

Sports Slants - cont'd

It's the things I don't know about that bug me.

So, here I am, supposed to keep up to date on what's happening in the world of sports and I don't know:

(1) who'll take fourth spot in the east - Buffalo or Detroit; (2) who'll finish fourth in the west and face Chicago in the quarter-finals; (3) who'll finish second and third in the west, with the winner of that series earning the right to meet Montreal (that's if the Canadiens get by either Buffalo or Detroit in their series) in the semi-finals.

Also of last Wednesday, it looked like Buffalo Sabres had a good chance to finish up fourth in the east. They were three points up on the Red Wings and had one game remaining. The Wings, however, had three games left, but two of them were against tough teams.

There was a regular traffic jam for second third, and fourth spots in the west. Minnesota held a three-point lead over Philadelphia for second place, but had only one game to play. The Flyers, meanwhile, had three left. The only thing sure about those two teams is that they would be in the playoffs and would face each other in the first round.

And fourth place in the west was up for grabs between three teams - St. Louis, Pittsburgh and Los Angeles. St. Louis had the upperhand, since they led the Penguins and Kings by three points. But then again, the Blues had two tough games remaining - against Pittsburgh and Buffalo, while the Kings' last two games were against two easy clubs - California and Vancouver. Pittsburgh's only other game was against the rough -tough Flyers from Philadelphia.

I picked Los Angeles to make the playoffs before the start of the season, so I have to stick with them. If I'm wrong, remember that I'm saying this before the weekend's final scheduled games have been played.

Isn't it funny how I've gone through about 25 paragraphs of so-called sports talks without really saying anything.

I would, however, like to go on record to say that Montreal will win the Stanley Cup! If they don't I'll eat this whole page of the Terrace Bay News when the Cup playoffs are over (providing the publisher keeps a copy for me), and I'll send along a photograph to prove it.

By the way, in case I have to go through the miserable ceremony of eating the column, if any of you happen to be talking to Pentti Lund in Thunder Bay, tell him I'll eat the column raw - not with Corn Flakes and cream.

SPORTS SHORTS: Believe it or not, the club with the best exhibition baseball record in the National League, as of last Wednesday was Montreal Expos. Gene Mauch's squad had won 12 and lost six. San Francisco Giants were second with 10 wins and five losses, followed by 1972 World Series finalists, Cincinnati Reds, with a 13-7 record. Pittsburgh Pirates, minus the late Roberto Clemente, were way down the list with eight wins and 13 losses, third from last

You can say what you want about the scoring feats of Phil Esposito, but, as far as I'm concerned, the only scoring king of hockey in my mind, is Bobby Hull. The Golden Jet, although he's playing in a mediocre league this year, came through with his sixth 50-plus goal season last week, the sign of a
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