



1971-72 MAGAZINE





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HOCKEY MAGAZINE
1971-1972



FROM THE PRESIDENT

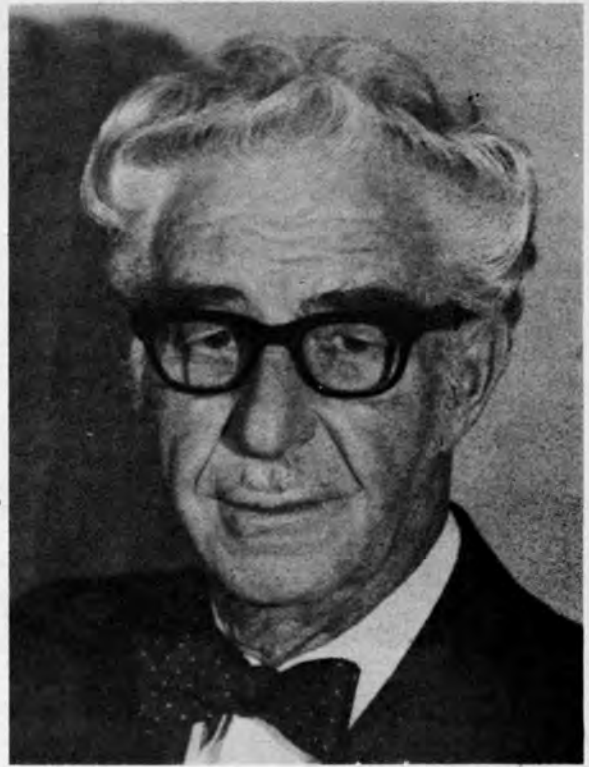
Ironically, during the past few years attention has centred around expansion of the National Hockey League, and yet, as of now the Western Canada Hockey League has surpassed the National Hockey League in expansion and at present is **THE LARGEST MAJOR JUNIOR HOCKEY LEAGUE IN THE WORLD**. Made up of twelve clubs, reaching in scope from Winnipeg, Manitoba to Victoria, British Columbia, it has, during the past two years, increased from eight clubs to twelve clubs.

While numbers alone do not necessarily assure success, twelve hockey clubs embracing the four Western Provinces, along with the many affiliated Minor Clubs throughout this expanse, must certainly give a great deal of assurance to boys who are interested in hockey, whether or not their interest lies in making it their career or just playing during the years they are endeavoring to complete their education.

Any one of these opportunities is, in the opinion of our League, worthwhile.

Coupled with this plan is our sincere wish to bring the hundreds of thousands of fans who have supported the Western Canada Hockey League in the past, the very best entertainment in Major Junior Hockey in Western Canada.

Let me say in all sincerity, I am proud to be associated with the challenge offered by a Hockey League of such magnitude.



**J.A. PIGGOTT
PRESIDENT
WESTERN CANADA HOCKEY LEAGUE**



E. YAUCK, MAYOR

MAYOR'S MESSAGE

It is my pleasure to extend greetings to our hockey fans during the 1971-72 season.

Flin Flon has been very fortunate through the years in being provided with Junior hockey of the very highest calibre.

The finest hockey entertainment in Western Canada is available to all of us. I hope that you will take advantage of this opportunity and attend as many games as possible.

Good Luck, Flin Flon Bombers.

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PAT GINNELL
Manager - Coach

PAT GINNELL

One of the best known and respected Junior hockey coaches in Canada, Pat keeps coming up with winners. Now in his sixth season, the venerable Mr. Ginnell faces another major rebuilding job having seen the likes of Arnason, Carr, Wilson, Baird graduate from Junior ranks and enter professional hockey.

Through the past five seasons, Pat has led the Bombers to three league championships and two Dominion Titles. He has refused a number of professional offers returning to the Bombers in their quest of a Memorial Cup.

Memorial Cups are not unknown to Pat, he has performed in them as well, being a member of the Bombers' title team in the 1956-57 season against the vaunted Montreal Junior Canadiens.

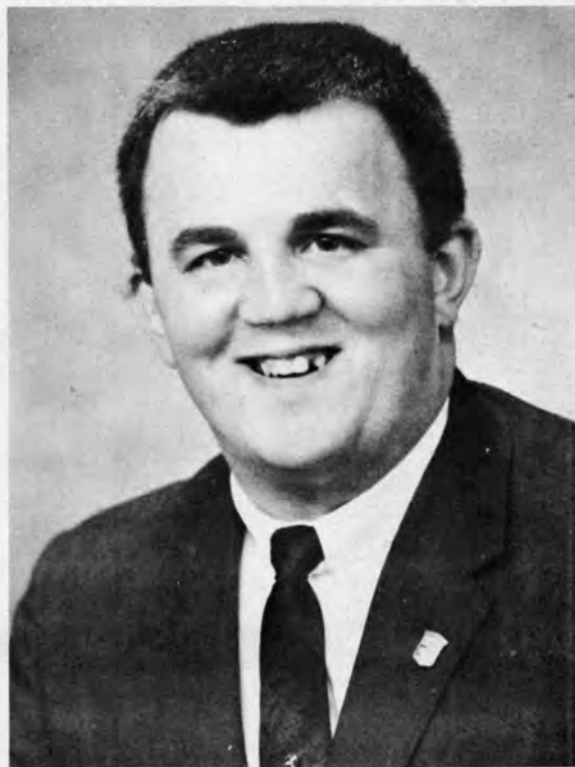
Many experts, including NHL scouts and professional hockey men rate Ginnell as the best Junior Hockey coach in Canada, you won't find many people disputing that claim.

THE STAR MAKERS

NICK OKLOBDZIJA

This is Nick's sixth year with the Bombers. A native of Flin Flon, Nick has worked his way up through the system serving first in the minor hockey divisions as trainer for the Midget and Juvenile Bombers.

Nick is well liked and respected by the Bomber players who realize that part of his job is to keep them healthy and producing to full capacity once they get on the ice.



NICK OKLOBDZIJA
Trainer





NOTICE
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FLIN *tabbatey*
FLON *atim*
NORTH of 54 Parallel



**BLAINE STOUGHTON -- Right Wing
Captain**

This is Blaine's third year with the Bombers and time is wearing well with this veteran. Blaine missed nearly half the schedule last season but still managed to muster up 26 goals. Blaine is five feet 10 inches and 185 pounds and is 18 years old. Plenty of potential for NHL scouts to gaze at. Blaine is a native of Gilbert Plains, Manitoba.

**T
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BLAINE STOUGHTON - Team Captain

**1971
1972**



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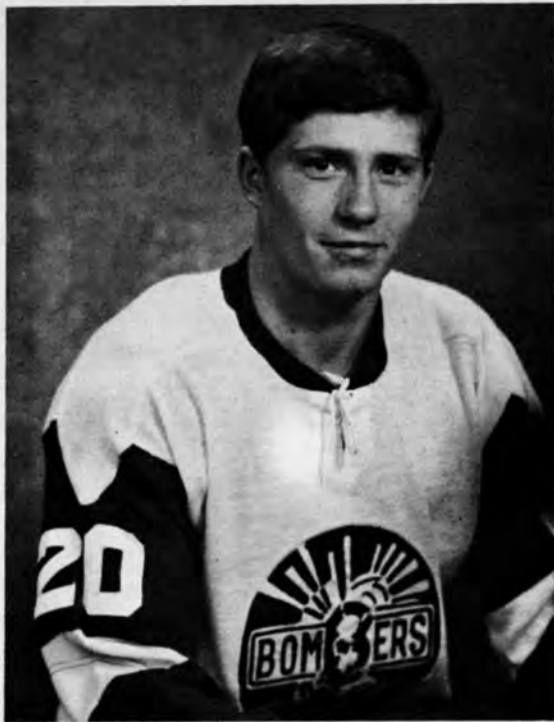
AT

