

LOOKING BACK

By: Scott Brooks

In this photo, from Spring of 1952, is the prominent Warren Block at the corner of Mill and Willow. Another interesting item is the Coca-Cola van, parked at the old Post Office. Photo Credit: Dills Collection



SPORTS TALK

Wild Wednesday

Very few days will trump Wednesday, April 25 in the annals of sports in the Toronto/GTA area.

By Michael Oke

This is the day three of the four major sports franchises in the area had critical season defining match-ups.

The Toronto Raptors, Maple Leafs and F.C. were all involved in important games on that day.

It all started with the Raptors going against the Washington Wizards at 7 p.m. local time, the fifth game of their best of seven first round playoff series. Raptors having initially done the business at the Air Canada Centre last week by winning their first two home games, stumbled in the District of Columbia in games three and four to ensure the series tied 2-2 guaranteeing we would still have a game six back in Washington come Friday. This series is slightly different from the 2015 series when the Raptors were swept by the Wizards, with one of their veteran players, Paul Pierce, throwing a gauntlet before that series even started by saying the Raptors didn't have "it". He was proved right with Washington sweeping Canada's sole NBA team 4 - 0. If the Raptors lost game five, they could still potentially progress by winning games six and seven. A loss only makes it more difficult.

The Maple Leafs, on the other hand, had a "win or go home" situation. A loss in their game seven match-up against

the Boston Bruins technically marks the beginning of the off season for

this young and exciting team, who by most standards have over achieved. They have earned their place by winning one game in Boston and holding their nerves in game six in Toronto.

Probably the most critical of the showdowns Wednesday was the soccer match between Toronto FC and Chivas Guadalajara of Mexico. The reigning MLS champions lost the first leg at home in Toronto by two goals to one and will look to overcome this deficit and the additional challenge of "away goals" which count as double in the event of a tie at the end of the second leg to become the first Canadian team to win the CONCACAF Champions League Competition. If they are able to overcome these massive hurdles, they will become the first non-Mexican team to win the Championship since the new format was introduced in 2008.

To get themselves into this situation again would take a lot from this team, not unlike qualifying for a playoff in the NBA or NHL. However, due to the number of participants from outside the Major League Soccer, it would be quite a hurdle.

All in all, a very interesting day for Toronto and Canada as a whole.

JUST A THOUGHT

Do we really need to know?

This weekend has been a particularly news-rich minefield of sorts. There was the to-be-expected splash of Earth-related news amongst the seemingly never-ending Trump saga. Then there was the baby news. A handsome new son for the future King of England and a world clamoring over itself—in essence demanding—to see the new prince only to chime in later that other babies are just as important. There was the usual fervor about how much that hospital wing costs or that it was unrealistic for Duchess Kate to be dressed to the nines—with makeup and heels—only seven hours after having had said son, let alone home within 12.

Yet, for others, the news was much darker. One woman, almost sucked out of a plane, was laid to rest as her family begins to accept such a bizarre accident. Some—sadly close to home—have lost sons. Others both their parents. And more still have been rocked by the needless and malicious actions of one man in a rental van who took to the streets in a slaughter Toronto won't soon forget. It has been a gauntlet of examples, but the age-old media question remains: do we really need to know? Sure, morbid curiosity plays into this game, but as a public do we have some right to hearing these stories and their circumstances?

Well, according to several studies, our brains certainly want us to know all about bad news. Apparently, and I am paraphrasing the research here a bit, bad news is "more



By Trish Bell

memorable and emotionally impactful," and thus sticks with us more. And this emotional context is a bigger piece of the puzzle than we might think. Our brains are actually more sensitive or bias towards negative news as an evolutionary result of self-preservation. Bad news is equal to danger and thus we need to pay attention or we do not survive. Therefore, our fascination with negative news, by nature is more about us preserving ourselves than about having compassion, fixing the world or some sick perverted craving for ill will. In fact, if studies are to be believed, we don't actually care all that much about news. Only 25 to 30 per cent of people—since the 1980s—claim to even follow the news on a daily basis, and of the news we pay attention to most—yep, you guessed it—involve polarizing social issues, war, terrorism, proximity to home, and bad weather; all reasons the recent string of news has been played out over and over again no matter to which paper, station or newsfeed you turn.

And while we all like to blame the media for all that ails us, we forget that journalists are not part of some ordained secret society that has endless resources and a higher power—they, too are merely employees of a business. They may deal in human

stories, but at the end of the day, journalism is about getting paid—and honey, giving the people what they want gets them fame, fortune and a little more security in a fragile work environment. Sure, there are ethics to uphold, but they are merely peddling what the public wants, not unlike movie productions or fashion designers. There are few who idealistically believe they can change this world through persuasion; most have realized people are what they are.

So, where does that leave us all in the aftermath of so much bad news? Where we are now, I suppose. People like the Yonge Street van murderer know that he will have his five minutes of fame because we can't help but be fascinated by such grotesque goings on. Families and friends of those lost tragically will want to know their loved ones will not be forgotten and that some purpose can come from such senselessness. And for what it is worth, perhaps some can. Perhaps instead of trying to understand such evil, to frame it as we have done hundreds of times before, we should stop and realize some of us are what we are. Some are just sick twisted souls who will go to great lengths to harm or destroy the wellbeing of others. Some of us will go our entire lives without tragedy while others will know it intimately time and time again. And despite all that we know and all that we are capable of, it is in our own nature to crave such news, because deep down inside we are all just trying to survive.

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