

SPORT-SCAN DAILY BRIEF

NHL 11/18/2012

Calgary Flames

- 644445 No kidding around
- 644446 Flames fan sends message to Bettman

Carolina Hurricanes

- 644447 Canes adjust to life without hockey

Chicago Blackhawks

- 644448 NHL, players set to resume lockout talks Monday

Dallas Stars

- 644449 Despite lockout, Stars' Gaglardi upbeat a year after purchase
- 644450 NHL labor talks set to resume Monday

Detroit Red Wings

- 644451 Nation + world: NHL CBA talks will resume Monday
- 644452 Ticker: Red Wings' Ian White's verbal shot at NHL commissioner Gary Bettman brings back memories
- 644453 Flashback: Amid Red Wings' great Terry Sawchuk's success, pain was relentless
- 644454 Red Wings players say NHL's suggestion of two-week hiatus in talks makes no sense

Minnesota Wild

- 644455 Aeros play AHL game as hockey returns to X
- 644456 Gophers lineup changes; NHL-NHLPA to meet Monday night
- 644457 Minnesota Wild coaches impressed by Charlie Coyle

New Jersey Devils

- 644458 League, Players Set to Resume Lockout Talks on Monday
- 644459 Inuit Prospect Skates the Ice Less Traveled
- 644460 NHL season: What might have been

Ottawa Senators

- 644461 Cowen out for up to eight months after hip surgery
- 644462 Ottawa Senators defenceman Jared Cowen out for season after hip surgery

Philadelphia Flyers

- 644463 Inside the Flyers: Shameful NHL labor impasse is imperiling the game
- 644464 Giroux injured in Germany
- 644465 Red Wings' Ian White calls Gary Bettman 'an idiot'

Pittsburgh Penguins

- 644466 NHL face finds his lockout voice
- 644467 NHL talks slated for Monday
- 644468 Hockey fans ask only this: When?

San Jose Sharks

- 644469 Marleau: Contract rules would hinder GMs;

Toronto Maple Leafs

- 644470 Ben Scrivens off to slow start with Toronto Marlies: Feschuk
- 644471 OHL profile: Kitchener Rangers rookie Justin Bailey gets wake-up call from knockout blow

Vancouver Canucks

- 644472 Wickenheiser tournament a hit with Mexican women

Websites

- 644475 ESPN / NHL: Labor talks resume Monday

Winnipeg Jets

- 644473 Local lads missing their Winnipeg Jets
- 644474 Toews didnt expect homecoming like this
- SPORT-SCAN, INC. 941-284-4129
- 644445 Calgary Flames

By Jim Bender

No kidding around

The NHL lockout has gotten downright scary for some of our kids.

In fact, one youngster dressed up as a ghoulish locked-out NHL player for Halloween. Troy Borthistle, 10, wore plastic chains around his neck with a

giant lock and a sign that said, 'Bettman, I'll Play,' on one side and, 'Will Play For Candy,' on the other.

"I want it to be gone," Borthistle, who plays for the A1 Atom Deer Lodge Blades, said before a game at the St. James Civic Centre on Saturday. "I miss the NHL. I just love hockey."

Borthistle was one of a number of players whom The Sun polled for their opinion about the lockout at various rinks over the weekend.

"I blame (NHL commissioner Gary) Bettman," he said. "I'm angry because I want the NHL back."

But there were actually more kids who blamed the players than Bettman.

"It's ridiculous because it's about a bunch of people with lots of money wanting more," said Brayden Solberg, 14, of the Bantam 2 Selkirk Steelers. "I blame the NHL and the players. They should stop being babies."

"I'm very angry, I want to watch some hockey."

Solberg's teammate, Nico Morrow-Litke, echoed those sentiments.

"It's actually very greedy for the players to be really selfish to want more money, and they should be playing now anyways," he said. "They're great players but I think they're being really greedy because they're already making a million dollars a year."

Greed was a common theme.

"It's the players' (fault)," said James Barclay of the Bantam AAA Winnipeg Hawks. "I'm mad because they're getting greedy and they want more. I don't think that's really fair. They sound like a bunch of overpaid cry babies."

"I give the owners some blame because they shouldn't be giving them that much money ... It's terrible. I don't know what to watch on TV anymore."

Turner Street, nine, of the A3 Minor Atom Corydon Comets doesn't know who to blame.

"I want to see the NHL this year," he said. "So, I don't like the lockout right now. I'm disappointed."

Some players were simply frustrated.

