

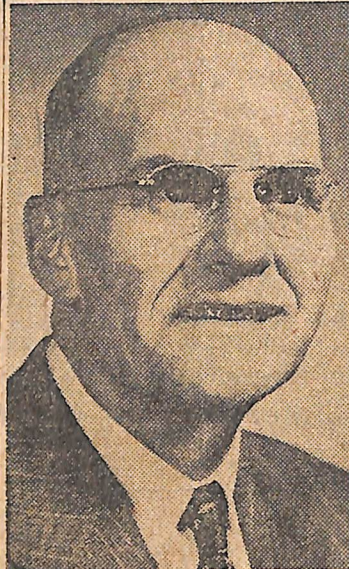
Past Haunts Edmonton as Hockey Struggles to Survive

By PROF. A. H. MILLER

EDMONTON, ALTA.—Basketball, the sport which just a few years ago was rated on a par with tiddle-de-winks and checkers by red-blooded Canadian youngsters, now is threatening to choke off the great Canadian sport of ice hockey at Concordia College here and end an era in which the school gloried for so many decades.

Since the building of the gymnasium in 1953 basketball has gained in popularity and the number of hockey candidates dwindled. At the beginning of this year the sport for a time was dropped to an intramural basis until some plucky students were aroused to give it renewed life.

The situation is a far cry from the days when rough and ready young Concordians battled the elements and the best the city



PROF. HERREILERS

talent. The days when some fine stars and great teams were produced on the white-boarded rink just to the north of the administration building.

Herreilers Recalls

Still on the faculty is Prof. John Herreilers, now in his 38th year here, who likes to reminisce on his many years as coach of the Concordia teams during the two decades of 1923 to 1940.

Prof. Herreilers can remember scrimmaging with some of the great stars of yesteryear. Such as Val Hergesheimer. Known as "Katz," he was reputed to be good enough to make the big time as his two brothers did, but he now is a pastor in Saskatchewan.

Rev. Fred Ulmer, now pastor at nearby Peace Hills, Alta., was "Spatz" in his playing days. He once also tried his hand at basketball (they played a bit on an outdoor court in the dead of

winter) and once in practice he broke one of Coach Herreilers' ribs with his elbow—probably the worst ribbing a prof ever got.

Werschler A Star

Some other stars the professor recalls included Adolf Wagner, Walter Rosnau, J. C. Werschler (a real star, says the former coach), "Petz" Treit and Goalie "Spud" Burkhardt.

Philip Becker is remembered as a great defenseman. Then there was Ed Oldhauer, Philip Janz and "Mosie" Leedahl—all stellar performers. Carl Noack was famed for his blistering shot and once played a game with his feet frozen without knowing it. He now is an announcer at CKUA radio in Edmonton.

In more recent years there was Ted Pearce, now head of the Lutheran Church in England; the Beiderwieden brothers, John

and Carl; the Riedel brothers, Pete Beitsch, Otto Schulz, John Hennig, "Porky" David Schultz who couldn't skate but was a whiz in goal, and many others. Most now are sedate Lutheran pastors but then they were 'hellions' on ice, loving the rough and hard contact of the sport.

Equipment? Shucks, Concordia never had funds for any thing so fancy. Latin exercise books, doubled over, served as shin guards and knee guards. Ordinary mittens served as gloves. Shoulder pads? Didn't need them, nor hip pads.

Boys Worked Hard

Those boys really worked, Prof. Herreilers recalled. They'd practice two hours a day and were tough customers as well as being scientific players.

A twinkle in his eye, the former mentor can remember when Father Hebert of Jesuit College shouted instructions and en-

couragement to his players in French and regularly addressed Prof. Herreilers as "Brother." Often, in the heat of battle, Father Hebert would talk French also to Coach Herreilers, and the latter, not to be outdone, would cheer on the German lads of Concordia in the Gallic tongue.

Early in fall the players sometimes sojourned to Cooking Lake, about 20 miles away, to get on the first ice for practice, even though it was thin.

Then came the cold night when Concordia's rink could be flooded. It required working around the clock for several nights and days. Being out after lights-out was "streng verboten," so anxious eyes would watch for the lights in Director Schwesternnann's house to go out. Then forth would creep the ghostly shapes to take turns handling the big hose all night, fortified by sympathetic kitchen cooks

who prepared sandwiches and hot coffee.

Overcame Obstacles

Did Dr. Schwesternmann know of these shenanigans? "Of course we couldn't allow the students out after curfew. It just wouldn't do. But then, how could there be hockey without ice?" he replied with a twinkle in his eye.

Among the college's opponents were St. Jean's, St. Anthony's, Alberta College, Stony Plain, a box factory team and the "Rink Rats" from the Arena.

Snow storms and bitter, sub-zero weather failed to stop the games. Students and fans stood on the snow banks outside the "boards" to cheer. Sometimes it was so cold that breathing hurt the lungs.

Often in Playoffs

Hardships were fun. Like the time three players stayed over at Stony Plain and skated the 25 miles back the next day.

Over the years the Concordia teams won a good number more games than they lost and often wound up in the city playoffs. In recent years the Beiderwiedens, Riedels, Pearce and Co., went on to Concordia Seminary at St. Louis and there won the city championship.

Those were the days. Are they gone forever? Not if the students can help it. Aided by four recent alumni, a full squad of 15 players again is competing in the Edmonton Commercial League, against teams of older players. Coached by Student Body President Don Mossman, formerly of the Melville Hockey Millionaires, they won one game, 12-2, and tied another, 6-6, for a total of 18 points in two games.

If any of Concordia's alumni can add to the tales of yesteryear or have any records, they are urgently requested to send them in.