

# Post War Hockey Era of 1947-48

By Waxy Gregoire as told by World War II Veteran Andy Hamelin

Following World War II, men in the services began returning to their hometowns trying to get back into the swing of civilian life and picking up where they left off.

In 1947, leading the way was Jack Rutherford (District Convener) and playing Coach Bunn Deschamps who organized an Intermediate team. "We were looking at being the first Intermediate 'A' team in Midland since the British Consols," recalled Hamelin. A belated entry was submitted to the OHA by Rutherford and Deschamps and the team was accepted into the Georgian Bay League with Coldwater, the Collingwood Intermediates, and the Midland Huskies, a junior 'C' entry.

The team make-up comprised of a bunch of fellows from both Midland and Penetanguishene, mostly players back from the services and the Merchant Marine. The club had tough going from the outset, both on the ice and at the box office. Howard Deschamps approached Branch 68 Legion in Penetanguishene looking for seed money to operate the team despite the fact the team would play their home games in the Midland Arena Gardens.

"On the ice, our biggest challenge was Coldwater. They had some pretty good hockey players from Midland like Harry Morrison, Jack Duggan and others".

As the team entered the playoffs for the All-Ontario, the Legionnaires faced off against Coldwater.

"Coldwater thought they were going to go all the way and we beat them two games straight, they were pi\_ed, losing to us!"

The next round was played against Goderich in a "two games, total goals" series. The team lost the opener 10-7 but rebounded by winning the deciding match by a very lopsided 22-3 trouncing. The Legionnaires then advanced with a decisive edge of 29-13 in total goals.

In the semi-finals the team faced the Georgetown Raiders but unfortunately came up short. Later, Georgetown went on to defeat Markham and winning the Intermediate 'A' title.

"What we didn't know is they (Georgetown) had 5 guys playing senior hockey in Toronto," recalled Hamelin. "We were just a pick up team after the war, trying to recruit as many players from Midland and Penetang, getting enough guys to play. As it turned out, it was not a bad team."



Front row – Moon Bourgeois, Gordon Ambeau, Phil Odesse, Jim Wallace, Jack Sager, Cliff Cote.  
Back row – Jack Rutherford, Eddie Day, Bill Quinn, Stan Swales, Ed Renton, Andy Hamelin,  
Albert (Shiner) Legree, Bun Deschamps, George Beaudoin, Len Leduc,  
Basil McLaughlin, Howard Deschamps, Frank O’Hearn  
Missing: Al Trottier