THE INSIDE ON HOCKEY

By ED. FITKIN

You can't tell how an expert's analytical mind is going to function but it seems to this observer that Bill Durnan is in line not only for the Vezina Trophy and All-Star goalie selection this year, but also for the Hart Trophy.

* * *

The Hart, as you know, goes to the player voted th most valuable to his club over a season—and what other player, we ask, can approach Durnan's apparent influence over the success or failure of Canadiens?

* * *

With Sweet William in the net, Canadiens cake-walked into first place and stayed there until he suffered a broken hand early in January, then the roof caved in on the Canucks. They lost three of their next four games and toppled from arst place to third place.

* * *

Durnan was on he sidelines for 10 games—and Canadiens won only three and lost seven. Paul Bibeault, in that span, yielded 30 goals, an average of 3 per game. Durnan, in the 24 games he played prior to his injury, conceded 61 goals—an average of 2.5 per game—and had three shutouts.

* * *

Then Bill returned to the net on Feb. 2 and the Habs promptly started to hurtle again. They romped to a 6-2 victory over Chicago, stepped into Boston and blanked the Bruins, 2-0, for Bill's fourth shutout, went on from there to Chicago where they walloped the Hawks again, 5-1, moved into Toronto, and cooled out the Leafs, 4-3, and then belted New York Rangers, 5 to 4.

* * *

Thus, since Durnan's return, the Hurtling Habs have clicked for five straight victories, as this is written, and are back on top of the heap—apparently to stay. Dick Irwin, who should know, claims that Durnan is responsible for this upswing. "Not only is he a great goalie," says Dick, "but he is also a great team player, a leader and an inspiration to the rest of the boys. You can't imagine what a difference he makes out there."

* * *

If Bill should wind up as Hart Trophy winner, he would become the first N.H.L. netminder to achieve this distinction. And it also would be precedent-shattering if he should take the Vezina, Hart and All-Star awards—for no man in hockey has ever been accorded a triple crowning.

* * *

Oddities Department

Maurice Richard, who scored 50 goals last winter, will have to score six goals in the next 11 games to hit the 25-goal mark this year.

Bill Taylor, one of the cleverest play-makers in hockey's history, has only 10 assists to his credit—while Gaye Stewart, who definitely isn't a playmaker, has 12 assists.

Barring unforeseen scoring splurges, only three players apparently will be 30-goal men this year. Max Bentley already has achieved that mark; Gaye Stewart needs three more goals and Toe Blake requires six. Last season only two men made the 30-goal grade—Richard, who bagged 50 and Herbie Cain of Boston, who netted 32. Toe Blake and Ted Kennedy wound up with 29 each.

Montreal's Punch Line—Richard, Lach and Blake—finished 1-2-3 in the scoring race last season and compiled record total of 330 points. Richard and Lach played the entire 30 games, Blake 49. This season, Chicago's Mosienko-Bentleys line raced away to a high-scoring start but injuries to Mosienko and then Doug Bentley wrecked their record-breaking chances. As of now, the Hawk first line has 125 points to its credit with 10 games to go.

(Editor's Note: Ed. Fitkin, conductor of this column, can be heard each Sunday afternoon at 4.30 over C-H-U-M (1050) dispensing breezy, dramatic and entertaining stories on "The Inside on Sports." Mr. Fitkin, Maple Leaf Gardens, Toronto, will be glad to answer questions about the players and the game).

Brand New Jobs For 10-15,000 Men

By risking their money to cover exploring and diamond drilling, investors have provided Canada with approximately 60 new indicated gold mines and two base metal properties in the last three years, says the Financial Post. A labor and materials become available the great bulk of these will be put into production, providing highly paid jobs for 10-15,000 men. In addition there will be expenditure of perhaps $50-$60 million for supplies, equipment, underground work and mill construction.

Here is another example of private enterprise at work, of a job only private initiative can handle properly because of the speculative nature of mine finding. No government, socialist or otherwise, would be justified in risking the large sums of money necessary to locate and develop minerals. The proper role of government is through tax and other machinery at its disposal to offer encouragement to the citizen who is willing to take the risk. If he loses, that is his loss and those who back the original speculation; if he wins all of us benefit through the new jobs opened.

Horses for Europe

It was in 1665 that the first phone brought to Canada from France was disembarked from a sailing ship at Tadoussac. It was presented to the Governor of New France, Augustin de Saffray de Mesy. by the settlers. Now horses are going in the other direction. A special Canadian National train of 22 stock cars carried 374 horses from Alberta and Saskatchewan to the dockside recently and movements of Canadian horses to France will continue every second week as long as there is space on the boats.

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PRETENDER TO SPANISH THRONE

Prince Don Juan, pretender to the throne of Spain, and his wife arrive at Lisbon, Portugal. Behind Don Juan are Duc D'Alba, right, and the Spanish ambassador, Nicholas Franco, left. To the left of the princess is Enrique Viana, Portugese representative.

Australia Loses 20 Million Sheep

It is estimated that the draught has cost Australia 20 million sheep, and failure of the Autumn lambing will account for millions more.

The immediate problem of graziers is to secure sheep and lambs for re-stocking, and competition is keen.

Taxation is so heavy that pastoral men are wondering how far it will pay them to re-stock to capacity.

Labor is short, fences are out of repair, and transport is difficult. And many would sooner invest what money they have in improvement of properties. The majority of losses comprise Merino sheep. which means a big reduction in the most valuable part of the wool clip.

New 2-4D Chemical Deadly To Weeds

A powerful new chemical weed killer known as 2-4-D, so effective it will destroy dandelions and most other weeds found in lawns without injury to the grass, was disclosed by the Federal Agriculture Department.

Experiments disclosed that one application of 2-4-D, expected to be available in quantities early this spring, would kill many weeds with greater effect than any other chemical. One drawback was that it temporarily eliminated clover which, however, gradually grew back again without re-seeding.

When used on Canada thistle, the chemical did not completely kill the vigorous weed but set it back so badly the weed did not reappear until harvest time and then only in the form of young shoots. Similar results were obtained on field bindweed growing in a field of oats.

The new killer swiftly destroyed annual weeds such as mustard, lambs quarters and red root pigweed.

The chemical caused "no perceptible injury" to plants of the grass family, which includes wheat, oats, barley and rye, but experts warned that if it was used on a lawn around a flower garden care be exercised to prevent damage to flowers as the full powers of the preparation still were to be determined.

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