

It's only a game

Take a youngster involved in minor sports (let's say soccer as an example), several parents, mix in a coach, put them all together on a warm summer night and you have the recipe for:

- (a) A pleasant evening
- (b) A nightmare

More often than not, the former is the case. However, on some occasions unruly behaviour has marred an evening and that was why the Georgetown Soccer Club opted to introduce designated "hush" weeks on two occasions this season.

"Hush" games are not new, but it's the first season the GSC has tried out strategy in which parents and spectators are asked to remain quiet for the entire game, only clapping when a goal is scored. Coaches were also asked to practise restraint, keeping their instructions to players to before, after and during halftime of the matches.

The GSC has tested the practice at games of all ages both in the house league and rep levels with somewhat mixed results.

Some kids found it "weird", some parents didn't like not being able to encourage their kids and some coaches liked the fact it forced the kids to communicate more between themselves. At least one parent raised the issue about her "constitutional rights" not being respected.

"Hush" weeks are, shall we say, interesting.

However, we believe there are some basic tenets to be following when it comes to all minor sports.

Parents should be there to be supportive—nothing more. If they are loud, over-bearing or obnoxious—it's up to the sports organization to bar them from attending games.

Coaching should be left to the coaches. If a parent is insistent on sharing his/her knowledge, then they should sign on as a coach at the start of the season.

Kids should be first and foremost in everyone's mind and they should enjoy themselves when kicking a ball or chasing a puck.

WEB POLL RESULTS

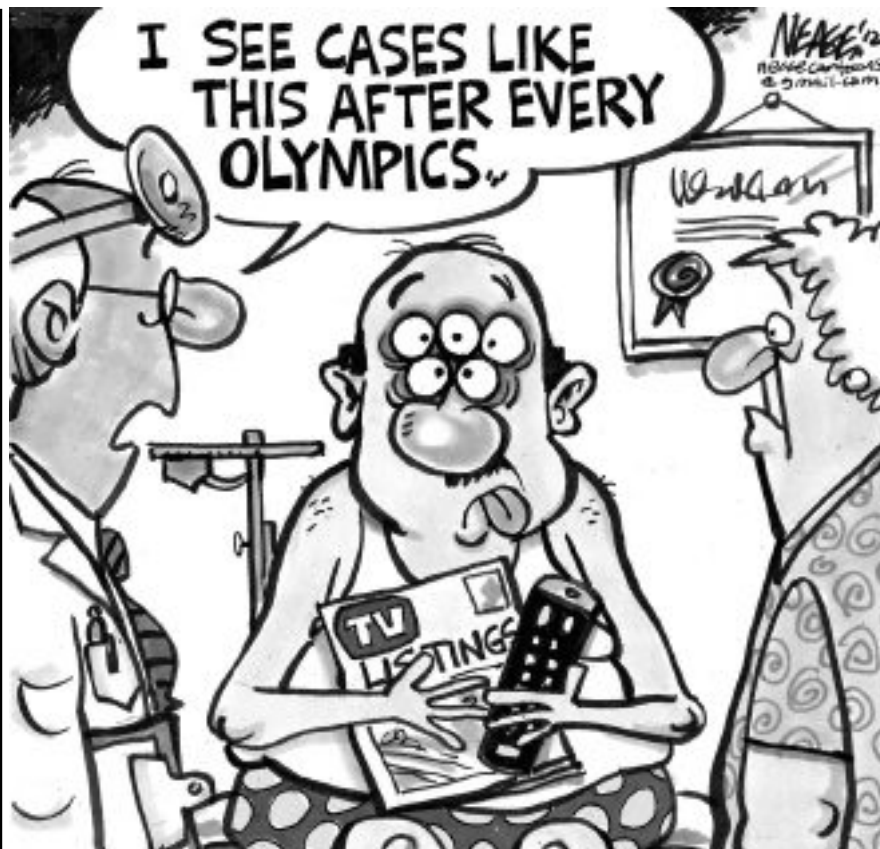
(Go to www.theifp.ca)

How would you categorize Canada's showing at the Olympic Games in London?

- A good, if unspectacular, effort (45%)
 - A little disappointing (42%)
 - A borderline disaster (13%)

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Letters to the editor

'Weak' legislation cause for concern

Dear editor,

As an environmental professional I'd like to expand on the issues raised by John D. Richards Aug.7 letter on the omnibus bill (MP's vote on bill raises questions).

First, I'd like to inform folks that Canada ranks second to last out of all the 29-ranked Organization for Economic and Cooperation Development (OECD) nations for its environmental track record. Hard to believe, right? Why? Because our environmental legislation is some of the weakest in the world of developed nations, and this was before the omnibus bill.

For example, the Fisheries Act was once important on a national scale, a heavy stick that helped environmental practitioners protect not only Canada's aquatic life, but rivers, shorelines, drinking water and the world's 20 per cent supply of freshwater.

Its recent 'gutting' is ironic given that 97 per cent of federally-listed endangered species are marine-based. Now it seems this Act is hardly worth the paper it's written on, and all other acts continue to pale in comparison, i.e. Canadian Environmental Assess-

ment Act, Federal Species At Risk Act, etc.

Including critical public debate and ensuring rigorous scientific/technical review on major project proposals that not only cost taxpayers billions but that could cause irreparable damage to the health of our communities is not a waste of time; it's essential!

So where does this leave us everyone? Dead last on the list I bet.

As Canadians, our country is often defined by glorious natural resources that are the envy of the world. Recent events leave me greatly concerned for the future of our national identity under the leadership of Stephen Harper and Michael Chong. It's up to us people, to bring Canada back into the circle it once belonged, as the stewards of the world's fresh water supply and a founding nation of the United Nations and the OECD.

Susan L. Robertson, Georgetown

Kids are watching

Dear editor,

It was with great interest and concern I read the recent articles *Child struck by truck in Acton* (www.theifp.ca/news/girl-hit-by-truck-in-stable-condition/ and www.theifp.ca/opinion/speedy-driver-gets-reprimand/).

This culminated in several articles

in *The Independent & Free Press* and a meeting at the school to educate the children about street safety.

We are now in the midst of summer and I see the true culprits: adults.

Adults who choose to cross in the middle of the street to hit the banks downtown, mere steps from the crosswalk.

Adults who try to race the pedestrian to the crosswalk in order to be that one step ahead on the way home.

Worse, drivers who don't seem to even notice the child waiting by the side of the road at the crosswalk, light blinking and cars not stopping.

Soccer season is a terrifying one. While I obey the speed limit of 40 km/h on Churchill Blvd. I must also be aware of the last-minute soccer moms and dads who, in a rush, dart across my path, usually with a child in tow. Again, only steps from the marked crosswalk at the stop signs.

While reprimanding our children and educating them about road safety keep one thing in mind. Children will listen to some of what you say... but they watch everything we do.

Cross with caution and only at marked crossing areas.

Our children are watching. "Sheesh.. adults these days."

Chris McIntosh, Acton