

The Empire Club Presents



**KYLE DUBAS, GENERAL MANAGER,
TORONTO MAPLE LEAFS**

**& BOBBY WEBSTER, GENERAL MANAGER,
TORONTO RAPTORS**

WITH ELLIOTTE FRIEDMAN

**ON: HOW BIG DATA IS CHANGING
PROFESSIONAL SPORTS**

Welcome Address, by Mr. Kent Emerson, Associate Vice
President at the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation
and President of the Empire Club of Canada

January 21, 2019

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. From the Metro Toronto Convention Centre in downtown Toronto, welcome, to the Empire Club of Canada.

For those of you joining us through either our webcast or our podcast, welcome, to the meeting. Today, we present Kyle Dubas, General Manager of the Toronto Maple Leafs and Bobby Webster, General Manager of the Toronto Raptors, in conversation with Sportsnet's Elliotte Friedman. Today's topic is "How Big Data is Changing Professional Sports."

HEAD TABLE

Distinguished Guest Speakers:

Mr. Kyle Dubas, General Manager, Toronto Maple Leafs

Mr. Bobby Webster, General Manager, Toronto Raptors

Mr. Elliotte Friedman, Analyst and Insider for Hockey Night in Canada and NHL Coverage, Sportsnet

Guests:

Mr. Mike Henry, Executive Vice President, Enterprise Risk Governance, Scotiabank

Ms. Kelly Jackson, Associate Vice President, Government Relations, Marketing and Communications, Humber College; Director, Empire Club of Canada

The Honourable David Peterson, Former Premier of Ontario; Chairman, Cassels Brock & Blackwell LLP; Chairman, 2015 Pan Am and Para Pan Am Games; Founding Chairman, Toronto Raptors NBA Basketball Club

Ms. Jacquie Ryan, Vice President, Social Enterprise, Scotiabank

Mr. Darryl Spector, President, Promotion Nuclear Ltd.

Mr. Mike Van Soelen, Managing Principal, Navigator Ltd.; Third Vice President, Empire Club of Canada

Ms. Colette Watson, Senior Vice-President, TV and Broadcast Operations, Rogers Communications Inc.

I am sure everyone is familiar with *Moneyball*, the book that brought worldwide attention to how sports organizations are using data in new ways. The book and a subsequent movie focused on the analytical approach used by the Oakland Athletics, building on the work of people like Bill James, one of the early pioneers in sabermetrics for how to assemble a competitive baseball team, despite the small budget that Oakland had at the time. It is not that data was not available prior to sabermetrics. Baseball has looked at data since the late 1800s, but professional sports innovators, including Oakland, whose manager—Billie Bean and others—started to make data a significant factor in their decision-making, not out of some geeky indulgence but because they saw the advantage of doing so.

Fast forward to 2019: Big data is all around us in every industry. It drives decision-making. It anticipates consumer behaviour. It forecasts world events, and it provides organizations that can take hold of its power with an advantage. There are many corporate leaders in the room, today that are responsible for giving their company an edge by leveraging data. As you can see on the screens, I think it is fair to say that how big data is used in sports organization is not widely understood.

That is why we have an absolutely packed room here today, to listen to two data experts in their thirties, who have found themselves in the position of leadership at Maple Leafs Sports & Entertainment (MLSE), one of the world's premier sports organizations.

There has been much talk about how our speakers utilize analytics as a tool to help MLSE coaches and frontline staff, too, to make better decisions on everything from team construction to how players are utilized to drawing up plays.

Bobby, it would be interesting to hear from you, today, and Kyle is about how you strike the balance between using traditional tools versus the new ones, the science versus the human. We know that the traditional assessment methods of professional sports, for example, seeing the athlete perform in big games, understanding how they interact with teammates, effectively assessing their value as humans, are not being diminished in importance by the new tools, but, instead, need to be understood differently in the context of these tools.

The Empire Club of Canada is a speakers' club that is 14 years older than the Toronto Maple Leafs. In the last 115 years, we have had dozens of sports speeches, the first of which, was delivered in 1963, by the president of the NHL—and no, it was not Gary Bettman at that time—who said at the time, that only 180 people worked there and the average salary was \$13,215. The NBA was just a fledgling organization. The business of sport has gotten much more sophisticated since then. That is why we have an exciting dialogue ahead, to help us better understand it all.

Let us go. To conduct today's discussion we have brought a very seasoned moderator. He has a remarkable career in sports media, spanning more than twenty years and earning him a reputation as one of the most respected

broadcasters in the country. He joined Sportsnet in June 2014 as an insider and analyst for the network's national NHL coverage and Hockey Night in Canada.

Unlike our speakers, he may not be in his thirties, but he often has thirty thoughts. And "30 Thoughts" is the name of his popular online column, and he has a new podcast of the same name with Jeff Marek.