"I blame both because the players are showing that they're just playing for the money and Gary Bettman because he doesn't want to negotiate with them at all," said John Higgs of the Bantam 1 Fort Garry Flyers. "Gary Bettman hasn't done anything good for the game since he got employed (by the NHL)."

Teammate Riley Thomson was more disappointed than angry.

"I hate it. I love watching hockey and it just sucks," he said. "I don't like watching basketball."

Entire families are missing out.

"I absolutely hate it," said Abbey Mondor of the Bantam Girls Bord-Aire Wings. "I'm used to sitting with my family and watching hockey every night."

Cam Foster, a goalie for the St. James-Assiniboia Hockey Academy, concurred.

"I honestly don't think it's right that we don't have hockey," he said. "The owners are being greedy. Being a Canadian, you should be able to come home and watch hockey on TV every night."

Most of the kids interviewed still view the NHL players as heroes and will return to games with the same enthusiasm they did before the lockout — if it ever ends.

"They should just make a deal and play," said Kristopher Beatty, Borthistle's teammate. "I'm disappointed that no one's playing but they can still make a deal."

That's the right idea, said Meghan Hodgins, who plays for both the Sturgeon Heights Huskies and Bord-Aire.

"They should just get their stuff together and play some hockey again," she said.

Out of the mouths of babes.

Calgary Sun: LOADED: 11.18.2012

644446 Calgary Flames

Flames fan sends message to Bettman

By Eric Francis

Like most Canadians, Nolan Rettie was frustrated over the onset of the NHL lockout.

A casual Calgary Flames fan who grew up playing the game, marched the Red Mile and felt privileged to attend two or three games a year, the 25-year-old grad student wanted it known he was upset.

He wanted to ensure the powers that be were aware this time it's different.

Unlike the love-in that followed the resolution of the last lockout, he isn't game to stand by idly this time, letting hockey executives and players take his support for granted.

So he decided to do something about it.

He packaged up his once-beloved Robyn Regehr Flames jersey given to him by his father as a going-away present for university and sent it to Gary Bettman.

Well, OK, to be fair, he sent it to TSN's James Duthie with hopes the broadcaster would have the best chance of delivering his jersey to the NHL boss, or alternatively, Donald Fehr.

"I thought if I sent it to Bettman directly he'd think it was a bomb," chuckled the University of Alberta student.

Included in the package was a letter Duthie posted on Twitter -- a powerful note brilliantly illustrating a frustration and sentiment written by one casual fan with a sentiment shared by millions:

"Dear Mr. Fehr and Mr Bettman, I am sending you the enclosed Flames jersey to inform you I am no longer a fan of the NHL or its players.

"I would describe myself as an average fan that used to go to two or three games a year and watch several more on TV. I do not know the intricate details associated with the current work stoppage and I don't care what they are. I feel both sides are being unreasonable and are at risk of losing an entire season. Both the NHLPA and the NHL should be embarrassed for allowing two lockouts in eight years.

"I think there are more fans that share the same feelings as myself and will not have the same support for the NHL when it does return.

"I will never attend another NHL game. Please keep my jersey, I won't need it."

It's interesting to note Rettie's frustration level dates back to the start of the 64-day lockout on Oct. 4, when he sent the package.

"I want them to know it's not the same as the last (lockout)," Rettie said of his mindset.

"Last time I missed hockey, but this time I'm just frustrated.

"This time I don't think it'll be a celebration when they come back. I think others will be hesitant to come back and support the NHL, as well. I'm one fan, but am sure I'm not the only one who feels that way. I guess I just wanted to put some action into it."

Duthie's posting to 162,000 followers prompted some to support Rettie on his Facebook page, confirming he's not alone.

"I think both Gary and Don probably have someone else opening all suspicious packages these days," laughed Duthie, Canada's new dean of sports broadcasting.

"I'm not sure what I should do with (the jersey). Part of me wants to keep it for him in case he changes his mind. I'm angry with both sides too, but I don't like seeing fans give up on hockey. I think Tweeting it hopefully accomplished what he wanted. I know people on both sides saw his letter."

Like most of Canada's jilted hockey fans, Rettie says he has had no problem filling the time he used to spend watching NHLers.

"It's not like I'm missing it or have to try filling a void -- you just do other things," he said.

"Life goes on."

Indeed it does, which is something Bettman and Fehr cannot be reminded of enough.

Calgary Sun: LOADED: 11.18.2012

644447 Carolina Hurricanes

Canes adjust to life without hockey

By Chip Alexander -

RALEIGH In the past few months, Kirk Muller has played a lot of golf, tailgated at an N.C. State football game, toured the Duke basketball facilities and even tried surfing for the first time.

