

Rookie Jim Ralph shuts out Kingston



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67's Ron Blackmore splits Kingston defencemen Lowell Loveday (24) and Peter Dineen to flick puck past sprawling Avelino Gomez, Jr.

— Tim O'Leary, Citizen

67's put punch where needed — in goals

By Bob Elliott, Jr.
Citizen staff writer

The game wasn't really a masterpiece, but Jim Ralph's first shutout as a junior can still hang in coach Brian Kilrea's gallery of fine works of art.

The 16-year-old Ralph handled only 22 shots in a game which had its most daring aspects provided by fisticuffs, but that shouldn't tarnish the veneer of Ralph's 3-0 white-washing of Kingston Canadians Tuesday at the Civic Centre.

67's scored on a power play at the one-minute mark of the game, added another goal with a two-man advantage early in the second and sat back on their heels to casually end a two-game losing streak and move into a tie for fifth and last with 12 points — but just four points back of the Leyden Division leaders.

The game may be remembered not so much for Ralph's exploits in the Ottawa net, but the two-round session involving 67's Rory Cava and Kingston's Jay Wells.

Make no mistake, Ralph deserved the shutout, but he put it best.

"I figure there were four tough shots, I stopped two and two hit the crossbar," said the 16-year-old Sault Ste. Marie native.

Ralph got a pad on Barry McQuaid's slapshot in the first and did the splits on a long drive by former 67 Peter Dineen, who later came the closest to scoring.

"His shot went off my blocker, hit the bar and I was able to fall on it," said Ralph, who lost his only other starts — an overtime defeat against Soo and a loss to Canadians in Kingston.

"Jim wasn't expecting to be drafted as a minor midget and he's still having trouble getting used to the idea," said Kilrea.

Ralph triumphantly signalled his first win — and first shutout since bantam house league — by raising his arms over his head as the buzzer sounded.

Kingston goaler Avelino Gomez, Jr. did the same thing, displaying some of his

pop's showmanship, after Wells knocked down Cava in the second period.

After a number of blows, the 19-year-old Kingston defenceman staggered Cava to the ice. The first shift after their penalties, second-year man Cava took on Wells and only to be hit square on the mouth and knocked down. This time he lost a tooth.

"Wells didn't go looking for a fight the second time," said Kingston coach Jim Morrison, "but he won't back down. I've never seen him lose."

Wells may be the worse for wear after the fight, however. The Paris, Ont. native needed nine stitches to close a deep gash on his right hand. Kingston already has two players on the shelf.

67's still have the most talented group of spectators in the building. Ed Hospodar, Chris Abbott, Jim Fox and Steve Marengere all watched last night and now Kilrea is worrying about Yvan Joly and Ron Blackmore.

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Joly, who pulled a groin early in the first, set up Sean Simpson for his 11th of the season on a power play one minute into the game.

Blackmore, who was hit in the face with the puck, took a rebound off the post and beat Gomez to make it 2-0. Levack's Pierre Duguay made it 3-0 scoring as John Linseman assisted again less than three minutes later.

For Blackmore it was his third and for Duguay it was a souvenir. Not the goal totals of years gone by for 67's forwards, but not the goals against either.

67's have allowed less goals than any club in the league — with the exception of Emms Division leading Niagara Falls.

"We got careless the other night up 3-0 (against Niagara Falls)," said Kilrea. "We weren't making the same mistake tonight."



Eddie MacCabe

On demon rum and football talk

L'Institut Canadien Francais, on Dalhousie Street, has been in operation for 126 years. They confess that not many of the original members are still alive, but they have been carrying the banner in the established style.

They play snooker, cards, eat well, drink even better than that, and have a consuming interest in sports.

Regularly they hold sports nights, sometimes to honor one of their own old guard who did large things in sports in days of yore; sometimes to honor a current French-Canadian star.

And sometimes, just to pursue their interest and knowledge. Like last night, when they held a football program and invited the Rough Rider coaches, and some old-timers, and saw some football film.

You walk in the door and run smack into Yvon Renaud, a lacrosse star for many years, a widely-known hockey referee, and a respected member of the old sports mob.

There is former defence star Joe Lepine, snooker ace Rene Aubry, old ball players and hockey players and fighters.

Herve Pilon, who played with the Riders back in the thirties, was there, and his nephew Claude, who was an amateur wrestler of international stripe and a member of the Rough Riders last year, was a guest.

They had John Bove and Bob Simpson, Gilles Archambault and Lally Lalonde, and all the Ottawa coaches.

And the fans there go back a long way. There were a number who remembered John Bove's debut in a red Rider suit.