ROSS'



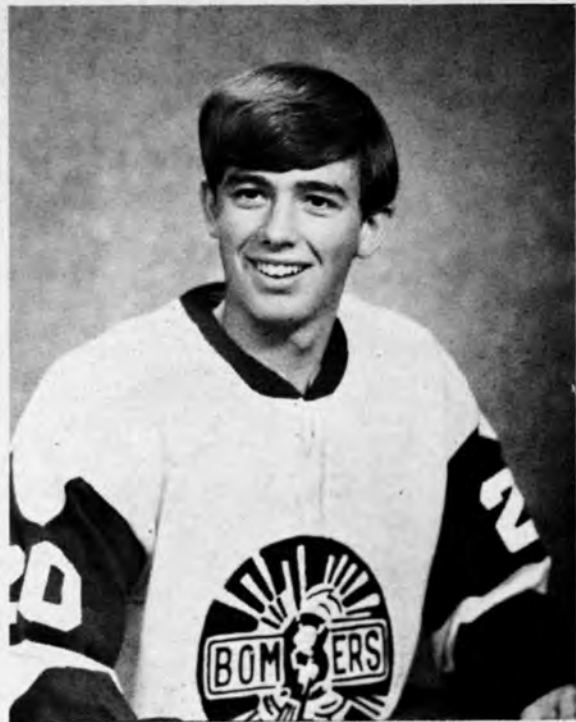
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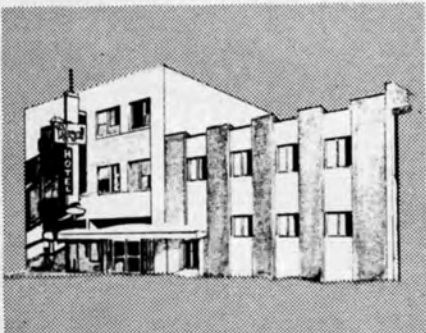
DAVE SHARDLOW -- Left Wing

Dave tips in at five feet 10 inches and 183 pounds. He is in his second year with the Bombers. Dave recorded 22 goals and 57 points for last year's Bombers in only 43 games. Dave has been named Assistant Captain this season. Born in Lethbridge, he is draft age this season.



AL HILLIER -- Centre

High credentials follow Al to the Bomber camp. Last season, this five foot eight inch, 150 pound, 17 year old, played for the Manitoba entry in the Winter Games and was a member of the championship Manitoba Midget team. A home town boy, Al has played all his hockey in Flin Flon. He has been named as one of the team's assistant captains.



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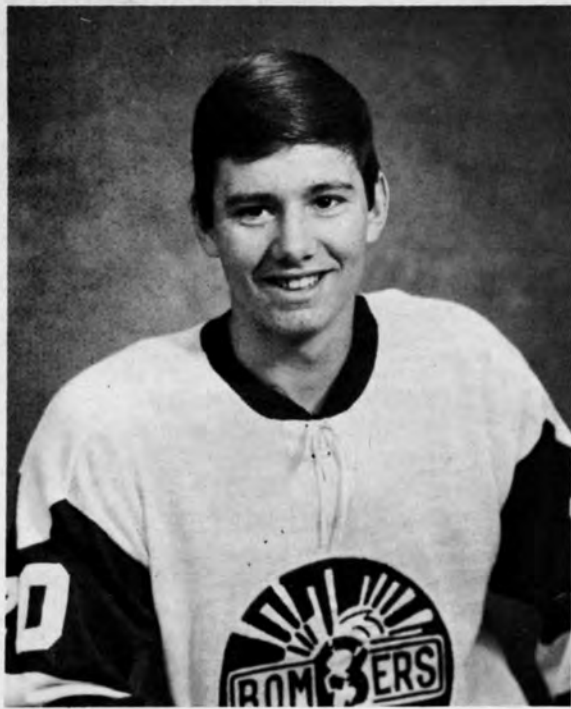
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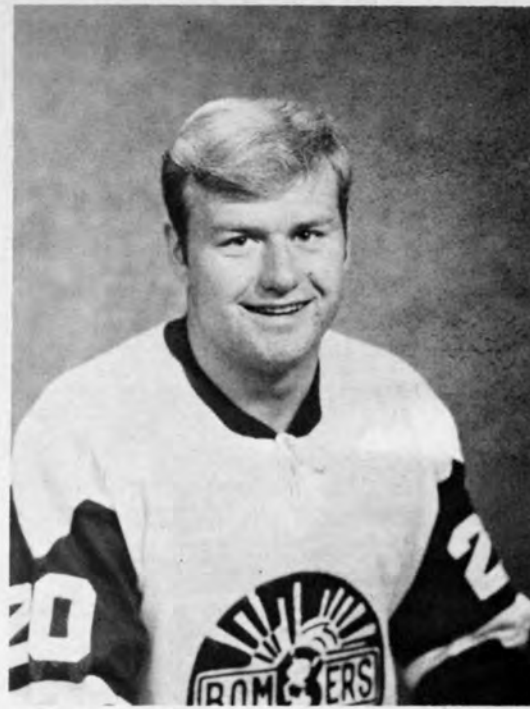
131 MAIN ST.

PHONE 687-6161





ROB WATT -- Wing



HERMAN HORDAL -- Goal

Rob was born and raised in Flin Flon and is a product of the fine Flin Flon minor hockey system. Rob played last season with the provincial Midget champions. He is 17 years old and stands at a strong five feet 11 inches and 162 pounds.

Herman is in his second year with the Bombers. He is 19 years old and makes his five feet 11 inch frame and 175 pounds well noted between the pipes. His home town is Wynyard, Sask., where he played his minor hockey.

THE SCOREBOARD

Goals	Assists	Time	Penalties			
			Flin Flon	Visitors		
Officials	Shots on Goal				Three Stars	
Referee:		1	2	3	Total	1
Linesman:	By Flin Flon					2
Linesman:	By VISITORS					3

WESTERN CANADA HOCKEY LEAGUE EXPANDS....

