

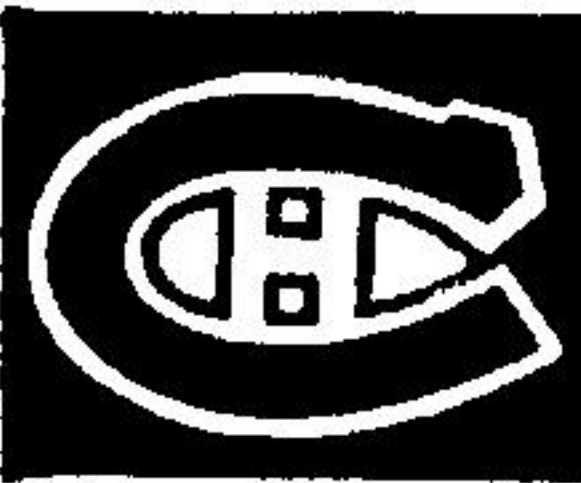


**Mark
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Sports Editor

It's a strange, strange world

What's going on in the sports world these days? The Montreal Canadiens not making the semi-finals, the Blue Jays in first place, and women beating men in volleyball. Have all the established sports expectations been turned upside down this week? Even the Olympics, the definitive answer (or so everyone was led to believe) to armed combat, is threatened with this chaotic span in time. Perhaps it is the daylight saving time that has something to do with it.

The year I was born, 1955, the Montreal hockey team won the first of what turned out to be five consecutive National Hockey League championships. Sunday they were going for their fifth again. This time it was in the quarter finals of Lord Stanley's playdowns. The high flying boys from Bloomington Minnesota, after astounding the hockey world by winning the first two games of their series with Les Habs at the famed Forum, rebounded from a three game draught to take the final two matches and the dramatic series win.



WHO'D THINK

Who would have ever thought? Obviously not many. The sixth place finishing team over the season weren't even expected to make it by the lowly Toronto Maple Leafs, because Ballard and company are a playoff team. They did, convincingly. But to defeat the perennial (it seems) champs from Quebec was just too much to fathom. Toe Blake, Jean Beliveau and Henri Richard had led that team to 10 other titles this past quarter century.

And what can you say about the American (baseball) League Blue Jays. Another one of those who would have thought situations. Being on top of the world, or first in your own division for that matter, is something new for Toronto fans. But, they had better get used to it and savor in its joys because it isn't going to last long.

The beauty of baseball is that any team can on a good day, beat the best of them. It just turns out that the Jays are having those good days now. As they say in most sports, a win in the early goings of the year is like two at the end. The Jays started out the 1980 campaign like all the teams in Major League Baseball, in first place. It is just that it is taking them a little longer to slip into their rightful position near the bottom of the ladder.

On the amateur front scientific sports beliefs about men being stronger, faster and more agile and co-ordinated were shattered for me in a game of volleyball this week. You know that simple little game where you try and keep a white spherical ball that is just a little heavier than a helium-filled balloon, up in the air on your side of the net until it lands on the floor of the opponent's side?

ARLENE AND FRIENDS

I was part of a husbands and boyfriends team that played a group of girls from a Bramalea ladies league. My girlfriend Arlene and her female friends proved again that there are indeed some things the opposite sex can do as well or better than some men. They trounced us.

Oh well, that's the way the ball bounces. Sometimes in this court, sometimes in the other. However, personally I would prefer it to bounce the way it is supposed to. There should be no pebbles on the surface to mar an otherwise good, fair and honest competition. Proper teams should be assured, no one should play above their head and everything would remain as it ought.

Not that I'm against change or like to see the same predictable thing happen all the time but, it is hard on the nerves when no one seems to know what is going on or how to control it. Then again, as they say again, a change is as good as a rest. So, when these particular instances return to normal, my faith in the normal way of life, will be restored sufficiently enough not to give me ulcers.

A short personal note of congratulations to my niece Shannon Clairmont who won the uneven parallel bars competition at the provincial championships in Burlington Sunday. I had seen her work her way from a mere tyke, who couldn't reach the balance beam six years ago, to one of the best little 12-year-old gymnasts in Ontario. Her work and that put in by the thousands of other young ladies and their coaches, like the Jills organization here in town, has to be seen to be believed. Their efforts exemplify everything that is good about developing athletic character and determination.



With Montreal Canadiens out Cup up for grabs by anyone

With the Montreal Canadiens now out of the National Hockey League Stanley Cup playoff picture, the new world champion of shinny is as hard to predict as the demise of Les Habs.

