

Organized sports in the Municipality of Pontiac

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Hockey, the story of a Pontiac tradition

For many, the Ottawa Valley is the birthplace of hockey in Canada. The Pontiac is certainly not the exception, where a long tradition of this sport has been established. The construction of an indoor ice rink in Shawville around 1912 (probably one of the first in the Upper Ottawa Valley) contributed to the sport's vitality and to the creation of numerous teams in the region¹. At the turn of the century, in 1902, Quyon already had a hockey team. The team of the Quyon Pets in 1980 is also seen on an old postal card, consisting of 12-year old boys and younger². The games are probably held on the River, and later on an ice rink, as portrayed by Gervase O'Reilly, a Quyon resident:

« Quyon hockey teams, they played on the ice out here on the river; they never had a covered arena like Shawville. Quyon was a hockey town. They also played a lot of lacrosse here »³.

« As a young lad, I played bush hockey. I knew I'd never make the big time. But I loved skating and playing hockey. A good skater? Well, I thought I was. We used to wear out the rink here every Saturday night. Open air, of course. Skating with the girls. (...) I loved it. We didn't have music »⁴.

However, the golden years of hockey in the Municipality of Pontiac seem to be the 1920s. In 1929, the Quyon team won the Cahill Shield during the Pontiac County Senior Hockey Championship Tournament⁵. It was the first time that a Quyon team won this title. During the quarter finals for the Citizen Shield, which rewards the best intermediate team of the various leagues of the Ottawa District Hockey Association (ODHA), the team continued its momentum, beating the intermediate team Hull Vimy, champion of the Hull district Division⁶. And thus qualified for the semi-finals, during which it had to compete against the Ottawa Notre Dame team. As to the team that would win the intermediate finals, it would have the chance to

¹ Frank Finnigan, Sr., « I Knew by the Time I Was Nine », in Joan Finnigan's, *Some of the stories I told you were true* (Deneau Publishers & Company, 1981).

² « Quyon Pets », *The Equity*, March 23, 2011.

³ Gervase O'Reilly's story (Quyon, Canada), « Horses, Horses, Horses – And a Horse Railway », in Joan Finnigan's, *Tallying the Tales of the Old-timers* (General Store Publishing House, 1998), p. 134.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ « This was an intermediate, later Senior B, hockey league in the Pontiac region of Quebec just West of Ottawa. It played in the Ottawa District Hockey Association ». See « [Pontiac League](#) », *Ice Hockey wiki*.

⁶ « The Ottawa Citizen (newspaper) contributed plaques to be given to the hockey champions of the Ottawa District Hockey Association at various levels. This was given to the intermediate champions », in « [Ottawa Citizen Shield \(intermediate\)](#) », *Ice Hockey wiki*. See also « [1928-29 Ottawa District Senior Playoffs](#) », *Ice Hockey wiki*.

compete against the Ottawa Shamrocks, senior champions of the ODHA in a game where it may qualify for the East Division of the Allen Cup playoffs. Unfortunately, due to a lack of funds, the Quyon team could not participate in the competition against Notre Dame, and had to forfeit the game⁷.

Also in the 1930s, a small team in Wyman existed, known as the Wyman Maple Leafs, consisting of Jim Pritchard and Edey Campbell playing as defence, Vincent Kilroy played forward, and Bob Pritchard was in the net, it was managed by S. Wyman MacKechnie, assisted by Fred Hutchison. The team played on frozen ponds or on a skating rink in Hutchison's yard during the 1931-32 season. It seized every possible opportunity to play against Quyon, Shawville and Fitzroy Harbour⁸.

In 1932, the Quyon team, always in the intermediate category, won the P.H. Mossop Trophy in the Lower Pontiac Intermediate Hockey League (a trophy awarded from 1928 to 1939, named after a sponsor, who was a car dealer in Shawville)⁹. The Quyon Hockey Team won the championship in this league again in 1936. The team was managed by Alf Smith, a player retired from the Ottawa Silver Sevens (team that played in Ottawa before the Senators) who won the Stanley Cup. Inducted in the Hockey Hall of Fame in 1962, he was a summer resident in Wyman since his childhood. All hockey players, certain of his six brothers played for the Ottawa Silver Sevens¹⁰. In 1939, the Lower Pontiac Hockey League consisted of four teams: Shawville, Elmside, Bristol and Quyon.

