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# Jeff Lumby's

## view from the country

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## Game on!

It was refreshing to see that the topic most Canadians were huddled around the water cooler talking about this week had nothing to do with the government. The jaw-waggin' centred around the ratification of the CBA of our national pastime, league parity and Sydney Crosby. Hockey is back and it promises to be better than ever.

Unlike Baseball, Hockey returned from a crippling work stoppage with some welcome changes. Ever since Jacques Lemaire perfected the neutral zone trap, scoring and interest in the game have plummeted. Hockey fans have been demanding a faster, higher scoring game for years now and by all indications they're going to get it. Some feel they didn't go far enough but the rule changes for 05/06 are encouraging.

Here's the hockey we're used to. A guy feeds the puck up the boards from behind his net; his winger gets it inside the blueline and spots the centre streaking up the ice. His pass hits him in full stride on the other side of the centre red line..... "tweet!" Offside. Play stoppage. Line change. Beer run. Here's another one. 30 seconds left in the 3rd period. The score is tied but the Leafs are threatening. They get into Habs zone only to lose the puck, the Canadians come out but cough it up just outside the blueline, a Leaf shoots it back in as a lone teammate struggles to get back out over the blueline. He doesn't. "Tweet!" Offside. Momentum death. Faceoff outside the blueline. ZZZZZZZZZZZZ! And finally this one. There's a mad scramble around the net, the puck bounces around from one guy to the next finally, there's a shot on net and....he scores! No, wait.....sorry. Somehow the puck got caught up in the Michelin Man's (goalie) endless tonnage of paraphernalia. Hundreds head to the can while CSI Toronto tries to locate the puck in the goalies' gear.

Some purists contend that we're toying with the original game with some of these changes. Not really! The centre red line was never part of the original construction of hockey. It was added in the 40's some time. The original game also had a rover skating around with the other 6 guys on each team. You wanna bring him back? Any more people out there and it's going to look like the frickin Ice Capades.

The reduction of a goalie's pad width to 11 inches doesn't come close to the gear of the old days. As a matter of fact, they were 10 inches wide in the early 80's. This year's gloves have also been dramatically diminished in size. Re-instituting the tag-up off-side rule is just sound policy designed to speed up the game with fewer stoppages. There are other rule changes that will cause the playing surface to take on a different look. Besides the elimination of the centre line, the blue lines will move in a bit, there will be less room behind the net and a new zone will be visible, limiting how far goalies can come out to play the puck. I love this change. It used to drive me nuts seeing some hotshot goalie stickhandling out past the circle. "Hey Gordie, get back in the net, we'll take it from here!"

Of all the rule changes, the one most important to the future of the game is a discretionary one. Every year the league talks about clamping down on obstruction. And every year the refs begin the season calling everything. By Christmas, after they've been yelled at by everyone and their water-boy, they relax a bit. And by the playoffs all the clutching and grabbing is back up to full force. The elimination of obstruction related incidents will require involvement by all sides. Refs have to enforce it consistently throughout the entire season. Coaches and players are gonna need to shut the old cake hole when a penalty is called. If the benches get too vocal about it, the zebras should be dishing out bench minors or misconducts right out of the blocks so that teams learn the new criteria in a hurry.

Hockey is poised to quickly bring back fan interest if all this stuff works. Mission one will be to keep Bob Goodenow as far from the game as possible. You know, it could be argued that the players, and certainly the game, would have been better off had Bob not even been involved. The owner's original offer to the NHLPA, besides a slightly lower salary cap, didn't include a 24% rollback in wages, didn't include two-way linkage and certainly didn't include the loss of a season. Thanks for all your hard work Bob. Here's an X-box, why don't you go find a nice dark room to sit in till your contract expires.

## Halton Women's Place hosts Riverside Walk

By MANDI HARGRAVE

This year Ramsden Training and Halton Women's Place will be hosting the 2nd Annual Riverside Walk for a 5km walk at Lion's Valley Park along Sixteen Mile Creek in Oakville. Peter Ramsden of Ramsden Training approached Halton Women's Place a year ago to do this because he wanted to support women and children who are leaving violent relationships.

"He was the force behind starting the walk," said Heather Thomas, Director of Development for Halton Women's Place. Thomas said last year's walk was fantastic for a first time event. There were 50 participants and the amount raised was approximately \$3,000. She said this walk is very scenic unlike others because they walk along 16 Mile Creek instead of the streets.

Halton Women's Place will be celebrating its 25th anniversary this year. The organization was started because a need was identified in the region for women seeking safe shelter. Last year over 700 women and children accessed the services provided at Halton Women's Place. All services are free and they include emergency shelter, a 24-hour crisis line, affordable housing, and a therapeutic program for children, as well as transitional support by working with agencies in the area such as lawyers and family counseling. Everyone is allowed to participate in the walk and Thomas encourages families and men to participate and show support.

"It's a good way for people to get out and show support," she said.

Currently there are 50 active volunteers working at Halton Women's Place and Thomas said they are always looking for more. The goal of Halton Women's Place is to raise awareness about abuse and raise money to support the programs and services provided.

Thomas said the walk is for a safer tomorrow and to support women. The walk will take place on Sunday, September 25 from 10 am to 12 pm at Lions Valley Park along 16 Mile Creek in Oakville. Registration is from 9 am to 9:45 am. To participate in the walk there is a \$25 registration fee and participants are encouraged to raise pledges.

## Toe tapping fun...

By DONNA DANIELLI

Looking to put the "fun" back in "fundraiser"? Then look no further than the upcoming Blazing Saddles event in support of Milton District Hospital. "It's going to be the hootenanny of the year," laughs MDH Director of Development, Donna McLaughlin. "We're encouraging people to dust off their frocks and dig out their spurs."

Blazing Saddles, which will take place on August 19 at Pinelands Farm, offers a little something for everyone. The all inclusive ticket (priced at \$175 per person) features appetizers, open bar (including a margarita bar!), a sit down plated barbecue dinner from Infusion Catering, dessert bar, live entertainment from the Bareback Riders and dancing!! Entertainment will be provided by Hee-haw star Gordie Tapp who will act as master of ceremonies for the evening.

"Not only will you have a good time, you'll be supporting the best cause there is: the hospital," says Donna McLaughlin. "We're expecting to sell out though, so people should get their tickets as soon as possible." Tickets are available at the Milton District Hospital Foundation office or at Delacourt's Gifts in Milton. For more information, please call 905-878-2382, ext. 7170.

# Country Heritage Park

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**Event of the week**

## Heavy Horse Field Days

**August 6 & 7**  
12 Noon - 5:00 p.m.



- ◆ Horse drawn wagon rides
- ◆ Farrier demos
- ◆ Harness demos
- ◆ Blacksmith shop
- ◆ Plowing, discing
- ◆ Making hay
- ◆ Cutting grain
- ◆ Stooking demos
- ◆ Threshing demos
- ◆ Belgians, Percherons
- ◆ Clydesdales, Spotted Drafts
- ◆ Park exhibits open

*Program subject to change.*

**Coming next week!**

## Bees, Garlic and Herbs

**August 13 & 14**  
10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.



- ◆ Bee demo hive
- ◆ Colony cast structure
- ◆ Honey vendors and demos
- ◆ Garlic vendors and demos
- ◆ Herb info
- ◆ Vintage honey equipment
- ◆ "Stinking good time"
- ◆ "Buzz with us"
- ◆ Heritage exhibits open

*Program subject to change.*

**... lots of fun for the whole family**

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