EAST DIVISION



WINNIPEG JETS

Rink: Winnipeg Arena
Capacity: 10,200
Colors: Red, Blue and White



BRANDON WHEAT KINGS

Rink: Manex Arena
Capacity: 1800
Colors: Orange and Black



FLIN FLON BOMBERS

Rink: Whitney Forum
Capacity: 2700
Colors: Maroon and White



SASKATOON BLADES

Rink: Saskatoon Arena
Capacity: 4500
Colors: Yellow, Blue and Black



REGINA PATS

Rink: Exhibition Stadium
Capacity: 5000
Colors: Blue and White



SWIFT CURRENT BRONCOS

Rink: Centennial Arena
Capacity: 3200
Colors: Green and Gold

WEST DIVISION



CALGARY CENTENNIALS

Rink: Stampede Corral
Capacity: 9200
Colors: Red, White and Black



MEDICINE HAT TIGERS

Rink: Arena Convention Centre
Capacity: 3800
Colors: Orange, Black and White



EDMONTON OIL KINGS

Rink: Edmonton Gardens
Capacity: 5200
Colors: Red, White and Blue



NEW WESTMINSTER BRUINS

Rink: Queen's Park Arena
Capacity: 5201
Colors: Gold, Black and White



VANCOUVER NATS

Rink: Kerrisdale Mem. Arena
Capacity: 2762
Colors: Green, White and Red



VICTORIA COUGARS

Rink: Victoria Mem. Arena
Capacity: 5000
Colors: Red, White and Black

Best of Luck Bombers

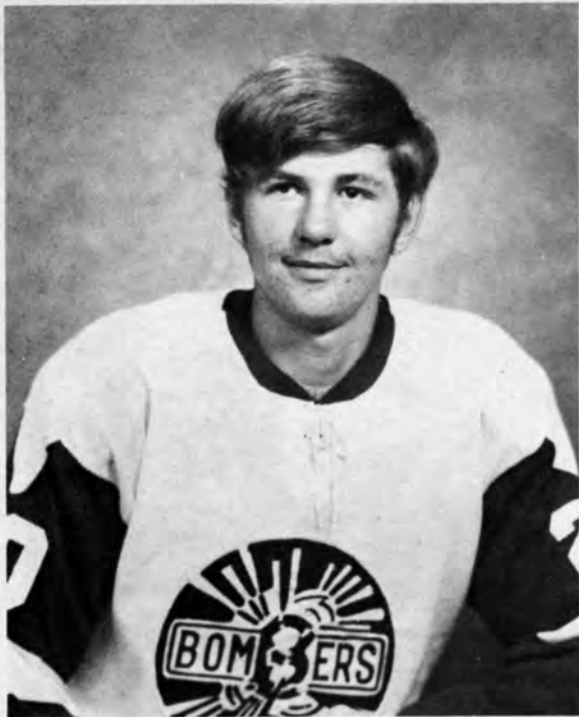


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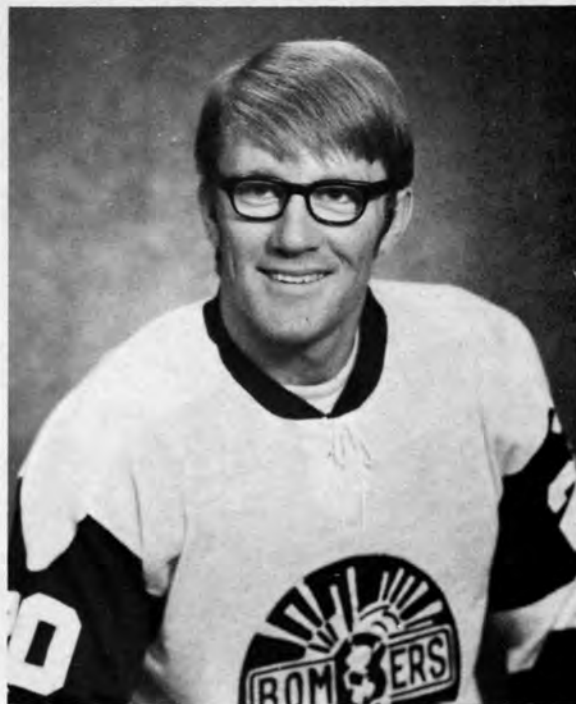
PHONE 7-3493





JULIAN KORENKO -- Defense

Another one of the bright young defensemen who are capable of filling positions left by yesterday's stars. Seventeen and six feet, one inch and 170 pounds, will help Julian keep opponents heads up. Born in Winnipeg, Julian is up from the Juvenile ranks.



JIM CARTER -- Wing

This is Jim's first year in the WCHL at 18 years of age and five feet 11 inches and 187 pounds, this could be a big "break through" season. Jim, born in Winnipeg, played last season with St. Boniface where he scored 45 goals. Jim is draft age this season.



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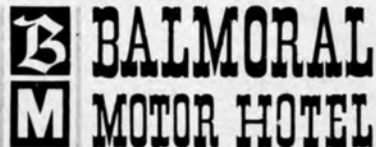
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Hockey Penalties Illustrated....

LOU DARVAS



HOOKING

CROSSCHECKING



SPEARING

HIGH STICKING



ELBOWING



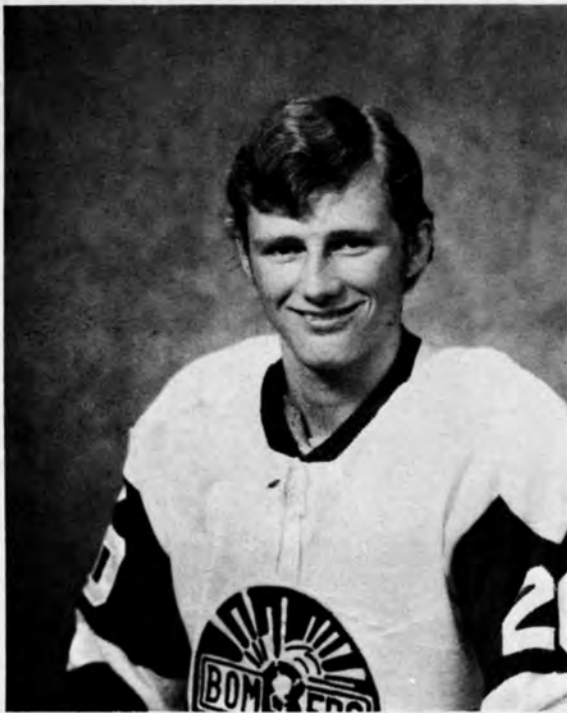
BOARDING

HOLDING



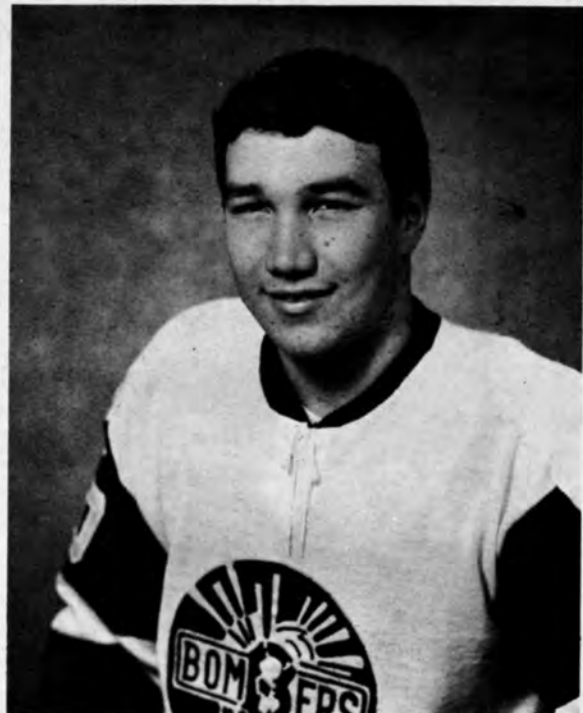
TRIPPING





DUANE BRAY -- Defense

A solid six foot one inch, 180 pound rearguard, Duane faces a bright future. Born and raised in Flin Flon, Duane has played all his hockey in Flin Flon.



MIKE BODNARIK -- Defense

A fine example of the Bombers' system . . . Mike has joined the Bombers from Richmond, B.C. A strong right handed shot packed on a five foot 10 inch, 180 pound frame.

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WCHL GRADUATES

Star products of the WCHL now earning more than their keep in professional hockey l to r. Greg Polis formerly of the Estevan Bruins, Reg Leach and Gene Carr formerly of the Bombers. Photo taken during the All-star dinner in Edmonton during the 1969-70 season.