Prior to joining Sportsnet, he was a mainstay of CBC's Hockey Night in Canada, serving as both an in-studio analyst and reporter for 11 seasons. Through his 20-plus years in sports, he has covered numerous major sporting events, including multiple Olympic Games, NHL, MLB, CFL, NBA events and more.

Put your hands together for Analyst and Insider for the NHL on Sportsnet and Hockey Night in Canada, Elliotte Friedman.

Our next guest has a huge responsibility for managing the day-to-day basketball operations of the Raptors franchise. He provides his expertise on strategic team building, roster and personnel planning and player acquisitions. During his time with the Raptors, he has also served as Assistant General Manager and Vice President of Basketball Management and Strategy.

Webster came to the Raptors after working for the NBA league office in New York for seven seasons in the legal department. He brings with him a vast working knowledge of the NBA's Collective Bargaining Agreement, having negotiated the new agreement with the national basketball play-

ers in 2011. While at the NBA, Webster also advised front office personnel from all 30 teams on a range of matters, including salary cap, luxury tax planning, player contracts, analytics, and trades.

Entering his sixth season with the Raptors and second in the driver's seat, please, welcome General Manager to the Toronto Raptors, Bobby Webster.

Finally, he was named the 17th General Manager of the Toronto Maple Leafs history on May 11th, 2018, after originally joining the Leafs as Assistant General Manager in July of 2014. In his role as the Assistant General Manager, he held multiple responsibilities involving player personnel, managing the club's player development department and farm system, managing the organization's research and development department, and overseeing the organization's top prospects as General Manager of the Maple Leafs' AHL affiliate, the Toronto Marlies. He has also served four years in a very successful role as Manager of the Toronto Marlies.

Before joining the Leafs organization, Dubas served as General Manager of the Sault Ste. Marie Greyhounds in the Ontario Hockey League for three seasons. At the time of his hiring by the Greyhounds, this sports management graduate of Brock University became the second youngest general manager in OHL history at the age of 25.

In 2015, he was recognized by Forbes Magazine as one of the sports industry's brightest young stars in their annual "Top 30 Under 30" sports list. Welcome, General Manager of the Toronto Maple Leafs, Kyle Dubas.

Mr. Kyle Dubas and Mr. Bobby Webster with Mr. Elliotte Friedman

EF: Thank you, Kent. Not only has Kent mentioned that I am older than Kyle and Bobby, but I look older, too.

That is good. Let us start with this. Talking about data, from 1964 until 1975, the most successful sports team on earth was an NCAA basketball team called the UCLA Bruins. They won 10 out of 12 championships during that time. Everybody wanted to ask their coach, a famous coach by the name of John Wooden, “What do you do?” First of all, he had great players. He had two of the best ever, but they would ask him what he looked at; what was important to him.

He would always say, “When I get the stats sheet, whether it is at half time or the end of the game, the first thing I check is field goal percentage. I want to know how successfully we are shooting.”

You guys both get stats packages during and after games. What are the first things that you guys look at?

BW: I think it is two parts. I think, as most people in this room, we have our own kind of proprietary information, which we get our own stat packs on.

EF: Do not worry, we are going to squeeze that out of you.

BW: First, we look at the score. I think if you are a fan and

you are watching, I think that one of the things you want to look at so you kind of have more of an analytical bent about it is you want to look at how many chances we had to score. There are different ways of looking at it; for example, if you have turnovers, that means you lost chances. If you have offensive rebounds, that means you gain chances. You want to look at these types of possession-based stats to figure out whether we had a lot of chances to score. If we did have chances to score, then the next thing is efficiency, which is field goal percentage.

KD: I think, for us, you look at it on the team level and, in general, it depends on what metric you want to use.

One of the major debates in hockey is there is the outright proxy for possession or Corsi, and so, what percentage of the total shot attempts did your team have? As analysis has grown deeper and deeper in hockey and has improved, now you are starting to be able to measure the quality of every shot and what it can do to your expected goals. If you have a shot from a certain spot on the ice, what is the percentage that goes in? What are the other factors that are going into that, and then how does that impact the expected goals that your team can expect to score on that night?

There are all these various different things, but until we can get into a level where that sort of stuff is ver-

ified, and I would say, having more of a sample size over time and better verification and—Bobby and the Raptors were one of the first and the NBA was one of the first to do formal player tracking and all their buildings, and we can eliminate some of these subjective analysis from these metrics. I think it has been proven over time that the general percentage of the shot attempts that you have over, game to game, the different things affect them, but you want to see where your team came out on that. And then individually, with players, you want to see how they came out on that metric at the end of the night. We look at that and various different other proprietary things as well.

EF: What percentage of players say hit me with this and what percentage of players say I work on what I work on and I do not even want to know?

