



# Mel the skate man marks 25 years

By DAN PELTON  
Staff Reporter

When aspiring NHLers and others take their blades to Mel's Pro Shop at the Alder Recreation Centre for maintenance, they are leaving their equipment in the hands of a man with a quarter century of experience.

Mel Zahodnik will be honoured for his years of dedication when local dignitaries join others on Sept. 12 at 1 p.m. for a tribute to the skate man of Orangeville.

In 1983 Mel worked part time at the Tony Rose Memorial Sports Complex under manager George O'Neill. During that time

**OPP charge four**  
Last Saturday saw Caledon OPP officers, with the help of vigilant motorists, lay impaired driving charges against four drivers, all of whom had their licences suspended for 90 days.

At 2:18 a.m., an officer on general patrol observed a brown BMW convertible stop at a green light at the intersection of Innis Lake Road and Old Church Road. Charged was Louis Mastromatteo, 41, of Caledon with driving with more than 80 mg/100 mL of alcohol in his blood.

Four hours later, at 6:15 a.m., a motorist contacted the OPP to report that a motor vehicle had collided with a parked car at County Road 109 and Highway 10. Charged was Kabir Sankar, 21, of Newmarket with impaired driving and driving with more than 80 mg/100 mL of alcohol in his blood.

That afternoon, another motorist contacted the OPP to report a suspected impaired driver travelling westbound on Mayfield Road near Innis Lake Road.

Kevin McKay, 47, of Toronto was charged with impaired driving and driving with more than 80 mg/100 mL of alcohol in his blood.

At 11 p.m. Saturday, a Caledon OPP officer on patrol in the parking lot of a local golf club observed a pickup truck collide with another parked car, then move to another part of the parking lot where the male driver left his vehicle. Shaun Cunningham, 28, of Caledon was charged with impaired driving, dangerous driving, failing to remain at the scene of an accident and failure to provide a breath sample.

the skate shop was for sale and Mel decided to purchase it.

From humble beginnings of selling tape, laces and sharpening skates, Mel grew to owning shops in Tony Rose and the Alder Street Recreation Centre.

Mel was trained by Blade Master in the cutting edge of skate sharpening and he also frequented the trade shows in Toronto and Montreal. During this time he decided to increase his business, adding riveters that repair eyelets, rivets, blades and holders.

At present Mel has four riveters, one for each operation at his current location. He also does contouring to give the player better manoeuvrability and be easier on leg muscles. Depending on the player's positioning (whether forward or defence) the skates are contoured to a setting customized for the skater.

Over the years Mel has increased his supplies to include various colours of

laces, tape and also in supplies of various styles of sticks. Being well stocked with supplies makes it more convenient to the local skaters who perhaps need skates sharpened or equipment repaired during their games, often in an urgent situation. Mel is well able to accommodate emergencies with all the equipment and techniques he has acquired.

In addition to the skate products he carries hats, touques and souvenirs, and can make custom orders through his many suppliers.

All this and his good reputation and repeat business designated him to be the people's choice as their number #1 Skate Sharpener for the past 25 years.

Satisfaction in his trade comes in forms other than business success for Mr. Zahodnik. For one thing, he is proud of his longevity in skate maintenance.

"I did the skates for kids who have become adults

and now I'm doing their kids' skates," he says. "The second generation is coming around."

As well, people come from as far away as Oakville and Burlington to have Mr. Zahodnik work on their blades.

He is more than a mere skate sharpener. He can also help skates, which can cost in the neighbourhood of \$600 these days, last longer.

"If the boot is still in decent shape, I can put in new blades and holders," he explains. "If they're taken care of, a pair of

skates can last up to 20 years."

Over the years Mel has sharpened skates of players such as Jeff Cowan and Dan Ellis who have gone on to become NHL players. Jeff's jersey is hanging in Mel's shop along with that of Mel's cousin Dave Andreychuk and memorabilia, newspaper cuttings of the Tampa Bay team and articles about Dave in his home city of Hamilton.

He has obtained quite a following over the years, having the machinery to sharpen both hockey skates and figure skates.

## It's Cruisin' for a Cause Day

The public is invited to join A&W and classic car enthusiasts from Orangeville and surrounding areas today (Thursday, Sept. 27) for an afternoon of old-fashion family fun featuring vintage cars and A&W food.

Hot rods, classic cars, Teen burgers and delicious root beer floats are all on

the menu as A&W Food Services of Canada celebrates Cruisin' for a Cause Day to support the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada. In Canada, multiple sclerosis is the most common neurological disease of young adults.

Event activities will include:

- \$1 from every Teen Burger sold being donated to MS Society of Canada
  - Lots of classic cars and hot rods on display
  - Root beer chugging and Grandpa burger eating competitions
- The event will run from 4 to 8 p.m. at the Orangeville outlet, 44 Broadway.

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