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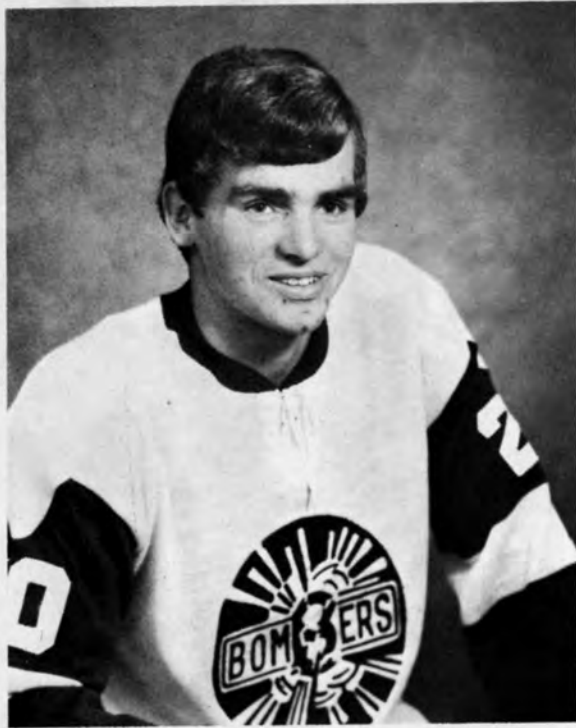
THE BEST OF LUCK
 AND A SUCCESSFUL SEASON



BEST RESULTS

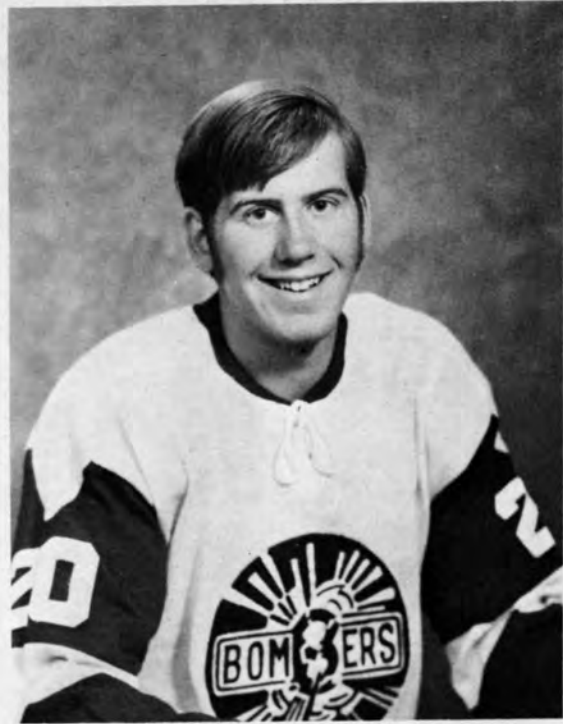
... TEAMWORK IN HOCKEY

... TEAMWORK IN INDUSTRY



MERV KOWALYSHYN -- Right Wing

Merv hails from Melville, Saskatchewan. He worked last winter with the Melville entry in the SJHL and Ginnell is looking for some extra strength on the wing post with Merv in the line-up. Five feet, 10 inches, 175 pounds, 18 years old.



ROD LOYNACHAN -- Left Wing

Rod's present home is in Thompson, but he is no stranger to Bomber fans. Rod drew only eight goals last season for the Bombers, but his two-way ability makes him a valuable asset to Ginnell. Eighteen years old and six feet, one inch and 177 pounds.

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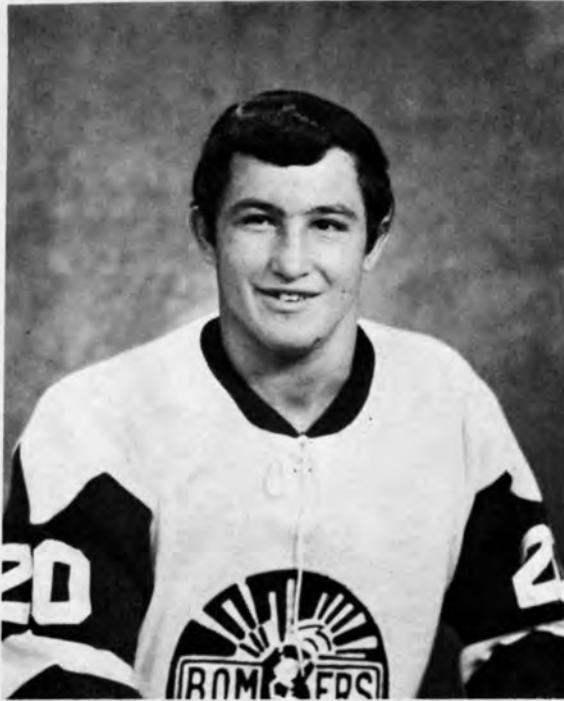
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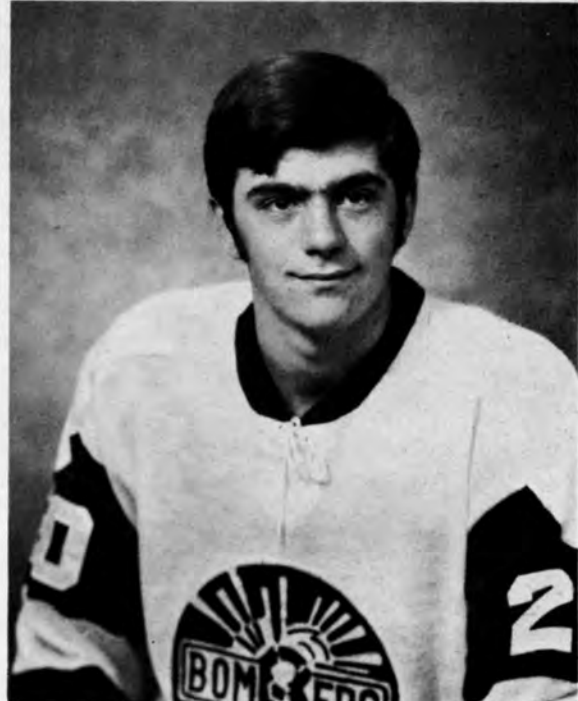
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DENNIS POLONISH -- Right Wing

A first year man, 17 years old, plenty of desire which more than makes up for the fact that Dennis is only five feet five inches and 150 pounds. Dennis calls Foam Lake, Saskatchewan home in the off-season.



CLIFF MORRISON -- Left Wing

Cliff is another great example of the fine seasoned hockey player that comes from the Flin Flon system. Cliff was a member of last year's Provincial Juvenile Championship club. He is 17 years old, five feet nine inches and 154 pounds.

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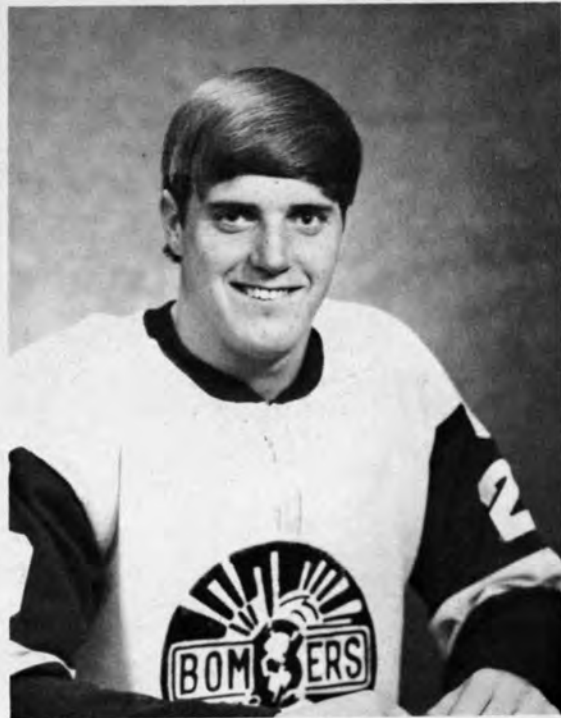


