



Victory at Paradise Hill

William Roy Brownridge

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The Story

Danny, star of William Brownridge's two bestsellers, *The Moccasin Goalie* and *The Final Game*, is back with his friends, Anita and Petou, his dog, Bingo, and his brother, Bob, who plays for the Toronto Maple Leafs. Danny and Anita have been turned out of the league, Danny because he can't wear skates and Anita because she's a girl, and Bob has come home under mysterious circumstances. On the way back from a local tournament, Bob reveals his secret, that he can't play hockey anymore. Danny must put aside his own troubles to seek a way to help his brother.

The Author/Illustrator

William Roy Brownridge is a native of Saskatchewan. Like the hero of his Moccasin Goalie titles, Bill lived for hockey and played in goal despite being unable to wear skates. In *Victory at Paradise Hill*, he once again demonstrates the unique artistic style, the flair for storytelling and the feel for prairie life that made the first two volumes perennial favourites. Bill lives in Calgary where, after a successful career as a graphic designer, he devotes himself full time to painting.

The Ideas

- Find out more about the life and art of William Brownridge by visiting his website at www.heartofhockey.com
- Once you have read about William Brownridge's artistic technique, see if you can create a painting in a similar style.
- At the end of *Victory at Paradise Hill*, Bob and Danny are headed off to the rink together. What do you think Bob will teach Danny and the others? Will Bob like being a coach? Write a few pages or a whole story about what happens next.
- Have any of your dreams ever seemed to melt, like Danny's does? What happened? What did you do about it? Or what might you do in the

future? Write a journal entry or a story based on what happened or what might happen to you.

- Bingo plays an important role in this story. What do you think Bingo might do to save the day in the next story? Write about that or paint pictures showing what Bingo does.
- Research the impressionist painters. In what ways is William Brownridge's work impressionistic and in what ways is it not?
- Create a storyboard like a simple comic strip, maybe 3 to 5 frames, and add your own words in balloons. This is a great way of visualizing unfolding action and stimulating the creation of dialogue. Draw large pictures with each frame filling a sheet of paper. Then they can be taped together and pinned up as a finished piece.

A Few Words from the Author

Dear Readers,

My inspiration to paint comes from three main sources. Being born with crippled legs and unable to participate in athletics has left me fascinated with all types of action. The environment into which I was born, the Canadian prairies, is cold for six months of the year and has given me a love of winter, both its shining beauty and its starkness. My brothers were great hockey players and they became my heroes and showed me the power, the speed and grace of the game – a game that at its best teaches courage and selflessness.

I was born in Rosetown, Saskatchewan, in 1932, the youngest of five children. Our family was poor, but Dad was hardworking, striving to gain seniority with the CNR as a telegrapher/agent. I had spina bifida and club feet. My medical history is so long that I've forgotten parts of it. My family was very good to me, and still today, my two sisters nurture and assist me in many ways.

As a child, I was a classic worshipper. My first heroes were my two brothers. It was 1940 and Canada was at war. Bob and Don were both pilots in the RCAF, and both played hockey. Before the war, Bob was a star in the American Hockey League with the New York Rovers—farm team of The Rangers. Don

was ferrying bombers to England and India. Comparing them to myself left me in awe. They were strong, handsome, leading lives of high adventure in far away places. I was a kid sitting on a station platform in Saskatchewan with a crippled leg. I was dazzled by them.

Naturally, my handicaps have shaped my life. Because I had to sit a lot, I started to draw, then paint. I began to see that art might be a way to escape my immobility, to gain some degree of independence. I received formal training at the Alberta Institute of Technology and Art. My world expanded. I graduated as a graphic designer and quickly plunged into the world of advertising. Those years were very rewarding, but I always dreamt of being able to devote myself to personal expression through painting. Now I'm pursuing the dream.

As far back as I can remember, I guess because of Bob, my interest fastened on hockey. My most indelible memories are of the outdoor rink, where the frozen air seemed to sharpen all sounds – the clash of sticks, the hiss of skate blades and the crack of pucks on boards.

Looking back, hockey was far more than just fun. The rink was where we had a crash course in behavior and socialization. In an afternoon scrimmage we might encounter bullying, cheating, embarrassment, even a bruise or a scrape. Equally, we saw other qualities – courage, determination, patience and discipline. Here was life in a microcosm. Because of “The Game” the good things always overcame and controlled the bad. We loved the game and no bad behavior could change our focus.

The central concept for my stories always flows from personal experience. All my life I've had to adapt to abrupt change of circumstances, many disappointments, and still keep moving forward. Often what was a disaster at first, turned out to be a bend in the road. I spent hundreds of hours in my youth having to sit, waiting for my feet to heal, not able to take a single step. For me this was an agonizing time of life. With no TV, videos, or computers, the hours were spent reading and drawing. Ironically that was the beginning of my career as an artist and a writer. It seemed a natural progression for Danny and Bob to meet adversity and keep going. In the real world many people seem unable to handle setbacks. They either give up on the dream or crash. I would like to show them another possibility.

My painting technique is impressionistic. Being a prairie dweller, I am fascinated by the effects of light: its luminosity, its relationships, its moods, and, of course, its colors. I relish “fat” paint and, now more than ever, love to use its texture and encrustment. Bright color is an important element in

my painting. Working with the full chromatic scale is a real passion. Perhaps because I could never run or skate, my work is often filled with action. I have studied movement all my life and usually you will find the power of diagonals in every composition. Spontaneity is important in my approach to painting. I work directly and usually finish a piece in three or four sessions.

Happy reading!

Bill

(Material for the above letter was taken from my website at www.heartofhockey.com)

Other Books about Hockey

Picturebooks

David Bouchard. *That's Hockey*. Illustrated by Dean Griffiths. (2002, Orca).

William Brownridge. *The Moccasin Goalie* (1995, Orca); *The Final Game* (1997, Orca).

Roch Carriere. *The Hockey Sweater* (1985, Tundra).

Jack Siemiatycki and Avi Slodovnick. *The Hockey Card*. Illustrated by Doris Barrette. (2002, Lobster).

Novels

Anne Laurel Carter. *In the Clear*. (2001, Orca).