KD: I just know from talking to Bobby and from studying basketball that I think that in terms of basketball players, if the team is not providing it, and you can jump in and correct me any time, they are hiring their own people to do it. And I think you are starting to see that more and more in hockey whereas, before, it was that we did not want to know anything; we just did what the coach said, and we worried about all the rest of it in the off season. Now, in the season, if you do not have staff that are helping provide the coaches with that to present to the players, the players are going to

go and hire their own people to break down their game on a deeper and deeper level. It has become its own industry within hockey. I do not know how it is in basketball, but I would assume it is *[the same]*.

BW: I think since I have been *[with the Raptors]* for six years, a couple of interesting trends include that first you have to educate the players, so you are speaking the same language. A very simple one is points per game, so how many points has the team scored?

We do not really look at points per game anymore. You look at points per 100 possessions, which just tries to normalize how many points you would score over the course of a game, if it was a fast game, a slow game. Now, it is when you talk to the players, you are talking to them in the terms that you want to talk to them. That takes years sometimes. Now, at the end of a game, we may have won the game by two points, but accounting for pace and then accounting for all of the variables, we actually were 10 points better than them.

There is an early education process for the players, because if you come and hit them with all this proprietary stuff, they have no idea what it means, which is no different than if your boss came to you or you went to one of your colleagues and introduced some new concept of how to evaluate the team. A lot of it is just educating the players. Once we educate them, now it

just rolls off your tongue, and you can have more of a daily conversation with them about some of these more, if you want to call them, advanced statistics.

EF: Just to let you all know we are going to take a few questions at the end. We are going to leave some time. If you have something, think about it. Do not be afraid, as both Kyle and Bobby know only reporters ask dumb questions. If you have got something, do not hesitate to ask. I am curious about something that you said there. You can talk about winning a game by two points, and you can say, “Okay, the result may have only been this, but we really liked our process, or we did not like our process.” That is one thing I get the sense of—that there are some players, obviously in hockey, which I cover more, and they say if they lose a game, a big game or a bad game, they never want to hear, “Our process was good.” How do you convince people over the long term that maybe a poor result is still okay?

BW: That is really tough. It is a great question. Even the other way I go with a lot of the times is if we win by two, but we felt like we got lucky or the process was not good, let us not gloss over all the things we need to work on just because we won. At the end of every game when I walk into coach Nurse’s office and we won or we lost, obviously, that is the carrying momentum of the moment, and you want to use these tools to

see through that and say we won, but you ask, “Should we have won? Are we happy with how we played?”

It is incredibly tough and something that we deal with on a daily basis. I will give an example.

Last year, when we decided we wanted to change our offense and Kyle and DeMar at the time, we obviously had had some success, and initially there was some pushback from them. One of the tough things to argue with them was we have won 50 games for however many years in a row, so why are we changing this? You have to educate them on why you want to change. Those are tough conversations.

KD: You use the word ‘process’, and I think that is what we use when we are talking internally, when we are making decisions, when we are having internal debates about the way that we are making decisions or the way that we play. We use that term ‘process’. When you talk to the coaches and the players immediately after I have noticed more and more—and this is my fifth year here—every year, whether we have won or lost, there are those initial handshakes if you win, and you have to go through the usual, “Be angry if you really played poorly,” or “Pretend you are angry if you played well and lost.” Then, you get into how you actually played and you start to shift away from what the result was on the scoreboard into these various different things that

we are trying to work on, how we are exiting our own zone with the puck, how we are entering their zone, where we are doing it—are we on the outside?

Are we in the middle?—different things that we want to do as a team, and you start to break down how you operated in those individual areas. The term that they will use more as players and coaches is “How did we play?” I think that is a much easier way to get through to them rather than say, “What was our process like?” And you can see them start to, well, *[they ask,]* “What do you really mean?” Inside the organization, you have so many various different processes you are going through. You have your player acquisition, your drafting, trades, contracts, and I think that when you are talking about the actual game that is being played, I find now we, including the players, say, “How did we play?” It is more about talking about the actual execution of the various tactics that we are trying to become elite at. I find there is more of a conversation revolving around that versus just “Did we win or lose 4-2?”

It is more about, “Are we working towards the goals we want to work on before we get to the playoffs?”

EF: That is a funny line that Kyle has there about faking being mad. I remember one time—the late Bryan Murray was a great guy to deal with up in Ottawa.

We went up there for a game on Hockey Night in

Canada, and they had won five in a row. They were just killing people. As he walked by me on his skates to go out to the morning skate, he said, “Please, excuse me; I have to go find a reason to be mad at these guys, so we can win six in a row tonight.” I always laugh at those kinds of stories. I am curious. You guys obviously do a lot of work. I am convinced that teams lie about how big their staffs are and how much they put into data management—creating data, mining it, sports sciences, all of that stuff. Without lying, how big are your staffs?