A FAIR
DEAL FOR ALL

BOMBER STATISTICS 1970-71

	GP	G	A	PTS.
C. Arnason	66	79	84	163
G. Carr	62	36	68	104
J. Collins	66	31	64	95
K. Baird	66	35	40	75
D. Shardlow	43	22	35	57
B. Stoughton	35	26	24	50
R. Butterworth	59	13	23	36
D. Morrison	64	16	14	30
R. Wilson	26	10	17	27
A. Hillier	17	6	13	19
A-D. Garinger	56	5	12	17
R. Loynachan	58	8	8	16
B. McKinstry	59	7	6	13
G. Westbury	39	6	5	11
B. Law	50	5	6	11
G. Haverty	47	1	8	9
D. Dutcawich	61	2	6	8
H. Andres	19	0	5	5
R. Maluta	9	0	2	2
D. Moore	20	0	2	2
W. Altamore	1	1	0	1
C. Morrison	2	1	0	1
J. Laidlaw	46	0	0	0

A-Includes 30 games with Medicine Hat



GARY HAVERTY -- Defense

A second year man, Gary showed his toughness last season, and enroute, collected 109 penalty minutes. A stocky five 10 and 190 pounds, Gary is one of Thompson's finest having played all his minor hockey in that community. Gary is draftable this year.

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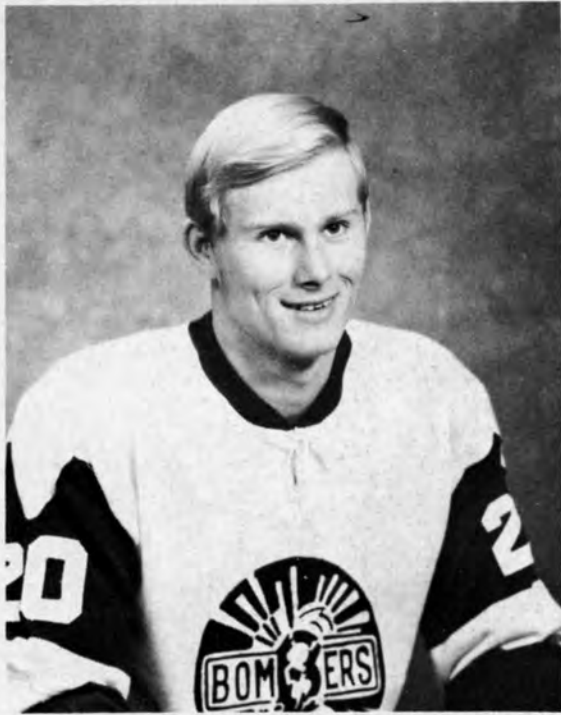


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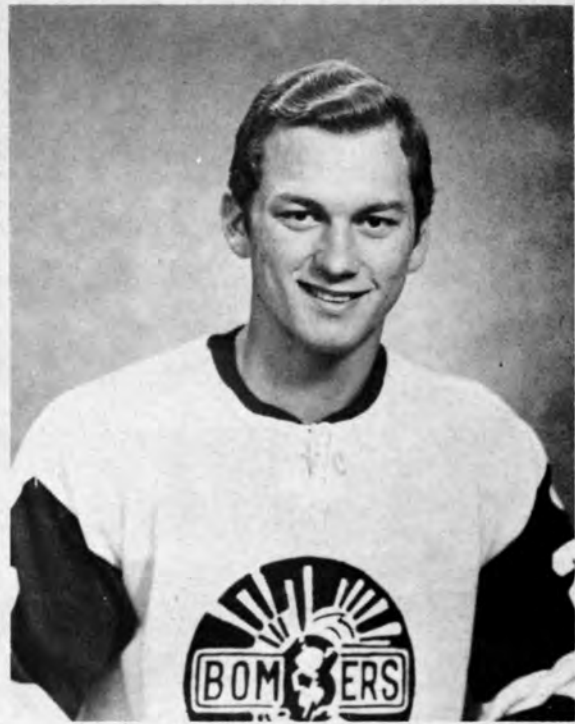
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JACK REYNOLDS -- Defense

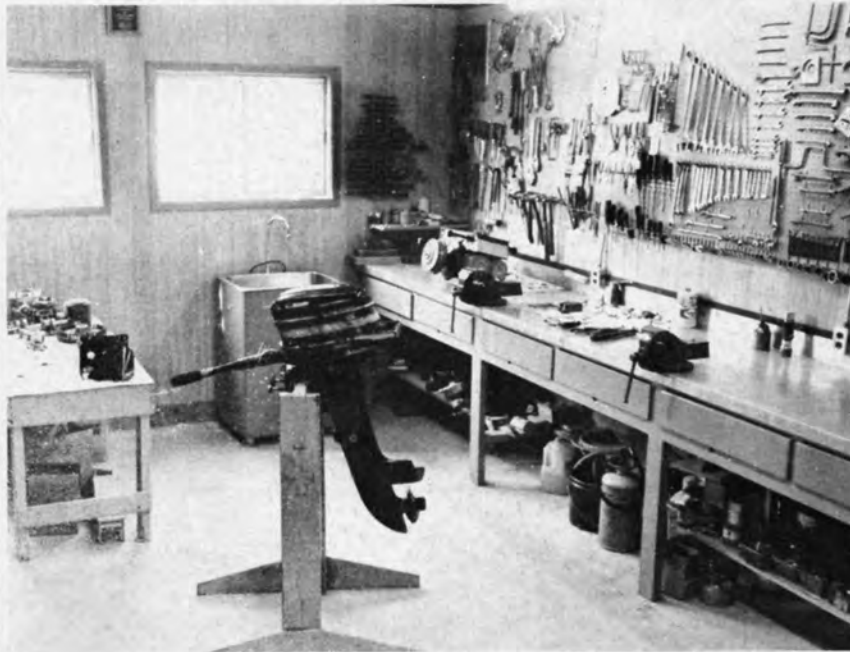
Jack is in his rookie year with the Bombers. Jack is a big six feet two inches and 190 pounds. He hails from Hartney, Manitoba where he was born 18 years ago and where he played all his minor hockey.



BOB MCKINSTRY -- Defense

Bob has undergone a major transition this season as he makes the switch from right wing to defense. He has the ability to make the turnover without losing a step in this, his second season. Bob hails from San Diego in California and stands in at a solid six feet three inches and 206 pounds.

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Every Fan Should Know



1. CHARGING — Rotating clenched fists around one another in front of the body.



2. SLOW WHISTLE — Arm extended above the head, to be used for an icing infraction, delayed offside, or delayed penalty.



3. HIGH STICKING — Holding both fists, clenched, one above the other at the height of the forehead.



4. HOOKING — A series of tugging motions with both arms, as if pulling something towards the body.



5. HOLDING — Clasp either wrist with the other hand well in front of the chest.



6. SLASHING — A series of chopping motions with the edge of one hand across the opposite forearm.



7. ELBOWING — Tapping either elbow with the other hand.



8. TRIPPING — Extending the right leg forward, clear of the ice, and striking it with the right hand below the knee.



9. CROSS-CHECKING — A series of forward and backward motions with both fists clenched extending from the chest.



10. MISCONDUCT — Placing both hands on the hips several times and then pointing to the penalized player.



11. WASH-OUT — Both arms swung laterally across the body with the palms down; when used by referee it indicates goal disallowed; when used by linesmen it indicates no icing or offside.



12. DELAYED PENALTY — Referee points several times to penalized player and then uses "slow whistle" (2) signal until stoppage of play.



