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'Grandmother of Hockey'

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Etobicoke Creek when I was a kid, with Callahan the referee. We just used to have magazines or catalogues for shin pads and we had a stick and that was it. Nobody slashed or body checked; it was all skill, just passing and stick handling. Many of our girls have gone on to play in the Canadettes Hockey Club. This club holds annual Dominion Ladies Hockey Tournament, and our Cooksville team won 4-2 over Thornhill in 1969 for the "C" Division Consolation title. Now that girls hockey is here to stay, I think it is time we bonded together and had a Women's Canadian Hockey Association like the C.A.H.A. for boys.

ME: Do the girls wear regular skates and hockey equipment (breast pads? jock straps?)

MRS. BOYD: They wear tube skates only and regular equipment, and some of the older girls do wear jock straps, and all the goalies do. They can get hit by pucks, too. They all wear breast pads for extra protection. It's just once chance in a thousand that they'll get hit, but it's better to be well protected than take that chance.

ME: Do you have many discipline problems with the players?

MRS. BOYD: At one time, we had swearing and smoking in the dressing rooms, but we took care of that. The executive told the coaches they had to clamp down on it or the girl couldn't play. Now we don't have any problems like that. We have male coaches and a woman as manager. We always have a woman in the dressing room with the girls. We like a husband and wife coach and manager team if we can — it works out very well.

ME: How many girls take advantage of the hockey clinics and power skating classes sponsored by the Mississauga Recreation and Parks Department?

MRS. BOYD: I've had one girl who has taken them for three years now. I'm sure some of the girls take advantage of it — it's very beneficial — but I couldn't say exactly how many. Not too many though, maybe they don't like playing with the boys; this could be the reason more don't take them. Then again, the classes aren't too well advertised and not too many of the girls know about them.

ME: The M.G.H.L. has a representative team that plays in the Ontario Girls Hockey League. Is it made up out of your house league?

MRS. BOYD: We call it All-Star now. Every girl comes out and tries for the All-Star team of her age

group. We have three all-star teams: 8 to 11, 12 to 14, and 14 up. It's not a true representative team though, because some of the girls' parents don't want them on the team — even though they are good enough — because of having to play and practice in Bolton. They play one game a week and have a practice a week, and play games against Brampton, Streetsville and Newtonbrook.

ME: You have been referred to as the "Grandmother of Hockey". Do you take this as a compliment?

MRS. BOYD: That came about because there was a write-up and picture of me in the paper about being a grandmother and still playing hockey. It doesn't make much difference to me, I know what I am. When Roy Morris was president of the Canadettes Hockey Club, he wrote that hockey can be an excellent means of exercise for the body and mind, hockey can bring you a group of new friends and fellowship. I feel hockey is for everyone, no matter what your age.

ME: What other activities do you participate in to keep you young at heart?

MRS. BOYD: I love to jump into my car and go for a drive along back roads — the scenic routes — and see the plants and wildlife. I am looking for a place to buy out in the country. I have always liked the land and I love farming and I love animals. When we were first married, we bought a horse and its name was Nellie. When we were out working in the field and I would stop hoeing, Nellie would stop plowing, and my husband would holler for her to go and she wouldn't; so he would turn to me and say "Get working, Mabel" And when I would start back to work, she would go again. I do sewing, knitting, embroidery and crotcheting. I also read and write poetry. I have a lot of wonderful memories to look back on. I have six children — one girl and five boys — the younger two are twins; they are 24 now, and they were fun to raise. All my children loved sports; my daughter played ball and all my sons played hockey. Two sons still play in industrial leagues. I've always enjoyed every minute I've been involved in sports. I think I get along with everybody quite well. I really enjoy kids; I had the six, and I wouldn't have minded a dozen more. I really like kids; I dig them and I think they must dig me, too. It's nice going to watch some of the older girls who have played for me, and I say I've taught them everything I know. It's a great feeling.