BW: I think I looked the other day, unrelated to this. I think our staff is 50 people. If you take 15 players, now we are talking probably three to four staff members per player, so that includes medical staff, coaching staff, analytic staff, scouts. I am thinking the biggest groups are the coaching staff, medical staff and analytics as far as analyzing what is going on.

EF: How many people would specifically be hired for analytics?

BW: We probably have five full-time analytics people.

I also say this. We did a head coaching search this summer. It is a huge part of every hire you make now.

Whoever you are hiring needs to be facile in understanding whatever analytics are relevant to your industry.

When you talk to Nick Nurse about analytics, that is a huge part of why we hired him. That is a huge part of how he assembles his staff. It is a huge part of how we are bring in new people into our medical group: do they understand how we are going to create baselines for the players, how are we going to evaluate their progress if a player is injured? You need to benchmark. All of these things to me are ‘big data’ or ‘analytics’. To me, that part of it goes into every hire we do now.

KD: Our research and development arm or analytics arm has five full-time people and then one part-time person. It is only going to continue to grow as our needs and the different things that we are measuring across all aspects of the organization grow. I would say that our actual hockey operation—so our daily analysis of our team and our scouting and drafting—is where they spend most of their time. Second to that would be our sports science and performance side. I would say that the amount of data that we are collecting on that side—and it is directly stolen from the Raptors. After the first season we were with the Leafs, Brendan and I, and Larry actually met with Alex McKechnie, one of their assistant coaches, and Alex helped lead our search for someone to head our department, and that is Dr. Jeremy Bettle. His department just continues to grow as well. The amount of data that they collect from the

players every single day—it has been a major help in making sure that our players are operating at their peak performance and that we are doing all we can to take all the data and then guide our practice philosophies and our training philosophies to make sure that we are not overstressing them and that for Wednesday night, when we play Washington, that they are at their optimal level to have success.

EF: That is one of the things I wanted to ask specifically about. Everybody here, as a Raptor fan knows, the Raptors manage Kawhi Leonard's schedule very carefully. On Wednesday night, last week, you had a game against the Suns where, initially, Kyle Lowry said he was not going to play, and then he did. Can the player make that choice, or does the organization normally say, "You may want to play, but you are not going to tonight?"

BW: It is tough. It is case by case. Kyle is different than Kawhi. Kyle was coming back from a back injury that can resolve completely, and Kawhi has been just dealing with coming back to playing NBA basketball at a super-high level consistently. Specifically, I think the interesting part we were just talking about with analytics and maybe someone like Kawhi is, when you bring in a player like Kawhi Leonard, you need to have some sort of analytical benchmark intake system.

We are going to say, “Okay, Kawhi is coming in to us on July 20th, and how are we going to measure the five things that our medical group thinks are very important? And then how are we going to keep track of those things over the course of the year, so that we know when he is tired, and we know when he has too much load? We know when he has been working too much; we know when he needs rest. That is an example of the analytical piece where you have to have people who know what they are tracking, know what they are measuring, and then be able to measure it over the course of the year, and then *[be able to]* tell me, tell Masai, tell coach Nurse in a way that we can understand when Kawhi needs to sit, when he needs to rest, how he is feeling. A lot of this, as you guys probably know, in terms of the medical intake is just everyday: “Kawhi, how are you feeling? How do your legs feel? How do your knees feel?” That goes into the decision-making as well.

EF: Does he ever tell you, “Okay, enough. I want to go tonight?”

BW: He is very structured. We set out a plan for him.

He knows what to expect, so it does not have to be a game-by-game thing. It is not like I wake up in the morning and *[say]*, “How do I feel? Do I want to play?” Alex McKechnie, who heads our medical

group sits down with him: “This is your schedule for the next two weeks, so you know what to expect.”

EF: The NBA has a lot of that now. They are teams who rest players. The NHL every year, at the beginning of the season, has what they call a ‘car wash’, for lack of a better term. What it is, is each team brings one or two star players to a central location. Last year it was New York. This year it was Chicago. All those things you see at the beginning of games where the players are fig skating on the ice, all that gets recorded there.

You do a bunch of interviews. Last year, one of the players there was Ryan Getzlaf for Anaheim.

I happened to ask him, “We’ve seen the NBA do this. You are getting a little bit older”—which a party did not like to be reminded about—“and you play a really physical game. Have you talked with Anaheim about maybe taking some games off?” He goes, “Yes, we did discuss it this summer, but we are going to see where it goes.” I called the Ducks, and they said, “Well, he wasn’t supposed to tell you that, so we are not giving you any further information.” Kyle, I am wondering, do you think the NHL will ever get to that point where players start taking back-to-backs off?

