

GADSBY

FROM PAGE B1

stories and you've had quite a life. Why don't you write a book?"

"They finally talked me into it. I got excited about doing it, because it started bringing back memories about the things that we did."

Perhaps with the help of Howe publisher Del Reddy (whose brother, Mike, is publisher of *Immortal Investment Publishing*), the book idea quickly blossomed into reality.

LOOKING BACK

In 2001-02, over a span of about 12 months, the hockey legend sat down with Michigan resident and USA Today hockey writer Kevin Allen to go over Gadsby's extraordinary life.

Gadsby's tape-recorded words were transformed on to pages thanks to the work of Allen. Interviews took place both at the Gadsby residence and at Western Golf and Country Club in Redford Township, where Gadsby is a member.

"We went chapter-by-chapter, year-by-year, story-by-story," said Gadsby, adding he is very satisfied with how the final product came out.

He's already signed about 1,100 of the 5,000 initial press run, leaving room for special

inscriptions for future orders on his Web site (www.billgadsby.com).

"I'll sign maybe 20 or 25 (at home), and if there's nothing on TV I'll sign another 25," he said.

Hopefully, there soon will be book signings at the Franklin Racquet Club in Southfield and at other locations. Gadsby also hopes to sign copies at Joe Louis Arena, perhaps between periods of Red Wings games. Gadsby's Web site will include information on such appearances.

"I was hoping they'd be in the playoffs (longer)," he said, referring to this year's four-game sweep by Anaheim. "We were really planning on that."

Not all of the stories in Gadsby's life have been happy ones, however. And, to his credit, a couple are included in his book.

Gadsby still gets slightly agitated when recalling the cruel twist of fate in 1964 Stanley Cup finals and when discussing the 1969 weekend he was booed by Norris.

In the spring of 1964, when playing defense for the Wings, Gadsby's bid for a Stanley Cup-clinching goal in Game Six of the finals missed the mark only because it struck the stick knob of completely-screened Toronto goaltender Johnny Bower. A minute later, at 2:43 of overtime, Bob Baun scored the winning goal.

Red Wings' Terry Sawchuk, Game Seven also went to the



The Grateful Gadsby

Maple Leafs, leaving Gadsby and his teammates to watch the Stanley Cup celebration and wonder what happened.

BAD BREAKS

"I was at the point and I remember giving the puck back to (forward) Floyd Smith," Gadsby said. "He gave it back to me and I shot it. I looked at Bower and he was just standing there. The son of a (gun) was going in the top corner, and it hit the handle of his stick."

The Red Wings and Gadsby returned to the finals in 1966, only to lose to Montreal on a controversial overtime goal by Henri Richard.

Gadsby said Richard slid into Detroit goalie Roger Crozier with his arms - and Richard, Crozier and the puck all wound up over the goal line.

"You've got to get the breaks," Gadsby said quietly. As far as his October 1969 firing by Norris, the Red Wings had just defeated Chicago, and the owner and coach had some happy

moments in the dressing room immediately afterward.

"Bruce Norris loved to beat Chicago, because his brother owned the club," Gadsby said. "He had his arm around me after the game and said, 'Bill, you've really got these guys going.' And I said, 'We're going to have a good year.' The next day ..."

Gadsby made a screaming sound, indicating he got the so-called ziggy.

But he doesn't have any regrets - except for not winning a Cup, of course.

"Just like it (book) says, I'm grateful," Gadsby said. "When you read it, you'll see. You'll know why I am so grateful and that's why I named it that."

FAMILY PRIDE

He is especially grateful to still be happily married to his childhood sweetheart, together with their daughters Brenda, Judy, Sandy and Donna.

Gadsby gets out to the golf course about four times a week and is now relatively pain free after hip-replacement surgery in the late 1990s.

There also is involvement with the Red Wings Alumni (he doesn't skate) and occasional visits to the Joe for games.

