

David Coulthard**'There is life after basketball'**

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Excalibur Special

"I don't really expect that people will remember me much past this year when I'm finished playing basketball in the Ontario Universities Athletic Association. I'm not living for the fact they will. I hope to have accomplishments other than basketball."

—David Coulthard

It's February 10th, a day after he scored 50 points against the University of Toronto Blues to set an Ontario Universities Athletic Association points per game record, and David Coulthard, the silent star of the Yeomen basketball team, is in JACS and is about to attempt a post-game field goal.

He crumples a paper cup in his hand and eyes a garbage can a few feet away. With the din of a video machine behind him playing games with his mind, Coulthard hesitates a moment and lays up a left-hander. The cup flutters in its travel and then peters out shy of the target. Airball. The irony is almost too amusing.

Personal awards

Since coming to York in '77-'78 following a splendid high school career with his hometown high school, Tillsonburg Glendale, Coulthard has accumulated a host of personal awards: two of the past four years he's received the Mike Moser Award, given to the best basketball player in the country; he's a three-time winner of the LeBel Plaque, awarded to the most-valuable players in the OUAA east and west divisions; five times he's been named an All-Canadian; and, he possesses a record five Ontario all-star selections.

He finished third over-all in OUAA all-time regular season scoring with 1133 points, and probably would have shattered the existing record of 1209 points had he not missed several games due to injuries.

He led the OUAA in scoring this season with 30.2 points per game, six points better than his nearest competitor. Coming into the season, he'd completed 52 per cent of the field goals he'd attempted, and 85 per cent of his free throws.

On March 5, the night of the OUAA final and his final game at York, Coulthard was honored by the University. His shirt number (14) was retired, the first time in the history of the school. Coulthard showed his gratitude by scoring 49 points and leading the Yeomen to a 95-84 victory over the Windsor Lancers.

Penetrating eyes

Despite all these accomplishments, however, Coulthard is far from satisfied. The Yeomen haven't won the national championship in all the years he's been at York, and for a person who sets goals in terms of winning games and championships, that's as disturbing as a forgotten phone number.

"We've got there three years in a row and we've always lost," Coulthard says, his penetrating eyes drawing you like a force to his frustration. "Every time you lose, it's always hard on you."

The one thing you can say about Coulthard is that he's a consummate team player. He doesn't like talking about his

talents; instead, he'd rather talk about the team. And it seems that every time the media tries to shine the spotlight on him, he directs it on his teammates. The reason is partly because he's intensely shy and partly because of his upbringing.

Basketball family

Coulthard grew up in a basketball family. His father, Bill, played for Tillsonburg's Livingstone Industries, which represented Canada in the 1952 Olympics in Helsinki. His eldest brother, Chris, participated on the 1969-70 Olympic team, while playing for Wilfred Laurier University. His brother, Bruce, played for the University of Windsor and his two sisters, Carol and Betty, played high school basketball for Tillsonburg Glendale.

But Coulthard never aspired to be like the other members of his family. When he started playing basketball at the age of seven, it was just for fun. He had no idea in his pre-teens that he'd be playing high school, let alone university basketball. He soon became adept at shooting and ball handling, the same two skills he uses today to delight fans and depress the opposition.

Principle downfalls

As for his success, there's also been a defeat — aside from the team failing to win the nationals. He's never made it to the Canadian National team, although he's tried out four times, and has just been offered another tryout by the head coach, Jack Donahue. Though he's never been told by Donahue why he was cut, Coulthard believes his two principle downfalls are his lack of defensive aggressiveness and his lack of weight. He says he can compensate for both these deficiencies and adjust to Donahue's rugged system. Still, he holds no grudge against Donahue and says he'll try out for the team again.

With the paper cup lying idly by the garbage can, Coulthard rises slowly and says there is life after basketball.

"I'm not dreaming of making a million dollars, but I'd like to live comfortably," he says, putting on his parka. And then, with an ear-to-ear grin, he adds, "a true capitalist's dream."