13. INTERFERENCE — Arms extended and crossed in front of the body.



14. KNEEING — Extending the right leg forward and clear of the ice and tapping the knee with either hand.



15. ICING — A series of upward motions with the right hand to indicate the possibility of an icing infraction. Upon the completion of icing, signal (2) is given for a whistle.



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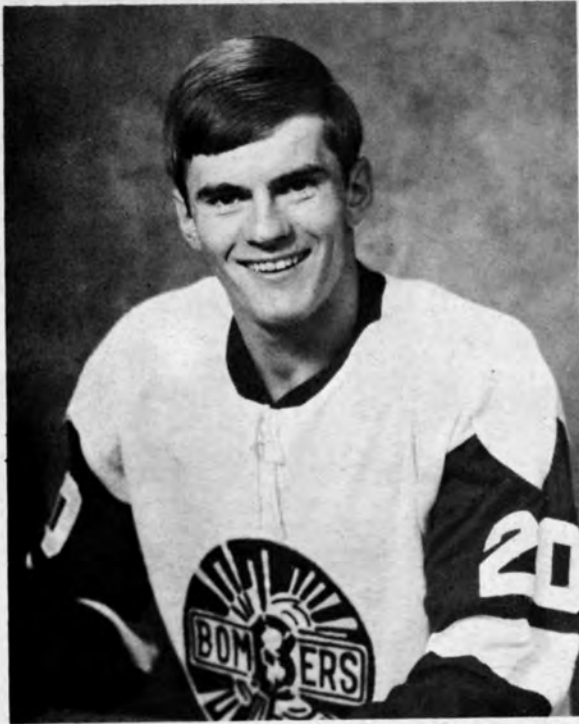
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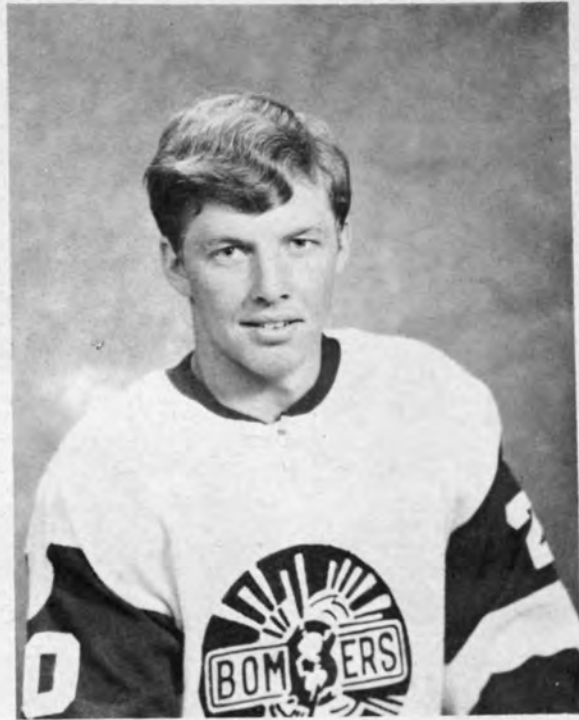
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ROY MALUTA -- Defense

At five feet nine inches and 165 pounds, Roy may not be the largest blueliner, but his desire is top rated. Born in Flin Flon, Roy toiled for the Manitoba entry at the Winter Games and Ginnell is looking for a strong future from this 17 year old.



DON MORRISON -- Left Wing

Don is 19 years old and measures in at five feet nine inches and 165 pounds. Don in his second year with the Bombers has been named Assistant Captain. Don is the third Morrison from Hartney to play for the Bombers in the past five years. Last year Don dropped in with 16 goals and 30 points.

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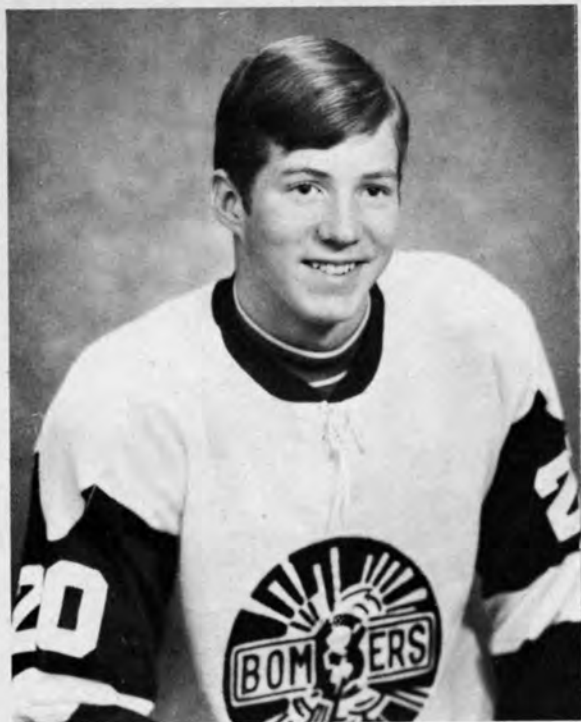
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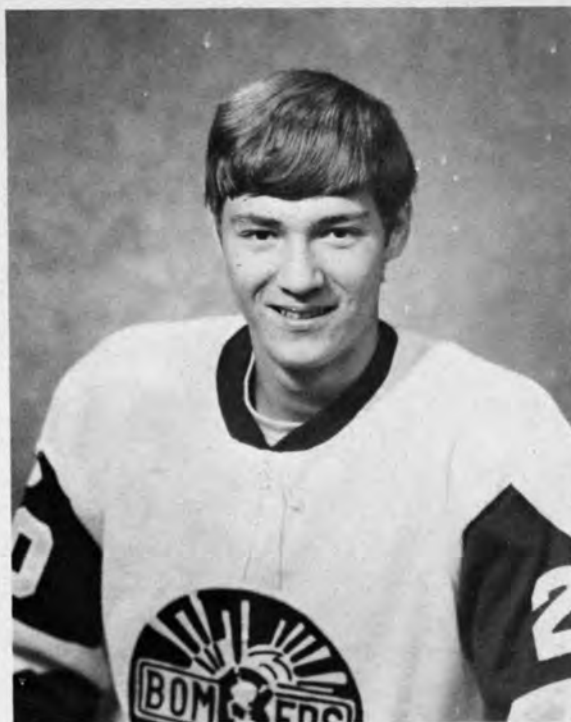


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DOUG HICKS -- Defense

A bright young prospect at only 16 years of age. Doug hails from Thompson. He stands five foot 11 inches and weighs in at 170 pounds. Look for Doug both this season and in the future . . . a strong Bomber prospect.



ROGER SWANSON -- Goal

This is Roger's first year in the crease for the Bombers. Roger stands in at five feet 11 inches and 158 pounds. He is only 16 and appears to have his sights set on a promising Junior career. Born in Flin Flon, Roger played his Midget hockey in Winnipeg the past two seasons.