Gadsby had a scare this winter when doctors found an irregular heartbeat during a routine checkup. He had a pacemaker implanted, and the Gadsbys had to forgo their annual two-month

trek to Hawaii.

These days, he's doing just fine. He and his wife plan to make it back to their island retreat in early 2004.

All four of his daughters contributed their personal insights into the book. Their participation is what Gadsby likes most about it.

"If you knew them you'd say, 'What nice people,'" Gadsby noted. "Everybody likes them. They love each other."

The Gadsby sisters grew into adulthood living with their parents at the ranch home Bill and Edna bought in 1968.

"Gordie (Howe) got us a real estate agent," said Gadsby, noting that Howe then was a Lathrup Village resident. "We looked at 60 homes over three days, and all were in Southfield. This was the second house we looked at."

The Gadsbys were taken by the central location and the fact it was a quiet, well-treed oasis in the middle of a growing metropolis.

Now, he putters in the garden or watches for birds from the patio. But there's less time that, with so many boxes of books to sign.

"(The house) is too big for us now, but we're going to stay put," he said.

Doing so is just another reason Bill Gadsby is grateful.

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BASEBALL

FROM PAGE B1

Farmington swept a doubleheader from host Auburn Hills, 12-2 and 14-12.

Houchins was the winning pitcher and leading hitter in the first game.

He struck out 12, allowed just three hits over seven innings and didn't walk a batter. He hit one, however.

Houchins helped his cause with four hits, which included a double, and knocked in three runs.

Bosler also had three RBI - two on a single and one on a fielder's choice. Volpe had two

hits and Chestney two RBI. Chestney also scored four runs and Kish three.

In the nighttime, Farmington led 9-1 after batting in the top of the third, but Auburn Hills scored eight runs in the bottom half to tie. Post 346 ended the stalemate with a four-run fifth.

Brown was 4-for-5 at bat and had two RBI. James went 3-for-4 and hit two home runs - both solo shots - and had a third RBI with a single.

Chestney played better 2-for-4 and had two RBI each. Farmington had 13 hits and received nine walks.

Kish worked the last two

innings to get the pitching win. He didn't give up a hit or a walk.

Post 346 played host to Berkley Wednesday and will be at home Friday against Milford and Sunday for a doubleheader with league-leading Chief Pontiac, which had a one-game lead over second-place Post 346.

"If the pitching holds up and the defense plays well, we have a chance to really gain ground," Christensen said, adding Berkley and Milford are contenders, too.

"We're slowly pulling away from the pack. It looks like the two teams are going to be us and Chief Pontiac."

HOCKEY

FROM PAGE B1

more consistent, and we're expecting him to score even more for us next year."

Last season, Mitchell scored 18 goals and assisted on 37 others for 55 points in 68 games.

Weber played primarily a backup role for the Whalers in goal this season behind starter Paul Drew. But when called upon, Weber posted excellent numbers, winning 13 of the 17 games he started, with a 2.32 goals against average.

"We got him in a trade with Sault Ste. Marie and he got better and better as the season

went on," Vellucci said. "Our goaltenders see a lot of shots in our practices, and we had a pretty good defensive team. His confidence picked up from there, and he was rewarded by being drafted."

All three players are expected to return to Plymouth next season. The NHL and OHL have an agreement that drafted players return to their junior league teams if they are picked when they are age 19 or younger. After they turn 20, the players are free to play at whatever professional level their ability dictates.

The Whalers also had three players selected in the 2002

Entry Draft. The team got quite a bit more exposure to pro scouts this season thanks to its long run through the playoffs. Plymouth lost to the eventual Memorial Cup champion Kitchener Rangers in seven games in the OHL Western Conference Finals.

Vellucci said the success of the team directly relates to the possibility of the team's players getting drafted.

"The longer you play, the better your chances are of getting drafted because the scouts remember you better," he said. "One thing we stress here is the further the team goes, the further the individuals have a chance to go."

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