

Stouffville Tribune

A Metroland community newspaper
9 Heritage Rd., Markham, ON, L3P 1M3

Publisher: Ian Proudfoot
General Manager: Alvin Brouwer
Editor in Chief: Brenda Larson
Director of Advertising: Debra Weller

Deputy Editor: Debora Kelly
Editor: Julie Caspersen
Production Director: Cheri Kay
Distribution Director: Barry Goodyear
Online Publishing Manager: Brian Kirlik

Classified Manager: Ann Campbell
Retail Sales Manager: Stephen Mathieu
Inside Sales Manager: Stacey Allen
Business Manager: Margaret Fleming
Office Manager: Viviani O'Neil

OPINION

TELEPHONE

(905) 294-2200

FAX: (905) 294-1538

EMAIL: newsroom@econsun.com



Anne Howland

Too much money to be made on playoffs to let best team win

What if the hockey playoffs are fixed?

I know it will cause consternation in some and outrage in others, but it's a pet theory I've had for a while now. And it could apply not only to hockey, but to almost any major league sport.

Let's face it folks, there's big-time money to be made. From huge media and consumer product companies to your local popcorn and T-shirt vendor, playoffs spell profits.

And what better than a nail-biting, edge-of-your-seat, down-to-the-final-and-deciding-game series?

Fans are in a frenzy. If they're not glued to the tube watching endless hours of commercials, er, action, they're fighting over game tickets or paying for wings and suds at the nearest pub with a big-screen TV.

They're sporting team jerseys and buying up series mementoes and souvenirs. They're picking up the next day's newspaper or tuning into the radio to get a rehash of each play. They're even flying into town for the latest match and putting themselves up at a hotel.

The spin-off effects on the economy, not to mention the direct benefits to advertisers and sponsors, are tremendous.

Take the playoff action involving the Toronto Maple Leafs. In the first two games of the quarter-finals with the Ottawa Senators, Toronto was obviously the better club, playing some of the best hockey the team had produced all season. It seemed they would be easy winners of the best-of-seven series and well on their way to the semi-finals.

But does that make for good television (or return on investment)?

Once the scene shifted to Ottawa, the Senators rolled over the Leafs, rallying to win not one but two games, forcing a best two-out-of-three showdown.

Home-ice advantage, or something more?

The same sort of thing is happening in the current semi-final series with the New Jersey Devils (with the hope, of course, that the Leafs forced a game seven with a win last night). How can a team, which shall remain nameless, play so hopelessly and still be in the running?

It just seems to me this sort of thing happens more often than not. What should be an easy victory suddenly becomes a fight to the death.

But then, it's hard to ignore the fact there are some major power brokers in action behind the scenes of these big sporting events. When they say jump, even a well-paid professional athlete might be tempted to ask, "How high?"

Who's to complain? The fans eat it up, the advertisers gloat, the economy booms and the players get to indulge in the game they love and take home a six, seven- or eight-figure salary.



LETTERS

No-smoking committee taking away public's right to choose

It is worrisome how the self-appointed no-smoking committee members, especially councillors Joyce Frustaglio and Jack Heath, took it upon themselves to introduce a law banning smoking in restaurants, pubs and hotels.

This issue has obviously reached a high level of political demagoguery combined with a sleazy approach. Such councillors have exceeded their territorial jurisdiction by cooking up a law and enforcing it on the public and privately owned businesses.

As tobacco is a legal substance, the public must have the right to frequent establishments that are either non-smoking or smoking (with approved ventilation).

This is far beyond the negative ramifications of smoking and its impact on health. It has to do with a breed of bureaucrats who, through political tyranny, try to take away from the public their right to choose.

What's next on this committee's agenda? Banning movies in which actors and actresses smoke? Or banning investment companies and the public from trading in stocks of tobacco and alcohol companies?

Obviously, Frustaglio and Heath have picked themselves a pre-election campaign issue, expecting to gain some notoriety and win some votes prior to the Mike Harris axe falling due to the inevitable amalgamation.

MOUNIR SAHYOUN
UNIONVILLE

Promote development with nature a sad commentary

We are deeply concerned about the degradation of the environment in Ontario. Far-sighted politicians must protect this resource or become responsible for the death of healthy communities in Ontario's future.