KD: It is interesting. I think that you see it already with goaltenders. There are very few goalies now that will play in back-to-back games. It is a little bit different.

The goalie is playing all 60 minutes of the game.

There is a strong statistical history which shows that, with a goalie, you can expect a certain drop off in performance if they play consecutive nights back to back. That is an easier sell. Plus, in recent times, there has been a lot of evidence of goaltenders reaching a certain threshold, much like pitchers in baseball, and putting themselves at risk of then having success in the playoffs. It has become conventional wisdom amongst goaltenders, but it is not yet there amongst forwards and defensemen. I think as it becomes more pervasive in other sports, whether that is the innings limit in baseball on pitchers, whether that is the way that the basketball teams are handling their situations with regards to back-to-back games and resting their star players, I think that it will certainly become more pervasive in hockey.

The one element that I would say that would hinder hockey a little bit is that the number of players on our roster that are not playing or are not playing as much is not as large as it is in basketball. In baseball, there is no salary cap. If we want to sit out a star player who is making a higher percentage of our available cap dollars to bring in somebody else, it just eats away at what is available. There are all those different elements that are in play that I think will affect hockey. I certainly think, especially as you get later in the year and especially as your position becomes more secure, teams

that are competitive year after year after year, like San Antonio—I do not know if they were the first one to do it, but it was the first one that sticks out in my mind in basketball that when you have had 20 years of being a contending team, and you are Gregg Popovich, and you can do what you want, it is a lot easier.

EF: Do whatever you want. Nobody is telling you what to do.

KD: I think it will become something that moves over to hockey, in time.

BW: I think one thing, though, that we are learning is it is really hard on your body and mentally. We have all done it; if you take a red eye, and you have to go to work the next day, you are just bad. Vegas has been able to quantify the odds makers. If you play back to back, for the second game of the back to back, you automatically get docked two points in the line. They are saying we just know over the course of however many games we have studied, that I do not care if you are the Raptors or you are Golden State or you are San Antonio, you are going to start off that next game down two in Vegas. I think that is just an example of probably objectively why this stuff—we need to look at it.

EF: This could be a lucrative on the Raptors' website—"Bobby Webster's gambling tips." I like this.

BW: I think there are a lot of smarter people than me doing this.

KD: On Bobby's point, in hockey: If you look at points per 82 games played, and you look at if your both teams are fresh—so last night, both teams were fresh.

We played Arizona. They did not play the night before. We did not play the night before. The points per 82 games you can expect in those games are equal. Then, you go into a situation like we will be in, a back-to-back situation on the weekend. We will play Detroit in Detroit Friday and then travel back and play at home against Pittsburgh. It is the beginning of the year.

Our data people produced for us here is the expected effect of your schedule on your points. We start off the season, and we say we are -2, and then if Tampa Bay in our division is +2, then it is a four-point gap right off the bat. We are not in that position this year. I am just using it as a hypothetical.

EF: It is interesting stuff. I know sleep patterns, all this stuff, it gets monitored very closely.

Without giving it away—because I know you guys are very careful about these kinds of things—what is the next thing that hockey and basketball teams are looking at? Kyle, I know you mentioned expected goals. I know that is a big one a lot of people are work-

ing on right now. What are the next things that people are looking at?

KD: I think it is going to be a number of different metrics that are verifiable and certainly able to be reproduced based off of the player tracking data that comes into the league. Right now, a lot of the available information is either manually tracked, or it is digitally tracked or tracked by computers, but then manually confirmed. There is no real formal tracking programs like they have in the NBA where we can absolutely 100% confirm different—everything that is happening on the ice, whether it is with the players and their movements or the puck and its movement and how it transports itself across the ice whether it is carried past, whatever it may be. I think once we are able to verify all those with player tracking, it will open up the ability to confirm a lot more of those metrics, like expected goals or various different other metrics that are out there in basketball. And, I think baseball, in particular, is much further head on.

EF: Bobby, what is the next thing?

BW: Just briefly, so you guys understand what the player tracking is, if you take basketball in the 1960s with John Wooden, you would get a box score. It would have how many points you scored, how many rebounds, and let us say that is 500 data points.

Then, I do not know how long ago, maybe 20 or 30 years ago, they came up with play-by-play data, which said in every play, who passed the ball to whom, where the shot got taken from. Now, we have more data. What we are using now is what they call player tracking. There are cameras in the top of Scotiabank, and they are tracking all ten players on the court and the ball, I believe, 25 times a second. Now, we are talking about, I think—I have talked to analysts—over a million data points. Now, you are able to basically have these really smart cameras who can identify when Kyle Lowry and Serge Ibaka run a pick and roll.

They understand what a pick and roll looks like. Then, depending on whether Serge makes the shot, Kyle makes the shot, Kyle passes it to Serge, what the expected value of that shot was, now, you have all these things that help you get a better understanding of what happened in the game as opposed to just what you remember.