That was in 1951, after the season had started, and Clem Crowe was looking for a defensive tackle. Bove had been dropped by the Philadelphia Eagles, and he came up to join the Riders in Hamilton.

"Just common sense"

They gave him No. 64, which had been worn to that time by Cam Switzer.

But the radio announcer didn't know of the switch, and all afternoon while John starred, Switzer got the public raves.

After he retired, Bove ran pool rooms in Ottawa for years, being horsed out of one location after another as buildings were torn down, or changed hands, until he decided he'd had enough of that. So, he (and Bobby Simpson) are now enthusiastic employees in Ontario liquor stores.

The films were shown by the coaches,

and spliced just as the coaches see them with all the defensive plays on one reel and all the offence on another.

Bob O'Billovich explained the defence, and George Hughes the offence. Brancato sat to one side, and at one point said:

"People try to make this game so complicated. It isn't. It's just common sense."

They were showing an Ottawa-Montreal game, and Brancato said:

"Watch here. The end is supposed to go straight across ... just straight in. But look ... he takes an inside route and he's out of it. Dattilio didn't run, but he could have easily, and got six or seven yards."

"The point of attack ... that's where to look."

But the revellers at the bar were not

to be interrupted for too long by technical football, and so it was not easy to hear.

So, the format was a "howling success," but not quite what they had expected, and despite a turnout of about 200, they'll try it the next time in a room away from the source of the demon rum.

But it was a good, warm experience, as it always is at the institute with those good people, and the Ottawa coaches were still fielding questions when I left at 11 o'clock.

There has been a lot of newspaper talk and conjecture about George Brancato, who has carved such a remarkable record that, inevitably, he is coveted.

We are always led to believe that surely, a little burgh like Ottawa with a

limited budget, cannot hope to keep a coach of such consistent excellence forever, particularly when sound coaches are in short supply all over America.

We have heard, for example, that Conrad Black, the new whiz kid in the financial world, is putting together a syndicate to buy the Argonauts from Bill Hodgson; and that already, unofficial feelers have been sent out to Brancato to come on as general manager and coach.

We have heard too, that in years past, he has had feelers from the New York Giants, and the New York Jets.

Last night we were asked, not once but at least a dozen times, would he ever leave Ottawa?

Well, of course he would. He likes it here. He'd like to stay. And he would

stay for less money than he could get elsewhere.

But security is a consideration. He's not a boy any more. He's 46, has been coaching a long time and he's not interested in staying on the firing line forever.

That brings us to other rumors, that GM Frank Clair's contract runs out this year, and that he will not be signing another.

His contract does run out this year, but he has given no indication he will not want another.

Don't wait 'til spring

Rider president Terry Kiely said: "I brought up the subject with Frank recently, and he told me he had never felt better in his life. So, that was the end of the conversation. I'm sure he has other things on his mind right now, so we'll look at the whole thing right after the season. But ... it's up to him."

There have been rumors since last year that vice-president Jake Dunlap was interested in the job, and with rumors rooted in rumors, there was the further note that Brancato would look elsewhere if his contribution wasn't recognized and the post given to him ... when Frank Clair leaves.

I asked Brancato whether he had received any feelers, however camouflaged, from any sources in Toronto and, direct as ever, he said:

"Nope. All I've heard from are newspaper guys down there ... media people. They talk about it. But, I haven't heard anything."

What about year-old inquiries from the Giants?

"The way they're going this year," he said with a chuckle. The Giants are 5 and 3 so far, hardly disgraceful.

A lot of people, inside football and out, are wondering, and musing aloud; have been for some months and will continue. Likely nothing will be done until after the season and then there is a cooling-off period, a breather, then vacations and scouting and all the rest of it, the Can-Am Bowl, the coaches' convention, and on and on and on.

Better for everyone then, that the football club meet with some people, decide upon a course, and clear the air ... before some people get hurt, or leave, or before all the conjecture leads to ruptured relationships which cannot be healed. Hopes fall harder when allowed to soar too high. Don't wait 'til Spring; do it now.



— Bryce Flynn, Citizen

Sports bash at L'Institut

It was football night at L'Institut Canadien Francais, and Ottawa Rough Riders, past and present, were much in evidence. Left to right, front row, Rider assistant coach Bob O'Billovich, head coach George Brancato and J.P.

Boisvenue (light suit); second row, Claude Pilon, Herve Pilon, Institut president Marcel Ouellette, Bob Simpson and Gilles Archambault; rear, John Bove, Maurice Lapensee, Rolly Hammond and assistant coach George Hughes.