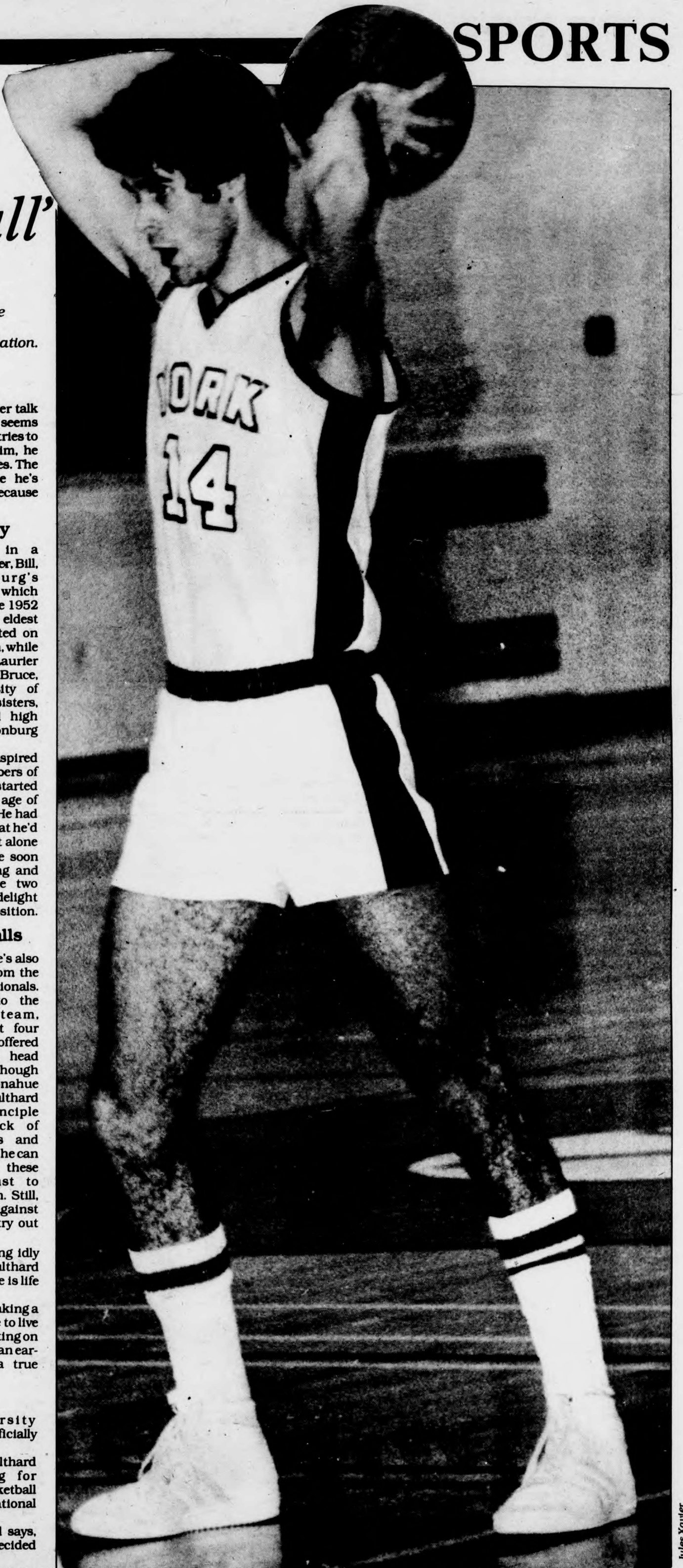
Epilogue

Coulthard's university basketball career is officially over.

As for the future Coulthard says he'll be looking for employment. As for basketball there's a tryout with the National Team.

Beyond that, Coulthard says, "I don't know, I haven't decided yet."

Perry Lefko is a Ryerson journalist student (and one of Coulthard's biggest fans).



York's claim to fame—David Coulthard of the Yeomen basketball team from 1977 to 1982.