

Elephant and marching band all in day's work

Scenes shot in north end for 10-minute film about a boy's hockey fantasy

By DON FRASER
Standard Staff

A boy's Montreal Canadiens fantasy is coming to life on a film set Saturday morning in north St. Catharines. At a cul-de-sac on Nello Street, homes are festooned with bunting in red, white, and blue Canadiens colours.

Marching out of an alleyway, the 50-piece E.L. Crossley Marching Band from Fonthill performs repeated takes in a sequence that includes shapely winged angels and bleating lambs.

Waiting for her upcoming scene is a visitor from the Bowmanville Zoo — a 44-year-old Asian elephant called Limba.

"OK, we'll get it next time guys," says Mark Montefiore, a St. Catharines native and the film's writer and director.

In one instance, the filmed action doesn't fit properly inside the camera frame. In another, the timing of the high school band is off by a hair.

After several takes, the scene is nailed. Montefiore noticeably relaxes and the crew of about 50 look less edgy. "That was our first shot of the day and we've got it," Montefiore says. "It's gone really well."

The 10-minute film is called Back in '93 and will likely be shown with other short films early next year on the Citytv, YTV and Bravo stations.

Tino, the main character played by Ricardo Hoyos, is a 10-year-old Habs fan who has to keep his passion a secret from his Toronto Maple Leafs-adoring St. Catharines buddies.

Stanley Cup playoffs create added tension for Tino as the Leafs and his beloved Canadiens square off for possible victory.

Filming took place from Friday to Sunday, and included interior shots and a scene in front of the Sts. Cyril and Methodius Church in north St. Catharines.

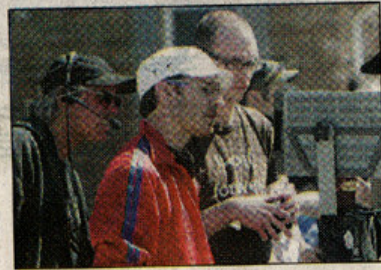
"It's always tough with child actors and a large cast, but they're doing a great job."
Mark Montefiore

David Gaines, who directs the high school marching band, praised the professionalism of the weekend shoot. "Everything has been on time, and my idea of a good day is when nobody gets hurt," said Gaines.

The students were being characteristically stoic through the takes, he said. "They are used to very long hot and freezing cold days — they're tougher than they look."

Band member Scott Haines, 18, was in a staging area near the set and commented wryly on the drudgery of a movie shoot: "Lots of repeating; do this again, do that again, go back to position one," said Haines. "It's kind of amazing to see how long it takes to actually film 30 seconds."

But the oddest part, by far, is the plotline, he said: "The Montreal Cana-



Nello Street was busy this weekend as writer-director Mark Montefiore, in red at left, and his crew filmed scenes for Back in '93, a short film about a young Habs fan living among the Leaf Nation. The film includes the E.L. Crossley Marching Band, above, an elephant from the Bowmanville Zoo, below.

STAFF PHOTOS BY BOB TYMCZYSZYN

