

# Sid Abel from page C1

remember Abel as much for his broadcast work. On TV and radio, he provided color commentary alongside play-by-play man Bruce Martyn from the mid-1970s until he retired after the 1985-86 season.

"We first met in 1950 when I just started right out of high school for a radio station in Sault Ste. Marie," recalled Martyn, who is now retired and living in Florida.

"Sid was centering the Production Line up there with Lindsay and Howe, and I went down to ask Sid if I could interview him. He was so friendly I couldn't believe it, and (their friendship) continued for 50 years."

Abel was one of the most knowledgeable hockey people he has ever known, Martyn added.

"I just learned more hockey from Sid than anybody in the world, just sitting beside him and listening to him explain things, being with him before and after games and listening to his stories," he said.

"Of all the people I know from 31 years with the Red Wings, the one I know best and consider closest to me was Sid, (former broadcaster) Budd Lynch, too, but Sid was right there."

"He was an amazing person, and he was respected around the league. Anytime you went into another NHL city, people wanted to talk to him. He had the greatest sense of humor in the world. Everything about him was genuine."

Abel spent the last two years of his playing career as player-

coach of the Chicago Blackhawks, but he returned to Detroit in 1968 to coach the Red Wings and later became general manager.

Abel signed former Red Wings defenseman Gary Bergman, now president of the Red Wings Alumni Association and a metro-area businessman, to his first NHL contract in the mid 1960s.

"More importantly than hockey, we were great friends, and our families were very close," Bergman said. "I always said Sid was the finest gentleman who ever walked into a hockey rink. He was an honorable man."

"One of the most important things to a player is knowing he can trust his boss. Anything Sid told you you could take to the bank. He was a first-class guy."

"He's the kind of guy we're really, really, really going to miss," Mrs. Abel said.

Abel's grandson, Brent Johnson, is a goalie with the St. Louis Blues organization, and Abel, who was coach and general manager of the Blues from 1971-73, was one of his biggest fans.

"Sid, even after he got ill and was drafted, his wish was to live long enough to see him play in the NHL," Mrs. Abel said.

"His wish was granted when St. Louis brought him up last year, (and he was in goal for several victories). His grandma was so proud of him, and his prayer was answered when he did see him play in the NHL."

Away from hockey, one of Abel's favorite haunts was Cow-

ley's Old Village Inn in downtown Farmington.

He enjoyed playing euchre with friends, including longtime friend Michael McEvoy of Redford, whom he met at the tavern.

"He was one of the finest gentlemen I've ever met," said McEvoy, who knew Abel for more than 20 years. "He never said a bad word about anybody even if he could."

Abel's ice skills far outshone his card playing skills, however.

"He was a better hockey player than euchre player," he said, jokingly.

McEvoy and two other friends were looking for a fourth player Tuesday afternoon at Cowley's.

"I'll miss the camaraderie, and the hockey toys were tremendous," McEvoy said. "He knew (joke) about everybody since hockey was invented. He liked to have a drink and talk — he was a great talker."

Cowley's manager Carol Rendin agreed with McEvoy's assessment of Abel as a gentleman, especially when it came to his fans.

"He wouldn't refuse anybody an autograph," Rendin said. "It was always a treat to wait on him." An autographed photo of Abel sits in a prominent spot at the bar.

Abel often visited Cowley's with his wife. His favorite drinks were vodka and water with a splash of orange juice, whiskey and water or a Miller Lite.

Another friend, Bill Richardson of Farmington Hills, said Abel had been sick for some

time. Like McEvoy, Richardson met Abel at Cowley's.

"It's so sad," Richardson said. "He'd been sick for over a year; he just slowly wasted away. The only reason he hung on so long was for his grandson."

"He was just an all-around nice person — he and his wife. He was very down to earth and never had a bad word to say about anybody."

Friend Steve Nahina, who met Abel 35 years ago, said Abel shared a special friendship with athletes, including Cowley's owner John Cowley, a former Gaelic (Irish) football player and winner of three Gold Cups.

"You know athletes; they tend to stick together," Nahina said.

**SID ABEL CAREER FACTS:** Abel was born Feb. 22, 1918, in Melville, Saskatchewan, the same Canadian province that produced fellow Red Wings great Gordie Howe.

Abel's NHL career began with the Wings in 1938 and was interrupted for two years (1943-45) while he served with the Royal Canadian Air Force during World War II. He returned to play seven more seasons with the Wings (1945-52) and two as player-coach of the Chicago Blackhawks (1952-54).

Abel is best known as the veteran center man on the Red Wings' famous Production Line, which included young wonders Ted Lindsay and Gordie Howe.

In 612 regular season games, Abel scored 221 goals and had 293 assists in 61 playoffs games, his totals were 28 and 30, respectively. His best season was 1949-50 when he had 24 goals and 35 assists, finishing second in league scoring behind Lindsay, Howe was third.

Abel was named to the All Star team four times and played on three Stanley Cup championship teams in Detroit (1942-43, 1949-50 and 1951-52). He was the Memorial Trophy as the NHL's most valuable player and was named "Hockey's Man of the Year" by Sport Magazine in 1948-49 when he led the league with 28 goals.

# Flyers extend win streak to 4 games

Farmington earned its fourth consecutive hockey victory Monday with a 9-0 shutout of host Waterford Kettering.

Frank Pisard scored two goals and had four assists as the Flyers won for the sixth time in their last seven games.

Farmington improved its record to 15-5 overall, trailing the number of victories it had last year during its inaugural season.

Brian Marion and Mike Lautenbach also scored two goals apiece. Jeff Swanson and Eric Zelman chipped in one goal and one assist each, and Matt Lee accounted for the final goal.