Hockey faced a slow period during the Second World War, but the sport was subsequently re-established once again. During the 1950s, the Farmers' Hockey League was active. It consisted only of teams in the Onslow Township (maybe also Eardley) ie. the 7th Line Dairy Kings (North Onslow), the Radfords, a team from Beechgrove and the team from Wyman. The games took place in the Shawville arena twice a week¹¹. The North Onslow team, "the Dairy Kings", seemed to dominate in this small hockey league and achieved many victories¹². During the 1960s, this league was consolidated and expanded, in addition to Quyon, to other villages and hamlets

⁷ S. Wyman MacKechnie, « Good Old Days! », *The Equity*, s. d.

⁸ S. Wyman MacKechnie, « Wyman Maple Leaf hockey reunion », *The Equity*, August 27, 1980; S. Wyman MacKechnie, « Good Old Days! », *The Equity*, s. d.

⁹ « The P. H. Mossop Trophy (1928). A brief history », *The Equity*, s. d.

¹⁰ S. Wyman MacKechnie, « Good Old Days! », *The Equity*, s. d. See also *Souvenir of the Centennial, 1875-1975*.

¹¹ « Dairy Kings Tie Two in This Weeks Farmers Feature », *The Equity*, January 17, 1957; « Radford Gaining Points Still Leads Farmers' League », *The Equity*, February 28, 1957.

¹² « Seventh Line Dairy Kings Win First Game in Farm Finals », *The Equity*, March 6, 1958; « Farmers League Champs », *The Equity*, March 1960.

including Luskville, Elmside and Otter Lake¹³. Around the end of the 1960s, the Shawville Carson's (probably a league that was sponsored by a company) joined the league¹⁴.

During the 1951-52 season, the Quyon Flyers won the Pontiac Intermediate Hockey Championship under the management of Al Martineau¹⁵. In 1968, the team won the title again. It made the finals in the Ottawa District Hockey Association (ODHA) in the intermediate B Division¹⁶. The team won against Embrun, but was defeated by the Cornwall Beavers¹⁷. In 1978, the Quyon Flyers (category 30 years of age and older) won the trophy in the B Division, during the Annual Oldtimers Hockey Tournament, opposite teams from Quebec and Ontario. Members of the team won the title of best defenceman (Roy Soucie), best scorer (Allan Brady and Lorne Fitzgerald) and best goalie (Art MacIntyre)¹⁸.

Hockey tournaments were also organized as part of the Quyon and Luskville winter carnivals, which were held in the 1950s and 1980s respectively. Over the years, these teams have also committed to improving their community. Thus, in 1980, the Quyon Good Timers, an improvised garage league, donated a cheque for 800 dollars to the Pontiac Community Hospital for the purchase of a heart monitor; money that they collected during a friendly game with the Shawville Flying Fathers¹⁹. The Luskville Nugents participated in the Fort-Coulonge Recreation Association Hockey Tournament. In 1980, the team won the tournament in a game against the Petawawa Posties²⁰.

From the beginning of the 1970s and until the 1990s, Quyon has its own hockey league (the Quyon Hockey League) in which several teams evolved, including the Marcotte's BP Station and the McColgans²¹. At the beginning of the 2000s, the Pontiac Ice and Atkinson's Bar, two businesses from Shawville were part of this league, as well as Gavan's (named after the famous establishment)²². In 2001, the « Almost Famous » (previously known as the Underdogs) of Quyon returned a second time to the street hockey championship, in San Diego²³. The same

¹³ « Farm League Hockey. Elmside in Finals Against Quyon – Luskville Winners », *The Equity*, March 1962.

¹⁴ « Farm League Hockey Standings », *The Equity*, February 1968.

¹⁵ « First Quyon Flyer hockey team », *The Equity*, March 11, 1981.

¹⁶ Geoff McColgan, « Quyon Hockey League », *The Equity*, April 2, 1959.

¹⁷ « Banquet to honor Pontiac Champions », *The Equity*, May 2, 1968.

¹⁸ « Quyon Thirty Plus », *The Equity*, February 22, 1978.

¹⁹ « The Flying Fathers here next week », *The Equity*, s.d.; « Quyon Good Timers », *The Equity*, March 26, 1980.

²⁰ « Final wind-up of Pontiac hockey », *The Equity*, April 9, 1980.

²¹ « Quyon Hockey League Winners », *The Equity*, May 4, 1977; Sylvia Bakker, « McColgan's takes Quyon hockey league », *The Equity*, April 2, 1997.

