

Comment

The Canadian Champion

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Give IceHawks a try

National Hockey League commissioner Gary Bettman and NHL players' union boss Bob Goodenow said last week, as the league announced a lockout that will effectively shut down the upcoming season, that both sides were "willing to negotiate a fair agreement" and apologized to the fans for the labour disruption.

Don't believe either one of them.

If fans mattered a whit to either of these men, hockey fans wouldn't be forced this winter to tune in to professional bowling or Australian cliff diving in a bid to feed their sports addiction.

This "labour situation," which was foreseen years ago, is about what most labour situations are about — money. The players want to ensure that even a fourth liner who scores three goals a year can get a million-dollar contract while the owners, multi-millionaires all, want an even heftier slice of the NHL pie.

It may be belabouring the obvious, but there's plenty of blame to be placed on both sides.

The owners, for their part, need a new collective bargaining deal in place to

save themselves from, well, themselves.

Out-of-control salaries are solely the fault of owners who over-paid for players in a bid to outdo other owners. For supposedly smart businessmen who made their fortunes outside the sporting arena, they have shown incredible stupidity when it comes to playing with their sporting toys.

The players, for their part, must realize that the NHL hasn't caught on in the United States (a poker tournament out-drew the recent U.S.-Russia World Cup game on TV), there's little revenue coming in from television contracts, some franchises are in real danger of going belly-up and the Wade Belaks of the hockey world aren't worth \$1 million a year.

Our advice to hockey-starved fans during this lockout is to go watch the Milton IceHawks play.

For those of you who haven't attended a junior hockey game of late, check out Memorial Arena Fridays at 7:30 p.m. It's pretty cheap, too. The cost for a ticket is \$8, with children under 10 getting in for free.

Our Readers Write

Thanks to everyone who supported ninth annual Leslie Wells Slo-Pitch Tournament

Dear Editor:

On behalf of the Leslie Wells Slo-Pitch Tournament Committee, I'd like to extend a very special thank-you for the generous contributions to our ninth annual Leslie Well Slo-Pitch Tournament.

This event wouldn't have been possible without the support of many companies in Milton.

Held August 13 to 15, the tournament was a tremendous success and enjoyed by all players and fans that attended. Thanks to the Milton Lions Club for its continued sup-

port for this growing event, as well as to the operations staff at the Nipissing yard for making the Thompson Road ball diamonds at Lions Park a first-class location in which to play.

The 2004 committee is pleased to announce that \$18,500 was raised, and will be donated to a number of organizations, including the Canadian Red Cross Society of Milton, St. John's Ambulance of Milton, Pierre DeBie, Health Recovery, Dumencu Boys in Trust, E.C. Drury's 25th anniversary

reunion, Milton Lions Club charities and Milton District Hospital, in memory of Barrie Elliot and Bob "Stumper" Davidson.

Over the past nine years the Leslie Wells Charity Slo-Pitch Tournament has raised more than \$100,000 for various charities in Milton.

Once again, thanks for your support of this event.

**Greg Ollerenshaw,
Leslie Wells Slo-Pitch
Tournament Committee**

E-mail all your letters to the editor to miltoned@haltonsearch.com.

Canadian Thanksgiving has its own unique flavour

Most of us celebrate Thanksgiving every year but how many actually know about the origins of the Canadian festivities?

I admit I didn't really know much until I was editing an article written by Stephanie Thiessen to be featured in the October/November issue of North Halton life, a sister publication of The Champion.

In fact, I think knowledge of the American Thanksgiving, a day our neighbours to the south celebrate bigger than Christmas, is more commonplace with pilgrims and football.

Reiterating sections of the article, I'm going to pass on some of my newfound knowledge to you.

In 1957, Parliament officially declared the second Monday of October as Thanksgiving. In previous years, the holiday had been changed to October from November due to complaints that it

was celebrated too late for the Canadian growing season.

It's commonly known that when Americans stuff themselves with turkey every fourth Thursday of November, they're celebrating the feat of their pilgrim fathers. This is the name given to a group of about 100 English colonists who landed from the Mayflower and created the first settlement of New England in 1620.

But surprisingly enough, our Thanksgiving origins date even further back. Historians agree that the first Thanksgiving happened around 1578 when English navigator Martin Frobisher celebrated surviving his journey to what's now Newfoundland.

The American holiday actually had some influence on how the holiday was celebrated in Canada. In the 1750s, settlers moving to the Nova Scotia area from America brought with



*From the
editor's desk*

with KAREN SMITH

them their Thanksgiving traditions, explaining many of the similarities. This continued as clumps of Americans immigrated to Canada throughout the next century, for various reasons.

With the Christian church at the centre of the community, special church services were the norm. An article in an October, 1903 issue of a local newspaper refers to a "splendid"

Thanksgiving dinner that was to be held October 15 at the Methodist Church in Milton.

"The ladies of the church are making arrangements for an admirable supper," it reads. "There will be an attractive musical programme."

Villagers often celebrated Thanksgiving in Victorian times with a communal feast as well as games and dancing.

As it does today, the Thanksgiving meal in the late 19th century would have resembled closely that of our southern neighbours — and the delicacies weren't much different from what we savour these days.

A typical menu might have included roast turkey, chicken, potatoes, squash, onions, cranberry sauce, plum pudding and for dessert, mince, pumpkin and apple pies.

Hopefully, this added insight will make the holiday more meaningful for you as it has for me.