In light of this, we are asking politicians to become involved in the Oak Ridges Moraine issue. The following issues are of the greatest concern:

- Do not let the Ontario Municipal Board make decisions that only support economic issues and developers' positions, while neglecting the wishes of the people, people you were elected to support;

- Protect all that's left of the Oak Ridges Moraine in Richmond Hill;

- Help create a 2,700-acre Kettle Lakes Park;
- Ban development on the Oak Ridges Moraine and impose stiffer controls where development has already been approved;
- Stop the extension of Bayview Avenue through the proposed park area;
- Set funds aside to buy sensitive lands across southern Ontario.

Recently, we watched a deer graze at the corner of Hwy 7 and Bayview Avenue. This wildlife and the nature present in York Region are so integral and necessary to our existence that the developer's choice to use their pictures to advertise the homes that destroy them.

What a tragic commentary on the human soul.

DON AND ESTHER COLLIER
RICHMOND HILL

Police helicopter trial under-rated value and usefulness of service

Re: *Would independent consultant support York's cop chopper?* Column, April 27

I am the pilot who flew for Peel Regional Police during last year's helicopter trial.

I have yet to read the consultant's report, but have been informed of some of its contents. My impression is that the evaluation methods may not have been valid and my suspicion is that the "effectiveness targets" set may have been unrealistic.

I do not think this was done intentionally, but rather because nobody had any experience either conducting or evaluating police helicopter operations.

There was, when we started, only one comparable permanent operation in Canada. That is in Calgary, where it is accepted as a valuable

tool. Our police observers spent four days there to see how they operated. Other than that, there was no training.

Some of our stats were pretty impressive, including a 62-per-cent reduction in criminal incidents in one industrial area that we patrolled regularly. Areas that we did not patrol as much, due to airliner traffic near the airport, saw significant increases.

Was York and Durham's trial more valid? Maybe. Maybe not.

The "\$1-million annual cost" is also on the high side. We were flying six hours per night. Every other police helicopter operation on the continent does four hours per night. That alone cuts the cost by one-third.

Very little of it was what I would call fun, especially in the beginning, but it was satisfying, nonetheless. A large degree of that satisfaction came from the comments from the street cops themselves. None of the many that I spoke to doubted its value and usefulness, and I asked a lot.

We saved many of them untold hours of wading through weeds, swamp and scrub in the dark on several occasions. We provided a considerable measure of safety to lone cops conducting suspicious vehicle stops late at night.

Once we put our light on the stopped vehicle, the occupants knew they weren't getting away if they tried something stupid.

Police on the ground are limited. They cannot see what's happening behind buildings, or on rooftops. They cannot check a large area as rapidly or thoroughly, or move from one area to another as quickly.

We provided good safety and crime-fighting capabilities. Our trial under-rated them.

MARK L. HORSTEAD
NEWMARKET

LETTERS POLICY

Stouffville Tribune welcomes your letters. All submissions must be less than 400 words and must include a daytime telephone number, name and address. The newspaper reserves the right to publish or not publish and to edit for clarity and space.

Write: Letters to the Editor,
9 Heritage Rd.,
Markham, ON, L3P 1M3
Email: letters@econsun.com

Stouffville Tribune

Serving the community since 1888



Canadian Circulations
Audit Board Member



Ontario Press Council

Canadian Publications Mail Product Sales Agreement #1403419
Subscription rates by mail: 1 year - \$69.55 (Tuesdays only)

Stouffville Tribune, published every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, is one of the Metroland Printing, Publishing and Distributing Ltd. group of newspapers, which includes the Ajax/Pickering News Advertiser, Alton Herald/Courier, Barrie Advance, Barry's Bay This Week, Bolton Enterprise, Brampton Guardian, Burlington Shopping News, Burlington Post, City Parent, Collingwood/Wasaga Connection, East York Mirror, Erin Advocate/Country Routes, Etobicoke Guardian, Flamborough Post, Georgetown Independent/Action Free Press, Kingston This Week, Lindsay This Week, Midland/Penatanguishene Mirror, Milton Canadian Champion, Milton Shopping News, Mississauga News, Newmarket Aurora, Georgina Era-Banner, Northumberland News, North York Mirror, Oakville Beaver, Oakville Shopping News, Orillia Today, Oshawa/Whitby/Clarington/Port & Perry This Week, Peterborough This Week, Richmond Hill/Thornhill/Vaughan Liberal, Scarborough Mirror, Stouffville Tribune, Today's Seniors, Uxbridge Tribune and City of York Guardian.

Phone: (905) 294-2200
Fax: (905) 294-1538

Classified:
1-800-743-3353

Distribution:
(905) 294-8244