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## INSTANT REPLAY:

By Len Corben

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## HowE about that...

Len Corben clears off his desk with some little items you might like



### SKETCHING GORDIE -

Before becoming famous for her For Better or For Worse comic strip, Lynn Johnston (holding a figurine of Gordie Howe) drew caricatures of hockey players like Howe for television. *Johnston: Len Corben photo, Howe: Canadian Archives collection.*

**Y**ou wouldn't normally see the names of "Mr. Hockey" **Gordie Howe** and *For Better or For Worse* cartoonist **Lynn Johnston** in the same paragraph.

But with the 85-year-old Howe scheduled to be the honorary host of the Scotiabank Hockey for Alzheimers Tournament at Canlan Ice Sports on Mt. Seymour Parkway coming up Nov. 15-17, it seems like a good time to tell you how Johnston and Howe connected 40 years ago during the 1973-74 hockey season, the second year of the upstart World Hockey Association. Johnston was **Lynn Ridgway** when she graduated from North Van High in 1965 where her mischievous doodles were everywhere in the school annuals she edited. She had not yet begun sketching her famous cartoon strip when she landed a job with the fledgling Global Television Network doing caricatures of the WHA players being interviewed on the broadcasts.

"The art work was on camera," Lynn explained to me some years ago. "It would be put up and then dissolve into the person they were interviewing. So if they were going to interview Gordie Howe, there would be a close-up of the cartoon of Gordie Howe and then it would dissolve to Gordie Howe himself. They used to give the artwork to the athlete as a gift and so I often didn't get it back. Gordie Howe's I got back."

Howe was returning to the ice that season with the WHA Houston Aeros after retiring from the NHL in 1971 following 25 years with Detroit. The Aeros finished on top of the western division as Howe topped the team in scoring with 100 points and was awarded the league's MVP trophy. Houston went on to win the Avco World Trophy, the WHA equivalent of the Stanley Cup

I expressed interest in seeing any of the caricatures Lynn still had but she wasn't sure exactly where they were. In the fall of 2009 she shipped off more than 4,000 original pieces of her work up to 1995 to the Canadian Archives and Special Collections in Ottawa.

It wasn't until September 2010 that art archivist **Jennifer Devine** began the task of sorting through the 25 boxes of artwork to catalogue the contents. By November 2011 she had found 12 hockey cartoons including two of Howe, six other players, a referee, several team logos and a funny one of two lawyers – one representing the WHA and the other the NHL – arguing in front of a judge. In January 2012, after Jennifer had scanned and sent them to me, it only took about an hour to identify **Wayne Carleton, Gerry Cheevers, Ted Green, Harry Howell, Johnny McKenzie, and Mike Walton**, although the referee is still unknown...

**FOOTBALL FEVER:** Remember when **Hec Rossetti's** North Van Norsemen and **Bill Parnell's** Delbrook Hilltoppers played their annual football game for The Helmet Trophy? Now, with the huge success that Carson Graham and Handsworth have with their annual Buchanan Bowl game, under the direction of **Larry Donohoe**, you'd think that with Argyle back on the gridiron scene that the Pipers and Windsor

Dukes would use their A&W initials to get a special sponsor for a similar annual grudge game called, perhaps, the A&W Bowl. It wouldn't take much imagination to guess who might want to provide some backing for a game like this set for a Saturday afternoon what with one A&W restaurant near Argyle in Lynn Valley and another at Parkgate in the Windsor area. The two schools are scheduled to play their league game this season on Friday, Nov. 1 at 2:30 at William Griffin Field, so it's too late for this year. How about next?...

**BASEBALL BANTER:** When **Ernie Kershaw** died last year at 102 years and 130 days, the long-time West Van High math teacher and former Caplanos pitcher in the 1930s and '40s was believed to be the oldest-living former professional baseball player then alive. **Connie Marrero**, former Washington Senators' big league hurler, passed Ernie in longevity in late

August and is now the oldest-living former major leaguer still alive and the second-oldest ever behind **Chester “Red” Hoff** who died at 107. Marrero lives in Cuba and **Kit Krieger**, retired West Van teacher and former WVTA and BC Teachers’ Federation president, regularly hosts his Cubaball Tours to the land of Fidel, including a visit to see Marrero for whom Krieger has faithfully raised money in lieu of Marrero’s inability for the longest time to get a major league pension. The next tour, organized through West Van’s Prime Travel, is slated for Feb. 14-22, 2014...

**ODDS AND ENDS: Gerry Karvelis** had the toughest September start up in his seven years as co-ordinator of athletics for the North Shore Secondary Schools’ Athletic Association – the organization that runs all high school sports competition across North and West Van, up to Squamish and over to the Sunshine Coast – after **Leslie Pasternak**, his part-time assistant the past two years, left to take the head secretary position at Lynnmour elementary at the beginning of the school year. The assistant’s position has now been filled with **Jaimie Allan** who began last week...

**Fred Winters**, the much-ballyhooed national volleyball team captain “from Victoria” (okay, he was born there) who played in the recent NORCECA (North and Central America and Caribbean) championships in Langley, is actually the same Fred Winters who graduated from Carson Graham in 2000. However, as a basketball player, he was a North Shore first all-star, Howe Sound Tournament MVP and B.C. first all-star with the Eagles’ hoops team which placed third in that year’s provincial “AAA” tournament. Though he preferred basketball over volleyball at the time, he took a volleyball scholarship to Pepperdine University in Malibu, California, where he was a two-time All-American as well as a conference all-academic. He’s been with our national team ever since and plays professionally with a team in Beijing.

*This is episode 490 from Len Corben’s treasure chest of stories – the great events and the quirky – that bring to life the North Shore’s rich sports history.*