

SPORTS

Player Haters

Justin Richard
Contributor

As the air begins to get cooler and the seasons begin to change, there is still no NHL hockey to be played in the near future. The NHL lockout has now lasted almost three months and more than 200 games have been missed. There have been limited attempts at negotiations between players and owners and pretty soon the entire season will be cancelled. I consider myself a dedicated hockey fan and I am disgusted by the stubbornness shown by the NHL owners and the NHL Players Association.

All of these professional hockey players were once children who idolized the NHL players who then got paid half, or less, of what they do today. They dreamed of a life devoted to hockey with all the fame and fortune. They trained year-round for their whole lives and practised like crazy to developed better skills, so one that day they would become good enough to succeed in the NHL. Now they sit around a boardroom with their arms crossed and argue that they don't get paid enough.

This is pathetic. The sad part is that only some would have to take a pay cut and those players are now playing in Europe getting paid the same as they would in North America if there

was a pay cut. It makes no sense.

The franchise owners aren't making any effort to resolve the strike, either, nor are they any closer to giving in. Just a couple of weeks ago, the team owners allowed arena owners to start booking other events 45 days in advance instead of the normal 30 days. The owners made sure this information got lots of attention from the press to prove that players are not even thinking of giving them what they want. With the amount of money players get paid, it is rare that a hockey organization makes a profit, so you really can't blame the owners to hold out like this. All the team owners want is to protect the middle-class players; the players who contribute a lot to the team, get underpaid (in some regard), and don't the attention that the superstars get. Owners feel that there should be a salary cap on the big hotshots who get paid too much. The team then can give the excess money to those middle-class players. So, really, the owners may not make any money if they get what they want anyway.

And what about the fans? Do either party care about the devoted hockey fans? I am sure plenty of fans have lost a great deal of respect for the players they have come to love for their exciting hockey talent. In some cities it might be hard to get fans back to the

rink after the lockout is over because they won't care to support these players who want more money for playing a game they love. Those fans who live and breathe hockey are now very grateful for junior and university hockey. Sometimes the hockey is just as good even though the talent isn't. At these games the players just play for the fun of the game and not a pay check. They don't work their tails off so one day they can sit in a boardroom with their arms crossed and demand more money. The only thing junior players demand now is a better parking spot.

So I hope it is clear that I am not with the players in this argument. I believe they already get paid too much in Europe and I think a minor pay cut would do them some good. They could step down off their pedestal and play the game just for the fun of playing the game. But in reality it is all about money and it will always be about money. Some players probably care more about whose car is better rather than who has more points than whom. And so, with the lockout still being locked out, fans might not see any NHL hockey in North America until...well, probably not until they get into a labour dispute in Europe and the players go on strike. And that would be a new low.

Women's Hockey Team Making Mockery of Opponents; Ice Hockey Men Jump To Winning Record

Liam McKenna
Sports Editor



When my older brother used to play hockey, he would describe wins so lopsided that he and his teammates could "stand at the sides of the ice baking muffins, while [they] scored goals at will." I couldn't think of a euphemism which describes UPEI's women's hockey team any better. Sorry.

If the ladies keep up the incredible play they have managed all season, there will be many muffins made indeed. So far, in four games, the women have outscored opponents 28-6, maintaining a 4-0 record along the way. The Island Women's Hockey League (IWHL) is only composed of four other teams: Summerside, Holland College, West Prince, and Charlottetown. The only opponent which has lost by a margin of less than four goals is Summerside, who the Panthers defeated 4-3 on the 14th of November after trouncing
Continued on page 14

Everyone's watching... there's a lot on the li

Research shows that in the past six months, over
2,800 young adults purchased tobacco products for minors.

Are YOU one of them?

It is against the law to sell or provide tobacco products to minors. Don't be a statistic. Let's keep tobacco out of the hands of children. It's time for you to make the save!

OPERATION
ID

An initiative of Canada's Tobacco Companies and the
Canadian Council on the Responsible Tobacco Industry

www.operationid.com