In that sense, I would say we are little bit ahead of hockey. To me, the next one for us is injury prevention. The reason why that is important is because of the payroll, which, I think this year, is around \$140 million; let us say, we miss 10% of the games because of guys being injured. Now you are looking at a \$14-million loss. How do we make that basically zero? How do we ensure that all of our players play as

many games as they can, as healthy and as productive as they can? I always come back to this old saying; I think it was “Predicting is hard, especially about the future.” I always think of that when we are thinking of what is next, because it is all about predicting, how we are projecting. How do you project in your own business? How do we project on the court? How do we project what Kyle is going to do tomorrow? How do we project what Kawhi is going to do for the next five years? A lot of it, I think, comes down to injury prevention, to the medical aspect and how we keep that as tight as we can.

EF: A question about your current teams. We saw both of you bring superstar players to Toronto in the offseason. I think that it is one thing to watch somebody from afar. It is another thing to see them up close.

I think in both Leonard’s and Tavares’s cases, we have realized they are even better players than we kind of knew. Bobby, *[tell us about]* the recruitment of Leonard, how you convinced it all to work out and just what you have learned about him now that you see him on a day-to-day basis as opposed to all of the rumours and innuendo you heard before.

BW: It was a high-stakes game this year. No. I think very shortly after we traded for Kawhi, I called this guy.

He was somewhere scouting. I said, “You have

to give me all your tips on how you guys got Tavares.” I think the difference is we traded for Kawhi, and they signed John. When you trade for a player, obviously, you have the benefit of the player having to come to you; whereas, when you sign a player, you are competing with the other teams. We have said it a million times, but we are going into the trade next July 1st when we meet with Kawhi, this entire process with him. It is all about us feeling like we are being authentic to who we are. We are proud of the Toronto Raptors; we are proud of what we have built here.

We think we have a great coaching staff. We are a great city. We have a great medical staff. We almost want to let those speak for themselves. I think everyone can relate to either being in a position where you were being recruited or you were recruiting somebody else and you do not want to overdo it. You do not want to say every second of every day, “Hey, Kawhi, how is it going? What can we do better for you?” You want that to be natural. You want to develop a relationship with the person first. You want to listen to what their needs are. You want to listen to any complaints, what is going good, what is going bad. Then, at the end of the day, we will see how the season ends up.

June going into July, I am sure we will have a lot of conversations about what we want that pitch to look like, how much of a focus is on basketball, how much

of a focus is on business, how much of a focus is on Toronto, Canada, all the things that we know here.

It is as all-consuming as comprehensive as dynamic as you can imagine.

EF: It is going to be a tight squeeze because you are still going to be playing in the middle of June, right?

BW: Exactly. I only have a couple of days to think about it.

EF: Kyle, when Bobby called you, were you really scouting, or were you on a beach somewhere?

KD: No, I was trying to remember exactly where I was.

I do not remember where exactly. I was driving somewhere. We talked about just everything. We are of similar age and very lucky to have, not really jobs—sometimes the pressure gets a little interesting and excited—but I think we are both in fortunate positions. I learn a lot from them. I really enjoy basketball and watching basketball. They have been at it in terms of contending in the NBA for longer than we have, so it has been fun from the time that I have been in Toronto.

They have been a good team, and they are building and patiently sticking with their plan, and it is good just watching the organization involved. I have learned a lot from them. It has been a good opportunity.

EF: The NBA cap has exceptions. Your cap does not.

First of all, take us through the recruitment of Tavares and how you—first of all, there is a video they showed Tavares, which I have heard is spectacular, and Kyle has said he will never share it unless Tavares gives him permission, so work on Tavares there.

But just tell us how you bring him in and how you involve the other players, and then how you have to put the whole circle together when Tavares is done.

KD: We were in an interesting position, because we have a very young core of existing players. They were all draft picks, essentially. Frederik Andersen was a trade.

He had been here for two seasons. Then, you have Morgan; you have Naz; you have Auston, Mitch, William. Then you have had Jake Gardiner who has been here for a long time. He was by trade, but he has been here longer than anybody. It is one thing to—I think this goes for any business—go and find a superstar talent, but making sure that they fit within the fabric of the company or of the program was very important to us. Everything I had ever heard of John or from John and watching him play—I remember when I was scouting before I was in university, still scouting for the Soo, and I would see his team play a lot, because he was always playing up a few years, and he had a

very good team. You get to be around them and their parents at the rink. A player builds a reputation.

His was essentially pristine, but you still do not know how it is going to fit into the room. We wanted to make sure that the core of our group was on side with John coming in. The first part was a matter of Do we want to go after John? Do we think it is the right time for us? Unanimously, the answer was yes.