All that are left of the original 16 who started the post season play over a month ago, are the Buffalo Sabres and the New York Islanders and the Philadelphia Flyers and the Minnesota North Stars. The four teams started the semi final homestretch to the Cup last night.

Opinions on who will be in the final and who will emerge as winners vary as much as the people who are experts on the subject these days. Everyone seems to have an idea who is going to take it.

With the Canadiens out, the obvious choice is no longer obvious. Minnesota, who upset the three-time defending champions Sunday night, are not given much hope. Fans around here were surprised they knocked off the Toronto Maple Leafs. Yet even though they put the French team to the ultimate test of seven games, and won, few offer much hope for them as the going gets tougher, if it can get any tougher than the stubborn Frenchmen.

Only Wendy Stewart, the president of the Georgetown District Minor Hockey Association, thinks that the young team from Bloomington can do anything more.

Perhaps that is why. She is obviously biased toward the young player squads. But she wonders whether all those skaters "is all that you need."

ISLANDER FAN

Mayor Pete Pomeroy is an "Islander fan". He says that



Mayor Pomeroy thinks Denis Potvin will help the New York Islanders win the Stanley Cup.

the "other" New York team has to have a chance at the big one just for knocking off the powerful Boston Bruins. They also had the best finish-

ing thrust in the league this year. That combined with the best defenceman, Dennis Potvin, should make them a legitimate contender.

Dave Kentner, well-known sportsman about town, says he is going all the way with Bobby Clarke and the Philadelphia Flyers. "I've gone

"pound Minnesota into the ice." The City of Brotherly Love, goes on Shepard has a hockey team that is healthy, unlike Minnesota.

"Philly is a bushwacking team," says Jamie Carter. If the North Stars get by the only expansion league team to win Lord Stanley's Cup, then they should become the second post 1967 team to do it.

Stallion House manager Glen Hillock is counting on the three year depth of the Big Apple's Islanders to do it. He says the goaltending duo of Resch and Smith will make the difference in what will surely be a goaltender's battle.

Gerry Wilson says the Ontario Hockey Association stays out of the professional ranks but, personally he says that you may not go wrong if you put a few bucks on Buffalo.

In Ottawa at the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association Hal Lewis says that the Cup is up for grabs by any of the four. Chances are, he expects, no one team is a better bet than the rest.

Here at the Herald sports desk, the Sabres get the nod with Minnesota runnerup.

So, there you have it. A small sample of nine people and there is still no clear winner. The only sure thing you can say about the new Stanley Cup winner is that it won't be a Canadian team again.

Raiders would have faced tough battle for national Int. title

The Canadian Intermediate A championship, that the Georgetown Raiders were vying for, should be in the hands of the players from Burnaby BC today. They were expected to wrap up the win with their third straight game win over Fredericton, New Brunswick, for the title. They had already won the first two in close contests.

Fredericton won the Eastern Canadian championship by defeating a team from the Ottawa Valley league. That team had defeated Timmins of the Northern Ontario loop. And Timmins had outskated the Dundas Merchants, the team the Raiders lost to.

So, had the Raiders gone on to win the Georgian Bay League the second year, the battle would have been uphill all the way.

In the Junior B provincial playoffs, that the Gemini hockey club were involved in, Streetsville won the Central Ontario division. They then lost to Belleville of the Metro league, who then lost to Windsor, who won it all.

It doesn't look like the Ontario Senior A champ from Cambridge can pull off an Allan Cup victory over the strong Spokane, Washington team. The Americans are winning that series 2-0.

Athlete of year and Sports Builder wanted

The 1979 Halton Hills Athlete of the Year doesn't know it yet but, plans are well afoot to make June 16 his or her night one to remember for the rest of his or her life.

Dave Kentner, chairman of the organizing committee, said that in addition to the deserving recognition which will be paid to the individual athlete, the Sports Builder of the Year will also share the spotlight that night. Both will be honored at a cocktail dinner party that will rival the Hockey Heritage Dinner presentation.

Nominations for male and female athletes who had a particularly rewarding 12 months this past year are now being accepted by this newspaper and Kentners Dairy Bar. The person selected will live or have lived in the Halton Hills community and participate for or represent it at another level.

The Sports Builder Award goes to someone who has contributed outstandingly to the area's developing athletes over the past year or one previous.

The Royal Bank, Miracle Food Mart and The Herald will once again be back as major sponsors of the event and have already begun preliminary plans that will lead up to the selections.