.

For the first time in years, the coaching staff is faced with the "luxury" of having a full bench of good athletes. The bounty of talent gave York three wins in four games last weekend at an invitational tournament.

According to van der Merwe, "This is the largest and most skilled crop of high school athletes York has had. Unfortunately, we're going to have to cut some."

Van der Merwe credits "good leadership at the high school level, along with an increased interest in competitive hockey" for the number and calibre of athletes at her disposal this season. "We have a strong bench—we recruited to fill in the holes," explained van der Merwe. "We have to be thinking about next year."

Another point in York's favour is the return of veteran player Karen Hewlett. Hewlett, who played for York previously, is a five-year veteran of the national field hockey team and was a member of the 1984 Los Angeles Olympic team.

Hewlett feels this year's team could be very competitive. "The new kids are fitting in really well," Hewlett observed. "We're not going to have any real weaknesses."

For the first time in many years York will be fielding a "balanced" team. "It won't be so lopsided," said van der Merwe.

In the past the Yeowomen have depended on a small number of experienced players to pull them through. This season's team boasts three junior national team members—Tammy Holt, Joel Brough, and goalkeeper Michelle Capperault. Brough was also a member of the senior national squad that travelled to Frankfurt last August.

Also competing for York are Jodi Koberinski and Jackie De Geojj who represented Ontario in last summer's Canada Games in Saskatoon. The remainder of the squad is a good mixture of experience and new talent.

The Yeowomen saw their first action of the year in a pre-season exhibition tournament in Waterloo. In the first game, York defeated Laurentian 5-0. Unfavourable weather made for poor conditions at Waterloo's Columbia Field.

"It's always hard to coach on grass," said van der Merwe. "It's very unpredictable. You have to try to maintain depth and width."

York was unable to "finish" a number of good scoring opportunities in a goalless first half. In the second, however, the Yeowomen exploded for five goals. Holt and Hewlett had a pair each and Koberinski added a single. Capperault and Michelle Kleiss shared the shutout.

York's second match of the day was less than inspiring. The Waterloo Athenas ran hard at the Yeowomen, making it 3-0 before York could get on the scoresheet. With just under five minutes remaining, Cathy Timmins broke through the Waterloo defence to set up Holt for York's only tally.

Throughout the weekend the York coaching staff rotated the lineup, in order to scrutinize the play of the rookies.

On Sunday the Yeowomen boosted their confidence, coming away with two victories.

Holt broke the tie with Trent after a scoreless first half. The Yeowomen held on to win 1-0.

Holt continued her scoring ways later in the day, putting York up 1-0 just two minutes into the game against Queen's. York's final two goals came off the stick of rookie forward Leslie Gage.

Van der Merwe was impressed with Gage's performance on the

weekend. Gage, like the rest of the rookies, possesses "good athleticism, strength, and agility," said van der Merwe. However, she added, "A great deal of work needs to be done with them."

The Yeowomen opened the regular season this week with their only home game. York defeated Waterloo 3-0. Also this week, York travels to Guelph to meet the Gryphons at 7:30 pm on Friday.



## corrections

A thousand apologies to **Andy Marshall** who's byline on the feature "rhythmic roots across the airwaves" in the September 21 issue of *Excalibur* mysteriously disappeared.

In the September 21 issue of *Excalibur*, Shane Altenstad was incorrectly identified in the article, "Almost Golden." He is the assistant coach of the Yeowomen soccer team.

## Excal's Strip of the Week

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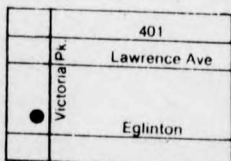
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