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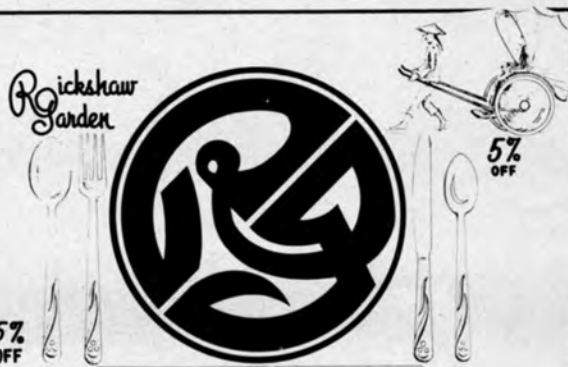
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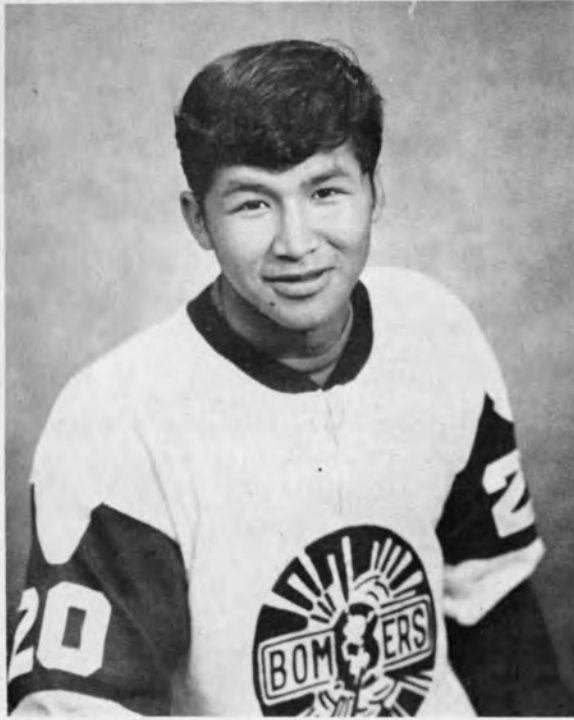
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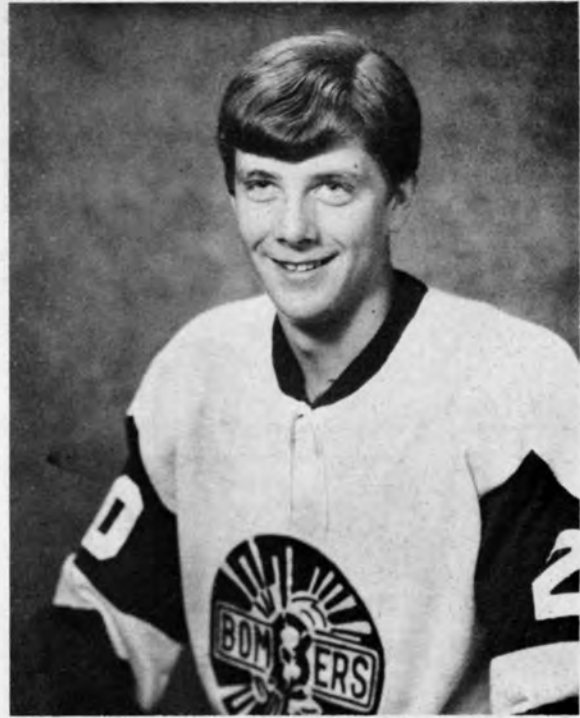
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NORMAN MICHELL -- Right Wing

Norm is in his first year with the Bombers. A 17 year old, he is five foot eight and 160 pounds. Born in Brochet, Manitoba, Norm played last season for The Pas Blues Indian Hockey club; a potential Bomber star.



DOUG ABRAHAMSON -- Centre

A first year man, this 17 year old at six feet and 165 pounds, Doug is another professional hopeful. Doug played last season for the Provincial Midget Champs and will be doing his part in trying to bring WCHL titles to Flin Flon.

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'SLAP SHOT' HEARD ROUND THE WORLD

By David S. Alexander

From The Rotarian

Ice hockey, after all, is just a game . . . isn't it? Then . . .

. . . why is it that practically the only way you can get season's hockey tickets in Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver is to inherit them?

. . . why did fans in Grenoble, France, stand outside a packed rink just to be close to the Olympic championship game between Russia and Canada?

. . . why did a man with a masters degree in finance give up a lucrative job to return to hockey in Minneapolis, Minn., only to lose his life playing the game?

. . . why did Mexico City, Mexico, build a hockey rink, then have to import two hockey teams to pay a game?

. . . why did fans in Boston, Mass., begin fighting in the stands -- a battle so intense that even the players turned around to watch?

Maybe it's because hockey isn't just a game. It's cult; it's insanity; it's an art form; it's a jarring collision of bodies; it's the roar of the crowd; it's emotion -- tears, laughter, clenched fists, nervous sweat, short tempers. A game it is, too -- smooth, flashing skates; deft puck handling; a 120-mile an-hour slap shot; a face-off; a poke check; a save; and, finally, a goal!

Hockey may be the most exciting spectator sport in the world. It certainly is the fastest, and it has more sustained action than any other game. Some individual sports can be enjoyed without spectators, but few team sports can -- definitely not ice hockey. The fans depend upon the players for excitement; the players depend upon the fans for support. Neither is often disappointed. Few sports evoke such heated response from their supporters.

There is an easy way to become a hockey fan -- just go to a game. "No matter what you think of the first two games you see, be sure you see a third. Once you see it, you'll be a hockey fan for life."

Ice hockey originated in Europe sometime in the 18th Century and is generally considered to have evolved from field hockey, played since ancient times. Originally it was played on any frozen surface using any small, hard object as the puck and with branches used to propel the puck. The name of the sport is derived from the French word describing field hockey, hoquet. One meaning for hoquet is shepherd's stick.

In the mid-19th-Century a game of hockey

between two British military teams was played in Canada, and the Canadians took the game to their hearts. By the turn of the century in Canada ice hockey had evolved close to the game it is today.

In 1940, the beginning of order was brought to international hockey with the formation of the International Ice Hockey Federation. The three original members were England, Canada, and the U.S.A. "Today we have some 30 member countries, including representatives from such nations as Italy, South Korea, and the Union of South Africa," says Robert Lebel, of Montreal, past president of the IIHF.

Until the close of World War II hockey remained pretty much a Canadian exclusive -- although other nations did play the sport. It started to grow with the perfection and wide use of artificially refrigerated ice rinks, making hockey practical in more temperate climates than Canada's.

Thomas Lockhart, president of the American Hockey Association, sees a bright future for the sport. "There is nothing hockey can do but grow. Why, we even have three or four registered girls' teams now. The IIHF has recently received an informal request for membership from Turkey, and Mexico is a likely future member. Mexico City built a hockey rink about three years ago, and then the IIHF provided two member teams to play an exhibition game there at Mexico's request."

Wherever hockey goes, its fever spreads among fans and players alike in epidemic proportions. Russia, where hockey wasn't even played until after World War II, claims it has 80,000 youngsters and adults playing ice hockey now. Canada has approximately half-a-million. At Grenoble when Russia won its third gold medal in the Winter Olympic meets, defeating Canada in the finale, 5 - 0, the rink was packed for the game, and even all the standing room was sold. Still other fans stood outside -- maybe just to find out immediately when goals were scored; maybe just to say that they were almost there.

There are few Canadians who aren't interested in their national sport. From the time a youngster is old enough to walk he is on a pair of skates. Shortly after that a hockey stick is added, still later a few protective pads, and -- voila! -- a new hockey player. Canada doesn't dominate the

Continued on page 30

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'SLAP SHOT'

Continued from page 28

World Amateur or Olympic meets, because all of Canada's top players play professionally in the National Hockey League and are thus ineligible for world amateur competition.

Every patch of ice in Canada is covered with boys playing hockey. The National Hockey League clubs (three teams in Canada and eleven in the U.S.A.), with well over 90 percent of its players Canadian-born, start watching a boy as young as 12. By the time a good prospect is 14 or 15 years old he is away at a special boarding school. He studies at one of these schools but his prime interest is hockey, being coached and practicing every spare minute.

