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Sports / Hockey

# McFarlands headed to Ontario Sports Hall of Fame

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The Belleville McFarlands, winners of the 1959 World Championship for Canada, will be inducted into the Ontario Sports Hall of Fame in Toronto this October. tif, BI, apsmc

JAMES HURST



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The World Champion Belleville McFarlands will be inducted into the Ontario Sports Hall of Fame this October in Toronto.

To mark the occasion, I have compiled a couple of stories about the McFarlands.

As was the case in many Canadian communities, hockey was a most important part of winter in Belleville, dating back to the 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

Belleville was involved in several Senior and Intermediate hockey leagues prior to the formation of the McFarlands. For seven years, Belleville played in a “Senior B” division. Team manager Drury Denyes envisioned the city playing “Senior A” hockey, competing for the Allan Cup.

Floyd Crawford was with the team, and Drury went in search of another leader. He found him in Val-d’Or, Quebec. His name was Armand “Bep” Guidolin.

STORY CONTINUES BELOW

The next player they added was a defenceman from Quebec, Maurice “Moe” Benoit. Benoit was well known for his hip checks, often dumping opponents into the laps of spectators because the boards were low, and there was no glass separating the fans from the players.

Hilary “Minnie” Menard came from a hockey family in Timmins. He had played junior hockey in Barrie and Galt, and had played one game in the NHL with the Chicago Black Hawks.

Keith MacDonald and Dave Jones were the only local players to move from the “Senior B” ranks up to the McFarlands.

In November, 1957, Belleville added another valuable component to the team, a well-traveled goaltender named Gordie Bell. Just after Christmas, Denyes inked “Ike” Hildebrand. He had NHL experience with the Rangers and the Black Hawks.

STORY CONTINUES BELOW



In the spring, the Macs upset the Cornwall Royals in their first playoff series, but fell to the Whitby Dunlops in the second round. The Dunlops went on to win the Allan Cup, then headed overseas to win the World Championship.

In the fall of 1957, the Macs added several key players to their lineup: Barton Bradley, Wayne “Weiner” Brown, Eddie Marineau, Russ Kowalchuk, Lionel Botly, Keith Montgomery, Joe Lepine, and Johnny Muretich.

Following a successful season, the Macs played the Kingston CKLCs in the first round of the playoffs, trouncing them 9-0 in the seventh and deciding game. They then faced the Pembroke Lumber Kings in the Eastern OHA final, winning in six games. The next opponent was the South Porcupine Porkies, with the Macs winning three games straight. The All-Ontario final was against the Kitchener Waterloo Dutchmen. Belleville won in five games.

STORY CONTINUES BELOW

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In the final game of the hotly contested series, the Macs triumphed 8-5 to secure the Allan Cup. They arrived home, wearing cowboy hats, after a long and weary train ride from British Columbia. They were met by a throng of almost 50,000 people, and rode in convertibles down Front Street.

They then prepared for the World Championships, in Europe in 1959. There were major revisions to the lineup. Additions were: Pete Conacher, John Maclellan, Billy Graham, Denis Boucher, George "Goose" Gosselin, Al Dewsbury, Lou Smrke, Jean Paul Lamirande, Fiori Goegan, Marv Edwards, and "Red" Berenson.

They began a series of exhibition games in Great Britain, continuing in continental Europe. The World Championships took place in Czechoslovakia, in March. Following the preliminary round, they faced Russia, the United States, Czechoslovakia, Sweden, and Finland.

In the deciding game in Prague against Russia on March 10, 1959, Denis Boucher, Moe Benoit, and Ike Hildebrand scored to lead the Macs to a 3-1 victory to become World Champions.



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