Then, it was calls to each of the individual core players on our team to ask them what their thoughts were on it. Resoundingly, they were, “Yes, we need to go after them; we will do whatever we can to help the team. Whatever is necessary, just let us know and we will do that.” That was great to hear for me because I had just really been around the team and had been with the organization for over four years, but it was my first real stretch as the manager of the team.

That was great for me to hear how excited they were that we were actually going to give it a shot.

We put everything together in terms of how John would fit in, where our group was at, where it was going, how we were evolving and developing as a program, how we wanted to build it out, what we were really about as an organization. The players were a huge part of that. They were involved in it every step of the way.

I think, in the end, people can talk about whatever they want, but he came to Toronto because of the players that were here and for, really, I do not think any other reason. The organization, I think, is sound. We continue to try to improve. The ability to play with those players for a long stretch was the key.

Questions & Answers

EF: Let us take some questions. There is a hand up over here. I think there is a mic coming around. I think I met you earlier. Your name is Patrick, correct?

Q: Yes, good memory. This is for Kyle. “The Athletic” recently came out with a list of the top 40 business-people under 40, so congratulations for not only making that list, but topping the list. I cannot resist mentioning that my nephew, Dustin Walsh, of the Vegas Golden Knights also made that list.

There are a lot of hockey people over 40 that may be set in their old-school ways who may not fully embrace the benefits of data analytics. Is it important to you that they do, and how do you bring them around?

KD: That is a good question. Congratulations on your nephew. That is great. I would say that I think I have been branded as an analytics person, but I think one

of the major advantages to the question that you have is when I grew up, I grew up in scouting and player development. Then, when I went back to Sault Ste.

Marie as the GM when I was 25, it was a team; it is a small market; it is a smaller market relative to the league. The revenue relative to the rest of the teams in that league is small, and the expenses are far greater than most teams in the league. We did not have the resources that were really going to be necessary to compete on a massive scouting staff or expensive, innovative ventures. The way I looked at it was we could not be wrong as much as others, because we did not have the resources to make up for our mistakes by just spending more and by signing more players and giving them lucrative—in that league, there are education packages, and we were very constrained with what we could do. I have always been interested in and invested my time in learning more about it on the baseball side and started reading more about it in hockey.

That is where we started to incorporate data into our decision-making to arm us and better inform us in every decision that we made to try to reduce our errors. I think having grown up in scouting and player development and then incorporating the data side of it much later and not coming in purely as a data person has been the biggest help that I have in terms of trying to educate or work with people who are anti-use *fin*

terms] of analytics in our sport, whether we have worked with them or they work for other teams or they are media people who are very negative about it. I think I am just very fortunate that was my background and really nothing other than luck in that regard has helped to explain this is what I was before just scouting and player development and this is how data helped us to turn our program around. That seems to help most.

EF: I cannot believe you said the media would be negative about something. By the way, Patrick, Kyle wishes your nephew all the best, except in this year's Stanley Cup final, right? Other questions? There is a hand right here. Please, let us know your name.

Q: Hi, I am Suzy.

EF: Hi, Suzy.

Q: I have a question. Obviously, the collection of data brings great benefits to the team and to the players, but in a world where so much data can be collected 24 hours a day, at what point do the teams and coaches and the players say enough is enough?

BW: I definitely think it is time of year. During the summer, during the offseason, it is a lot of time for us to dig deep and go down endless rabbit holes and talk about how we want to evaluate the team. I think a good example is during the game. We have analytics people on our

coaching staff, but they cannot just sit back there and tell Nick, “Do not pass here,” and that kind of stuff.

I think you have to set those parameters in advance of the season, so we agree on what are the four or five parameters we are going to look at over the course of the year, so that we do not end up going down too many wild goose chases as far as looking at everything. You do have to agree within your group of what are the things we are going to focus on.

EF: One of the things, just quickly, is that most players, the younger players are much more receptive to it than older players are. Is that generally true?

BW: I do not know. I would say Kyle Lowry is probably our most receptive. I think it is just what the mindset is.

I think even back to what Kyle was saying, and I tell some of our coaches that are more analytically inclined, “Go coach youth basketball; go coach high school.”

We need to teach those kids that because, otherwise, if the same people are coaching the younger kids, then, ultimately, they will just come up lacking that education.

EF: Yes, sir, what is your name?

Q: My name is Tim. It is a question really for both of you. You are successful executives, and you happen to be young. What advice would you have for other young people that are looking for an executive role or role with a professional team as a career?

KD: This is a question I probably get more than any other question. My advice is if you really want to work in sports—is your question sports related or just in general?

Q: Sports related, specifically.

KD: When it pertains to sports, I would say there is so much opportunity from a very young age to work, as long as you are not set on working at the very highest level at the beginning. I grew up in Sault Ste. Marie. Really, the only show in town is the Sault Ste. Marie Greyhounds.