Hockey fever in Canada is best exemplified by Montreal's NHL team, the Canadiens. First of all, there is almost never an empty seat in the Forum, the Canadiens' rink. Secondly, most of the seats are sold on a season's basis. You can obtain a season's ticket if your father, or grandfather, has one. He'll leave it to you in his will.

Many observers consider hockey the roughest sport played in the world. Many disabling injuries occur. Bill Masterton, of Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, who played for the Minnesota North Stars in the NHL, had earned his masters degree in finance in 1964, had landed a good job as an accountant, but decided he would rather play hockey than do anything else, so he left his job to do so. He became that league's first fatality when he died of head injuries received in a game. He was checked hard by two opponents, and he landed on the back of his head when he hit the ice. Bill never regained consciousness.

The U.S. Olympic hockey team lost one of its key players in a game won by Sweden, 5 - 2. While trying to retrieve a puck, he lost his balance, slid into the boards which surround a hockey rink, and cracked his ankle. Fortunately, more often than not, injuries in hockey are not disabling. Sizzling pucks, swinging sticks, slashing skates result in much blood being spilled on the ice -- and many surgical stitches and lost teeth -- but little time out of action. Top hockey players realized that physical contact is simply a part of the game and aren't thinking about losing an incisor.

"Hockey is no sport for cowards. Aggression pays off, and not only in games won. The aggressive player not only makes a big contribution to the spectacle, but he is also less liable to be hurt by a checker than the player who tries to avoid a check and is clipped moving away from the play.

"Aggression isn't barreling into a scramble with stick and knees up. It isn't a poorly timed rush from the corner into the goal mouth. It isn't a senseless waste of energy and strength chasing

the puck when it is obvious the play will move in another direction.

"Aggression is a firm desire to win. It is self-confidence. It is the guts to play harder immediately after you have missed a shot or your team has been scored on. It's the drive to get back into the play, playing hard, just after taking a tough check. Aggression is the spirit that keeps a player trying his best, no matter what the score, right up to the end of the game."

The death of Bill Masterton predictably brought forth a cry for protective head gear in the NHL. Proponents of helmets argue that every other part of the player's body is protected. Why not his head? No legislation has yet come from the league, but several players in the NHL, did start wearing helmets right after the tragic accident.

Not in any rule book, but certainly a part of hockey, is the occasional fist fight -- sometimes erupting into a full-fledged donnybrook. A player might feel he has been checked a little too hard, a little too often, and decides it's time to retaliate. It usually begins with a "playful" shove; you know it's the real thing when both players shed their gauntlet gloves and begin swinging away. Often teammates rush to the rescue, and the referee and linesmen (who control the game from the ice) often must enter the fray to break it up. Players usually are hustled to the penalty box -- to the cheers and boos of the crowd. The fights are usually less harmful than the body contact in this fast-skating game. The main problem of a fight on ice is that you can't take a toe-hold and really let your adversary have it. One trick is to pull the other player's jersey up over his head so he can't see . . . and then slug him. Fights among fans aren't uncommon. In an NHL game in Boston, Mass., the fight was so good that players on the Boston Bruins bench stood up, turned around, and craned their necks to witness the action.

Once in a while a fan gets into the act on the ice. In a Stanley Cup game several years ago, between the Chicago Blackhawks and the Montreal Canadiens, a partisan Chicago crowd thought a penalty should have been called against a Montreal player just before Montreal scored what proved to be the winning goal. Debris rained on the ice from the stands in protest -- oranges, programs, eggs, pennies, heated with matches (they stick to the ice when they hit), anything the irate home fans thought was expendable. It was all too much for one paying customer. He leaped over the side boards and ran, slipping and sliding, until he reached the referee and tackled him. A sharp crack to the back of the head with a hockey stick stopped the

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'SLAP SHOT'

Continued from page 30

man. The next day he probably wondered if it was all worth it. His net gain: eight stitches in his head, a stiff fine by the police.

The object of this game, which inspires such fierce devotion, is deceptively simple -- to put the puck (a 1-inch thick by 3-inches in diameter, hard-rubber disk) into the net. Ice hockey is divided into three 20-minute periods and is played on a rink (a maximum 200 feet long by 85 feet wide). An official rink has rounded corners to help in passing the puck, and it is enclosed by 4-foot-high boards which are topped with shatter-proof glass. Each team starts with six players on the ice, a goalie, three offensive players, and two defensive players (although anyone may score a goal).

The referee, (the chief official) starts the game with a face-off, dropping the puck between the two centremen who swipe at it with their sticks. From then on the action stops only for one of various puck infractions, for penalties, or for goals.

When a penalty is called, the violator must go to the penalty box for two, five, or ten minutes, or the balance of the game. Typical penalties result from illegal use of the stick or illegal checks. (A legal check, stopping the opponent with your body, is an integral part of hockey.) Generally, when a player is in the penalty box, his team must play undermanned. The team can be short a maximum of two men -- four of six must always be on the ice.

Goals are scored when the puck is directed over the goal line with the stick. The puck can carom off another player, but it must be hit first with the stick; it can't be kicked into the net or slapped in with the hand. Two basic shots are the slap shot and wrist shot. The slap shot is the more powerful; the puck is "slapped" with the stick after a windup. The wrist shot can be gotten off quicker -- though it doesn't travel as fast as the slap shot -- because the stick blade doesn't leave the ice before the shot. When the puck winds up in the net, the goal is scored, and the resulting crowd reaction is deafening.

With all the excitement provided by players and fans, hockey really needs nothing else to perk up the game. But 30 years ago Thomas Lockhart, who was then associated with a New York, N.Y., hockey team, decided it would be fun to have a real bear lead the visiting Bears hockey team of Hershey (Pa.) to the ice.

"A local radio announcer said he knew there was a roller skating bear performing down the street," recalls Lockhart. "I contacted the bear's trainer, and he agreed to have the bear perform and assured me the transition from

roller skates to ice skates would be no problem.

"The day of the game arrived, and we managed to find some ice skates to fit the bear. At the last minute, though, the trainer decided he'd better be along to keep the bear calm. So I found a pair of skates for him, too, but I never thought to ask whether or not he could use them.

"Well, on cue, the bear hit the ice and skated off beautifully. But when the trainer's skates touched the ice, his feet went out from under him and he landed on his backside. The Hershey Bears' team skated past the fallen trainer, and they and the bear (his rope tether dangling behind him) skated round the rink. Try as he could the trainer couldn't get to his feet, much to the delight of the howling fans. Finally, the trainer's wife called the bear, and two players helped the red-faced trainer off the ice."

The enjoyment and fanaticism shown by hockey fans result in part from their closeness to the play. In some hockey rinks the farthest seat from the ice is 90 feet away. This, plus the violence, speed, and sustained play, gives the fan the impression he is almost a participant -- although this isn't always an advantage. Take the chap who went to see his first hockey game. During it, a puck was deflected out of the rink and smacked him. Result: four lost teeth.

The sustained play lends much to hockey's excitement. It is the only game in which players may be replacing while the clock is running and action is continuing. Once, when a goal was scored by the home team in Chicago, the fans were deliriously happy; and, over the noise, the announcer couldn't make his usual announcement as to who had scored the goal and who had assisted. Play continued, and the announcer had to wait until play stopped. That wasn't for five minutes -- five minutes of constant action. No other sport even approaches that kind of a record.

Hockey's rules, as in most any sport, are quite complex, but it takes only a rudimentary understanding of them to become "hooked". As we says, "be sure you see a third game". And when you see your third, or maybe even your first, you'll wonder why your polite applause has suddenly developed into a full-throated roar of approval. After all, it's only a game isn't it? But what a game! To parody a famous U.S. poet and essayist: "It's the slap shot heard round the world."



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