

LETTERS

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Take part to make it work

To the Editor,

Why do you think it is useless to vote? Don't you know that in the past your own ancestors died so you can have the right to vote? Or is history not important to you?

When you do vote, you can make a change in your province, or your city, or even your own street. You are so necessary so that a democracy can be successful. If you

do not take part, somebody else will, and might take away your right to vote at all.

Either be a part of your country or lose the right to be called a Canadian citizen. Ask a refugee what can happen when there is no right to vote.

You can be an important person, but only if you choose to vote.

Sytske Drijber

LOOKING BACK

By: Scott Brooks

Aerial views give an interesting perspective of our past. Pictured is a view from 1960, looking over downtown Acton. Photo Credit: Dills Collection



SPORTS TALK

What Chris Paul and Alex Ovechkin have in common

From a distance, it may be difficult to find any similarities between Chris Paul Houston

By
Michael Oke

chance to look at their careers and found some other similarities; both

Rocket (NBA) point guard and Alexander Ovechkin, captain of the NHL's Washington Capitals.

For one thing Paul is an African-American basketball player, while Alex needs little introduction—he is a Russian born left winger, widely regarded as one of the greatest goal scorers in the history of the NHL.

Despite their amazing careers, they both had one albatross around their necks—despite their immense talent neither had ever played in a conference final.

This curse was broken last week for both men with Washington overcoming their perennial rivals the Pittsburgh Penguins—and one Sidney Crosby—to set up the Eastern conference final against the Tampa Bay Lightning, while Chris Paul was instrumental in the Houston booking a date with Golden State Warriors in the Western conference of the NBA, when they overcame the resilient Utah Jazz in five games.

Prior to the current season, both had played a combined total of 173 playoff games without ever getting beyond a conference semi-final. I had a

started their North American professional sports life 13 years ago. They are both in their 30's—Paul is older—both players are also considered leaders on and off the ice or court.

They have both represented their countries at international sporting events and have played somewhat active roles in politics and civil society. With Ovechkin famously starting a social movement called "Team Putin" last year in support of Russian President Vladimir Putin. Chris Paul was selected president of the NBA Players Association in 2013 and played a key role in the suspension and later a lifetime ban of Donald Sterling the erstwhile owner of the Los Angeles Clippers for making racist remarks. This led to the eventual sale of the franchise to former CEO of Microsoft Steve Ballmer.

With all the Toronto teams out of contention, if you are currently without any team to support in the current playoff series—aha, Winnipeg!—give some thought to these long suffering athletes and pray their empty trophy shelves gets some silverware soon.

JUST A THOUGHT

Motherhood 101



By
Trish Bell

As Mother's Day once again comes and goes, I wonder if we truly understand how to honour these incredible people. Sure, we give them flowers or make them breakfast in bed but compared to their feats it is but a small and meek gesture. Mothers everywhere—and forever—have done what no one else could—or would—and done so on more of a learning curve than even they might like to admit. Diapers and bottles give way to picky eaters and temper tantrums and then slowly, but surely, the challenges become much more visceral. Friends. Self-image. Firsts. Crushes. Disappointments. Successes. Failures. And while we hold their hands and become their emotional—and even sometimes physical—punching bags, it truly takes a certain fortitude to watch your precious child struggle or ache and know that you can do little to ease that suffering. While it seems like only yesterday you brought that bundle home, now you are dealing with the challenges of them becoming so soon an adult but not quite there. And kid yourself not: such daily struggles are every bit as daunting and soul wrenching as the exceptional situations some moms find themselves. Sure, we think of the mothers in hospitals holding onto hope whilst watching doctors purposefully poison their child in an attempt at saving their life. Special needs mothers that celebrate each birthday wondering how their child will fare—not thrive but merely survive—once they are gone. Mothers of children who by what must appear some cruel lottery will never know the loving embrace—perhaps even hear the word

mom spoken—as they struggle to survive the daily realities of autism. And to many more whom must find Mother's Day the cruelest irony: the baby never held; the child who now calls someone else mother; the precious life taken too early. Be it illness or malice, accident or misadventure, the injustice of burying one's child is a horror that cannot be understood, save by those who have had to walk that path. Clearly, for some their preconceived notion of raising a child was vastly different than the day-to-day existence they now find themselves and yet, their unwavering love keeps pushing them on when the helplessness and exhaustion would make the rest of us quit.

Yet, it is not just the exceptions that deserve our observation. When I was young, tongues wagged for those moms who worked instead of staying home with their children. They were seen as somehow uncaring or uncommitted. No one stopped to think about why they were working or whether they were doing an adequate job. No one asked whether they were struggling or whether they needed help. No, they merely judged by a set of seemingly ordain and archaic set of standards to which it was unlikely any mother could achieve. Today, the standards have reversed; staying home now holds the same stigma and isolation. Mothers choosing to stay home—or having to because of needs or logis-

tics—are callously shunned by many as lazy, not ambitious, or just too stupid to hold an important job. Quick glances at ring fingers to decide if they are proper. Once-over nods to appearances as if messy hair and no makeup is a sign of value in the motherhood economy. What people don't see are the authentic sacrifices these moms make. Coupons, discount racks, and dreams on hold. Less social. Less status. Less worth. There are no rewards for putting life and personal ambition on hold to raise the child you chose to have and let's face it in a society of ample—and mandated—sex education, ample contraceptives and abortion rights, unplanned does not mean no choice. But moms who stay home today have no government subsidy to offset the costs. No child care credit. No break on hydro time of use fees. We all know mothers who feel isolated and alone—like failures—and yet we do little to help them.

We need to stop leaving Facebook to support mothers and start doing our fair share in raising the children of our town. Stop punishing parents; letting mothers—and fathers—choose the way to raise their children only ensures they do indeed raise them—not schools and institutions. Stop bullying parents into a one size fits all parenting method and parents, in turn, need to step up and meet the challenges, not hide behind fear or disapproval. There is an old saying that it takes a village to raise a child. For the sake of our future, perhaps we ought to take a look at how well our village does at helping our mothers. After all—the future is in their care.

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