Marion had a pair of assists, too; Glen Hearn was credited with three assists, and David Brown and Kurt Laird assisted on one goal apiece.

Even Farmington goalie Logan McLean, who earned his fourth shutout of the season, had an assist.

The Captains fired 10 shots at McLean in the second period, but the Farmington defense was less giving in the first and last.

McLean turned four and three shots in those periods, respectively. Hearnnet, the Flyers peppered the Kettering net with 40 total shots.

Farmington led 4-0 after one period at Lukeland Ice Arena and 6-0 at the end of two.

On Saturday, the Flyers boosted their Western Lakes Activities Association record to 10-5 by beating host Walled Lake Western, 3-1.

The first of two goals by Kevin Tomerowski gave Farmington a 1-0 lead in the second period, but Western tied the score in the third.

Farmington's Russ Patterson broke the tie with the game-winner, and Tomerows-

ki added an insurance goal.

Lautenbach, Karl Meus, Lee, Laird, Marion and Patterson had one assist apiece.

Greg Dixon was in goal the entire game, making 20 saves for the Flyers, who took 28 shots at the Western net.

Farmington concludes the regular season with a non-league game Friday night against West Blocton at the Farmington Hills Ice Arena. The Flyers beat the Lakers in late November, 6-1.

Farmington's game scheduled for Wednesday, Feb. 16, with Livonia Churchill has been cancelled.

Livonia Public Schools decided to cancel the remainder of the regular season for the Churchill and Livonia Stevenson teams following a brawl at the end of their game Friday. There's a possibility the teams could still participate in the state tournament.

**SHAMROCKS WIN ALPENA TOURNEY**  
 Redford Centurie Central, which played at Trosion on Wednesday, went to Alpena for a tournament last weekend and swept both games.

The Shamrocks (13-1) defeated Marquette, 4-1, in the opener Friday night and blanked Bloomfield Hills Cranbrook, 4-0, on Saturday.

Forward Brandon Kalericki was fantastic, coach Gordie St. John said, and (forward) Mike Ragan was one of the stars up there.

Against Cranbrook, Kalericki scored twice and assisted on CC's other two goals while Ragan had a goal plus two assists. Defenseman Ryan York assisted on three of the four goals.

Defenseman Andrew Eggert scored CC's other goal while Brett John had an assist.

"I should say this," St. John said, "Brian Yost was the best defenseman in the tournament. Forget the scoring, he just was all over the place. He was excellent."

Brian Dunne was in goal for both contests and earned the spot on the all-tournament team.

Marquette narrowed the margin to 2-1, 70 seconds into the middle period but it went back out to a two-goal margin at 9:48 when Tim Rybinski scored, assisted by John Perkonich and Davis.

Ross netted his second goal at 13:42 of the final period, Moss and Sean Oerlich, drawing the assists.

# Whalers stop Sting for 3rd straight victory

It was a game for the goalies Tuesday at Compuware Arena. The Plymouth Whalers' Rob Zepp shone a bit brighter.

Zepp turned away 19 shots on goal, including a penalty shot, in leading the Whalers to their third-straight win, this one by a 1-0 count over the Sarnia Sting in an Ontario Hockey League game Tuesday.

The victory boosted Plymouth into a tie for first in the OHL's West Division with Sault Ste. Marie. The Whalers are 29-17-4.

**HOCKEY**

the Greyhounds 27-20-4. Both teams have 63 points, but the Whalers have played one less game. Sarnia, which is also challenging for the top spot in the West, is 27-20-7 with 61 points.

The game's only goal was scored in the opening period by Eric Gooldy off a feed from Shaun Fisher with 9:04 elapsed.

With 4:26 to play in the first, Plymouth's Andre Robichaud

was called for a trip and a penalty shot was awarded. Zepp, however, made the save on the Sting's Dusty Jamieson.

It was a sign of things to come for both teams as the defenses took over. Sarnia goalie Greg Hewitt was nearly Zepp's equal; he had 24 saves.

The Whalers were just a bit better, against one of the hottest teams in the OHL.

Going into the game, the Sting had been 7-2-1 in its last 10 matches.

**WHALERS WIN PAIR OF GAMES:** Playing in front of a crowd of 3,613 in Sault Ste. Marie, home of the West Division leading Greyhounds, the Whalers faced long odds in a hostile surrounding. And they overcame them, Stephen Morris scoring the game tying goal with 4:11 left in regulation, then getting the game-winner from Nate Kiser 3:01 into overtime to claim a 7-6 win over the Greyhounds.

For the second time in three weeks, the Whalers had to travel to Sault Ste. Marie for a Friday night game, then bus six hours back to Plymouth for a Saturday game. In each case, the Whalers came out double winners.

Saturday night victim was the Guelph Storm, whom they thumped 6-4.

Friday's game against the Greyhounds was a key one. Plymouth twice had to battle back from one goal deficits.

# Earn up to \$100 without spending a dime.

Here's the deal. For a limited time we are offering **FREE** three-line want ads for folks who have things to sell for a few bucks (\$100 or less).

So, say you want to get rid of that old exercise thing, and that fairly new trimming thing, and that thing that could be great if it were fixed up a little. And say that your whole pile of household things that you don't want anymore totals an asking price of \$80. We'll put your ad in the next two issues of your hometown newspaper and it won't cost you a thing!—nothing, nada, zip, zero, zilch.

Then sit back and wait for the phone to ring.

There are a few exclusions to this offer: Dealers, collectibles, pets and garage sales. Other than those four your home **FREE**.

There are only three ways you can submit your **FREE** ad: You can **FAX** us at 734-953-2232, or you can e-mail it to [mulfig@oe.homecomm.net](mailto:mulfig@oe.homecomm.net), or you can fill in the thing there at the right, and **mail** it to us.

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