²² Dave Moore, « It's down to Pontiac Ice and Atkinson's in Quyon league finals », *The Equity*, February 28, 2001; see also « Baie Pontiac Campbell's Bay-Litchfield champs », *The Equity*, April 3, 1996.

²³ Dave Moore, « Quyon Break Out team off to coast », *The Equity*, July 25, 2001.

year, the skating rink that had long been where the soccer field is situated, was relocated to its current site²⁴.

Ball sports: baseball, fastball and soccer

Although Quyon had its own badminton club, (the Quyon Badminton Club, consisting of Lester McCann, Laurie MacKechnie, Gervase O'Reilly, etc.) during the 1950s, it was especially baseball and fastball that were most successful in the municipality²⁵. In 1959, Quyon is part of the Upper Ottawa Valley Baseball League, along with Shawville, Campbell's Bay, Sheenboro, Vinton and Otter Lake²⁶. Quyon also had a minor team, the Quyon Little Leaguers²⁷. At a Luskville tournament in 1981, several teams stood out. The Quyon Ranch held the title in the A Division, against another team from Quyon, the Quyon All Stars. The Quyon teams, including every age category, were renamed after the local hockey team "the Quyon Flyers".

In 1995, the Quyon Flyers, a mixed team in the 9 to 11 year-old category managed by Cecile Dumont and Ron Armitage, won the title of the A Division champions, during the final of the Recreational Association's Pontiac Ball League²⁸. At the end of the decade, while there was a slight decline in registration for minor baseball in the Pontiac, this sport remained very popular in the Municipality. In 1999, two younger children's teams and a team of 13 to 15-year olds existed in Quyon²⁹. A new lighting system was also installed following a fundraising campaign held by various community organizations, such as the Quyon Citizens' Committee³⁰.

Since 2008, the Quyon Combat Flyers played in the Greater Ottawa Fastball League, which included six other teams consisting of Ottawa, Stittsville, Carp, Fitzroy Harbour and Kars³¹. In 2015, the Quyon Minor Ball league consists of teams from Quyon and Shawville. Teams existed for each age group from both areas. Thus, there were two teams in the T-Ball and 7 to 9 year old category, and in the 10 to 12 year old category, there were two teams from Shawville and one from Quyon. In the 13 year-old and over category, there was one team from Quyon and one from Shawville³².

The Quyon Sports and Recreation Association was the organization that, with the indispensable help of volunteers, made these summer activities for youth possible. Also, proposed by this organization, and more recently by Groupe Action Jeunesse (Luskville), soccer has become

²⁴ Interview with Mr. Minor Chevrier, October 2015.

²⁵ « Quyon Badminton Club Final Dinner », *The Equity*, May 29, 1958.

²⁶ « Shawville and Quyon Split Double Header », *The Equity*, July 2, 1959.

²⁷ « Little League Champions », *The Equity*, September 17, 1964.

²⁸ Dave Moore, « Flyers clip Calumet in a big way », *The Equity*, August 30, 1995.

²⁹ Dave Moore, « Numbers down for Minor Ball », *The Equity*, April 21, 1999.

³⁰ Paul McGee, « Light Cash », *The Equity*, June 23, 1999.

³¹ Scott Campbell, « Pontiac's only fast and furious ball games », *The Equity*, June 27, 2012.

³² Diana Desabrais, « [Quyon Minor Ball teams celebrate successful season](#) », *The Equity*, August 19, 2015.

extremely popular in Quebec since the 1980s. As an organized sport, it started in the municipality in 1996, under the initiative of Jan de Haan, a player and coach of Dutch origin who founded clubs in Pembroke and Aylmer³³. More than 120 children registered the first season and the vast grounds were equipped by volunteers, where once a year, the Quyon Fair was held on the welcoming site³⁴. Well established in the 2000s and 2010s, an average of approximately 80 to 90 children of Quyon and Luskville registered for soccer³⁵.

³³ Sylvia Bakker, « Soccer to start in Quyon », *The Equity*, February 28, 1996.

³⁴ Sylvia Bakker, « Vandals tear up new Quyon soccer field », *The Equity*, May 29, 1996; « Quyon soccer kicks off », *The Equity*, June 29, 1996.

³⁵ Leah Miller, « Quyon soccer gets under way », *The Equity*, May 11, 2005; Wilber McLean, « Season concludes for Quyon soccer group », *The Equity*, August 27, 2008; Wilbur McLean, « Soccer season wraps up in Quyon », *The Equity*, July 15, 2009.