

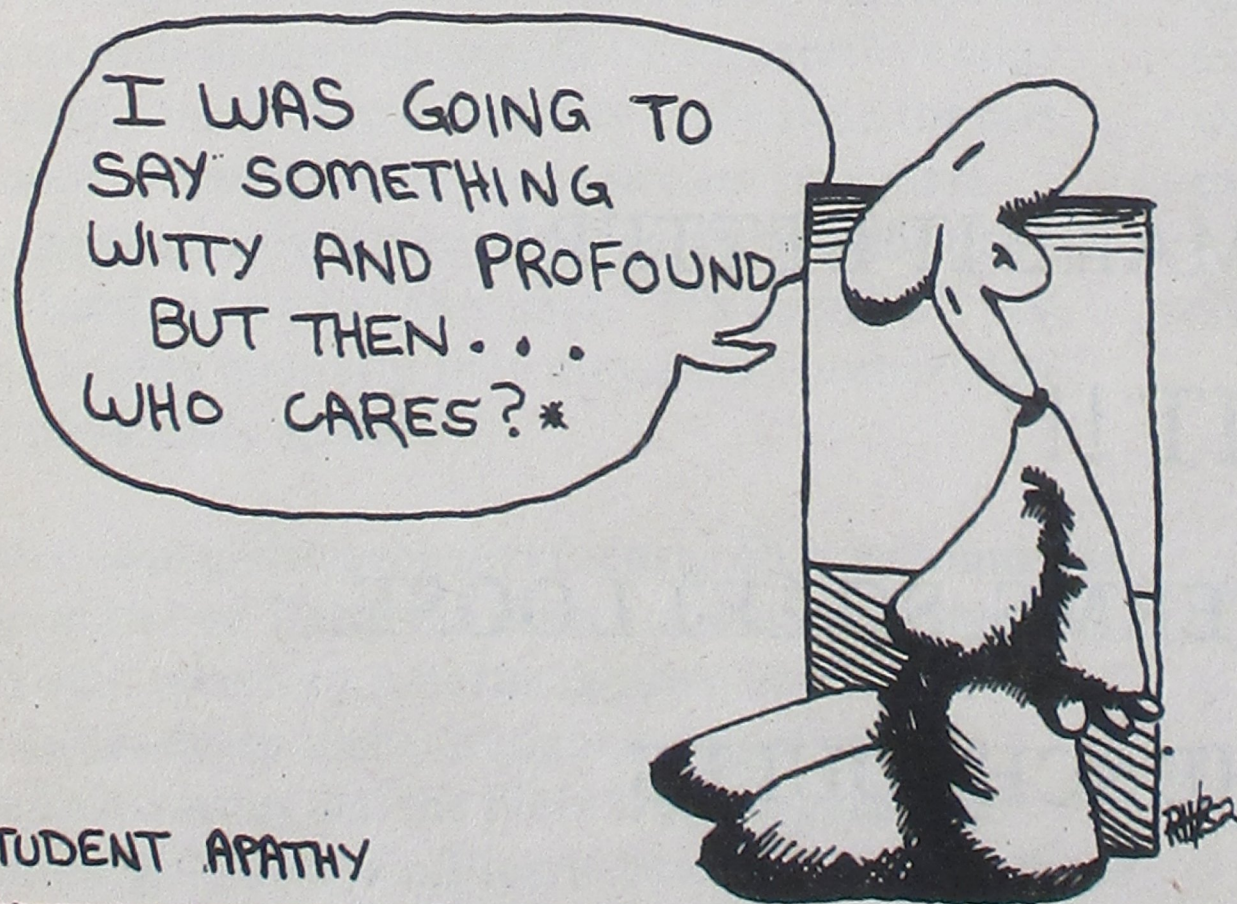
## “Choking”

I hate it when “half-baked followers” of the Blue Jays accuse the team of “choking”. As early as Game One of the Blue Jays/Twins series, Doug Saunders, sportscaster of CBC’s “The Maritimes Tonight”, made a sickening choking gesture when he talked about the Jays. The Blue Jays did not choke. The Blue Jays did not play up to their potential, and the Twins had a lot of luck on their side.

People keep saying that certain teams are chokers. Until the team wins everything, the players are labelled as chokers when they are involved in important games. I am arguing that choking should be replaced with bad luck, as the hinderance to winning. The following will be the proof. (1) For most of this century, the Boston Bruins have lost to the Canadiens in the playoffs; however, all hockey fans know that recently, the Bruins have caused the Habs a lot of heartache. (2) For a long time, the New York Islanders were told by critics, “You guys can’t win in the playoffs.” 1980 came along, and the Islanders went on to win four consecutive Stanley Cups. (3) Last spring, Pittsburgh Penguins goalie, Tom Borasso led his team to its first Stanley Cup. Before the Penguins, Borasso goaltended for the Buffalo Sabres, and everyone said that Borasso could not win when the game was on the line.

The point is, eventually, good luck comes to everyone’s side. I am sure that soon, the Blue Jays will have it on their side, too. But, until then, people, like Doug Saunders, will probably continue to preach about “doom and gloom”.

Chris McCarron



\* STUDENT APATHY

## “Offsider”

The best thing about starting school in September knowing that the hockey season starts shortly. This season, the National Hockey League’s seventy-fifth anniversary started with a few big surprises:

--The Stanley Cup-winning Pittsburgh Penguins’ coach Bob Johnson underwent surgery to remove brain tumors. Scotty Bowman is replacing him as helm.

--The St. Louis Blues signed another high profile agent, Brendan Shanahan, and lost last summer’s signee, Scott Stevens, to the Devils as compensation.

--The Habs traded away Stephane Richer and Tor Chorske to New Jersey for Kirk Muller and Roll Melanson. (So far it seems the Devils got the edge on that deal.)

--Eric Lindros was drafted first overall by the Nordiques but refused to don the jersey or sign a contract.

--Canada won the Canada Cup (again?).

The League’s birthday party seems like any other party. Nobody knows who will show up, act odd, or fool everybody else. As of October 19, the Washington Capitals had the best record, and the Vancouver Canucks were not far behind. This makes no sense except to Capitals’ or Canucks’ fans. The San Jose Sharks have already won a game--they defeated Calgary 4-3 on the eighth of October. Mario Lemieux is bothering him again. Walter Gretzky is sick. Mark Messier is a Ranger; Rod Brind’amour is a flycatcher. Nothing is as it should be.

If anybody out there likes trivia, I have a couple of tidbits. The New York Rangers’ Tie Domi is the first NHLer to have been checked by a grasshopper. The Rangers were playing the Kings at Caesar’s Palace when Domi tripped over a grasshopper. San Jose’s first goal ever was scored by ex-Canuck Craig Coxey. Coxey is one of the few Californian-born players in the league.

I know that there are some card collectors out there, so I will mention a bit about cards. Score and cards are both on the market and the combined rookie