

TIME STAMP  
1974



**NOT JUST ANOTHER PRETTY FACE**

Andy Brown's official O-Pee-Chee playing card (above) proclaimed that when he started as a goalie, "he had trouble adjusting to a face-mask." Brown always maintained that he just plain didn't like them. He played without one for three seasons with the Indianapolis Racers.

horrific injuries, anxiety disorders, you name it—all because of the stress of playing without masks," he says.

Brown, who lost two toes working in the steel mills during his early years on the ice when money was tight, had back surgery, lots of broken bones, and many stitches over a hockey career that cost him all but two of his teeth. Why did he continue to play goalie without a mask long after his peers had changed? "I just didn't like them," says Brown, who once racked up an impressive-for-a-goalie 75 penalty minutes in one season. "You get stubborn as you get older." The important thing, says the Ontario-born Brown, was that he wasn't afraid to play barefaced. "If you feel fear, no matter what you're doing in life, you won't succeed," he says.

Brown's dad had been an NHL player, and he signed with the Racers in part because he wanted to be close to the Brickyard. He left the game when the Racers canceled his contract. "They shafted me and some other guys so they could sign Wayne Gretzky," he says. Brown took Racers owner Nelson Skalbania to court, but the team folded, and he never got a dime. He hasn't been back inside a hockey arena since his playing days. But he still thinks

about them fondly. "Hell yes, I miss it," he says. "But I love my horses, and I'm happy with how my life turned out." ■

# Face Value

Andy Brown, now of Trafalgar, shrugged off flying pucks as hockey's last mask-less goalie. **BY DAVE SEMINARA**

**FROM 1974 TO 1978**, the Indianapolis Racers played hockey as a member of the WHA, a long-defunct rival league to the NHL. They were the toast of the town, but with their long hair, bushy mustaches, and mutton-chop sideburns, they looked more like a classic-rock band than a hockey club. Even on this team of free spirits, there was one man on the ice who stood out. He was the team goalie, and he wore no mask.

Andy Brown was a journeyman goaltender, part-time racecar driver, and full-time tough guy who holds a unique place in hockey history: He was the last goalie to appear in an NHL game with no mask, and he continued playing without headgear in games

for three seasons in Indy. After his contract was abruptly canceled in 1977, Brown retired and essentially cut off all ties with the sport. A representative from the NHL Players Association thought Brown had died. But he's alive and well at 75, breeding racehorses in Trafalgar.

Jim Hynes, a hockey historian who co-wrote *Saving Face: The Art and History of the Goalie Mask*, devoted an entire chapter to the psychological problems goalies suffered in the pre-mask era before the 1960s. "Nervous breakdowns, alcoholism,

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