I was very fortunate. When I was 11 years old, I was still playing hockey, and I got to start working as a water boy for the team. I got injured playing hockey, and the role grew from being water boy on game days to working in the front office and then doing scouting, and it just continued to evolve. When I look back on the journey, if I did not really love doing that when I was 11 years old and volunteering every day—and then, when I was scouting for the team, I got very lucky. When I was going to university, after working in the front office for three years in high school, our scout in that area just quit late in the summer. They offered me the job when I was 17. The pay was nothing, but I just thought it was a great opportunity. My grandfather had a great way of looking at it. There were other people in my family who said, “You do not want to do that job; it is going to cost you money, because you are going to have to drive around, and you are not getting paid anything.” He said, “You

look at it as an investment in yourself.” That is how I looked at the investment of time, even though I was getting no money, or you were actually losing money doing it. If you had not done that and taken those opportunities at a lower level where there is a lot more responsibility to be had, then you would never advance your way through and be afforded the mentorship that I was all the way through from the time I was 11 to Lou Lamoriello and so on and so forth. That would be my take.

EF: That is great advice. Is the pay any better now?

KD: A little bit.

BW: I think the perspective I have thought about over the years is that if you grow up in sports, you grow up whenever and you are high achieving and you are one of the leaders in your high school team, your college team. Then, you enter the workforce, and now it is like you are down here. It is an interesting dynamic of having a ton of leadership responsibilities early in life and then you go through this point after university or college where now you are at the bottom, and you are carrying towels and getting drinks for people.

On that next ascent, I think it is important to remember those leadership qualities that you had growing up and apply those in your current daily life in your work in a way that is relevant to your position as you continue

to move up. Now, you are able to draw on all of those things that you had growing up, and now you are able to utilize them more. Do not forget to use them, I guess, in that little ascent that you have.

EF: If there is one last thing that I would add just as the wise and elder of this panel, Tim—and I would tell this to any young person that any of you are giving advice to—it would be that the right people are always watching. I always tell that to young people now that think, How do I get noticed? I tell them that you have an advantage that I did not have when I started, and that is the world of social media. Social media can be a bad thing, but it could also be a very good thing. You can create a voice where people of my generation could not create a voice.

We had to write for our student papers or volunteer somewhere, and then we hoped to get hired. Now, there are people out there who have created their own ability to be heard without being hired in the old, traditional way. I always tell them that the right people are always watching. You are always being judged as good or bad, so I always say carry yourself as if you are always being judged. It is not easy. We all make mistakes.

We all have slip-ups, but, I think, in general, that advice that I received when I was younger and that I have given to other people who have been younger is good advice. As you guys all know, a lot of you probably

here hire, and you are always watching the people that you are looking out for. Kent, I think we are good. Thanks very much everybody for your questions and your time.

KE: Thanks, guys. I am pleased to invite Mike Henry, Executive Vice President and Chief Data Officer from Scotiabank, to the podium to thank today's speakers.

Note of Appreciation, by Mr. Mike Henry, Executive Vice President and Chief Data Officer, Scotiabank

Elliotte, do not worry, there is now a couple of more guys that are not in their thirties on stage with you. It is a privilege to be here on behalf of Scotiabank to say thank you to our speakers, and to both MLSE and Rogers, our key partners of the bank. Bobby and Kyle, we are excited to hear about the new ways that data is helping to revolutionize sport. Scotiabank is thrilled to be a partner of both of your teams, not just to use data to help win games, but, frankly, also to use it to help create better fan experiences for all the people that enjoy watching our games. Beyond Bobby's gambling tips, I wanted to just do a quick bridge to the world of business here. I think both of you gentlemen talked a little bit about leveraging data starts with early education, starts with culture change to get it imbedded in the

organizations. Bobby, I was struck by your comment about the ongoing benchmarking of organizational health when you were talking about Kawhi and Kyle and using data to focus attention on really specific aspects or processes of the game. I thought those were key insights for me, personally.

The fact that we are here, today, means that we are interested not just in the subject, but I think also keenly interested in the success of your teams. We all wish you very well. Please, join me in thanking Elliotte, Bobby and Kyle for their time today.

Concluding Remarks, by Mr. Kent Emerson

We have come to the conclusion of our program. I want to call for everyone's attention. We have some great events coming up. For those of you who are interested in sports, we have the Vice President of FIFA coming on the 30th of the month to talk about the World Cup, what it is bringing to the region. That is going to be a fantastic event.

We also have Barack Obama's speech writer, Sarada Peri, on the 28th of January and many other events through the season. Thank you very much for coming, today. I want to thank Rogers and our lead sponsor, Scotiabank, again, for all the work that they put in, in the sponsorship. Thank you very much.

The meeting is adjourned. Thank you.