Muller has watched the Charlotte Checkers play hockey. He has watched hockey video and analyzed hockey statistics. He also helped coach a few junior hockey practices in his hometown of Kingston, Ontario.

But Muller can't do what he wants to do most: coach the Carolina Hurricanes.

Muller is a hockey man. This is his time of year. But with the NHL lockout lingering, with a collective bargaining agreement still to be signed, there is no team for him to coach and no hockey to be played.

Muller has tried to make the most of his unexpected free time. So have John Forslund, the Hurricanes' longtime television play-by-play announcer, and Jay Harrison, a veteran defenseman for the Canes.

"I'm more or less the concierge at my house," Forslund said this week. "Laundry, homework, shuttling people around. Whatever needs to be done, I'm your guy."

Some players have headed overseas. Jussi Jokinen and Jamie McBain are in Finland. Jiri Tlustý is in the Czech Republic and Anthony Stewart is playing in England.

Others have stayed put for now. Harrison is part of a dwindling group of players – along with brothers Eric and Jordan Staal – who are skating at Raleigh Center Ice, hoping for a CBA breakthrough.

"It has been an up-and-down rollercoaster," Eric Staal said of the CBA talks.

Muller and his wife moved into a new house in March, but he wasn't able to get much work done in it with the hockey season ending in April. He then had to leave for Finland, where he was an assistant coach for Team Canada in the 2012 IIHF World Championships.

"I've now got the to-do list for getting the house organized and settling in," Muller said.

Muller had another to-do list – the schedule he and his staff set up for the Canes' preseason training camp. But the lockout, which began Sept. 16, wiped out the NHL's camps. Muller said he now has a revised, shorter training-camp regimen, not that he can say when it will be needed.

The NHL lockout allowed Muller to go back to Kingston for a few weeks last month and be with his sister. After battling cancer, Sherry Muller died Oct. 24 at age 49.

"If we had been playing, I would never have had that opportunity to be there at the end with her," he said. "So on a selfish note, it was really nice that I was able to have that time."

Muller also got a taste of hockey. His 15-year-old nephew, Mathew Muller, plays junior hockey and he helped run a few team practices. He also took in a few junior games.

"Had not been able to do that in a long time," Muller said.

Back in Raleigh, Muller said he has "played more golf in two months than the last four or five years." One recent golf partner, he said, was former Pittsburgh Steelers coach Bill Cowher.

Muller said he attended the N.C. State-Virginia football game with daughter, Bryelle, a freshman at N.C. State. During his visit to Duke this week, the Blue Devils' basketball team was in Atlanta to play Kentucky but he met football coach David Cutcliffe.

Then there was the trip to Wrightsville Beach. Muller grabbed a board and caught a wave – or at least tried to.

"It was not easy," he said.

While there have been no Hurricanes games, there still has been hockey. He went to Charlotte with general manager Jim Rutherford and others to get a closer look at the Canes prospects playing in the American Hockey League.

"That got me up to speed on the players in the organization," he said. "It's good to know who's (playing well). When our season starts, if you're going, you've probably got a pretty good opportunity to seize the moment with doors opening up with the big team."

Forslund and Harrison, like Muller, can only wonder when the lockout will end and NHL season begin. There were no labor negotiations this week.

"Everywhere I go people ask the question, when will it all be over. I don't have any answers," Forslund said.

Forslund, who has been with the Hurricanes franchise for 18 years, said he was asked to come to Charlotte for the Checkers' Nov. 4 home opener and be a part of their cable broadcast. He considered it but declined.

"I just didn't have the appetite to do it," he said.

Harrison has played organized hockey since he was 5 and his Octobers and Novembers have centered around games and competition. Not this fall. He has conditioning workouts and skates three times a week at RCI, but often it seems as if he's spinning his wheels.

"It's frustrating," Harrison said. "But whether we're playing or not, we're professionals. You make do with what you have ... but by no means is it an ideal environment at the moment."

Harrison has been able to lend his wife, Jodean, a bigger hand at home and spend more family time with their three young daughters.

"That's been a bright spot of the lockout," Harrison said. Muller said he was taking the family to Washington, D.C., for Thanksgiving. They'll see the White House and play the role of tourists.

It'll be different for Muller. It's November. He's a hockey man.

News Observer LOADED: 11.18.2012

644448 Chicago Blackhawks

NHL, players set to resume lockout talks Monday

Reuters

NHL and players' union officials will meet again on Monday in New York in a bid to resolve the bitter two-month-old labor dispute, the league said on Saturday.

Weekend discussions between NHL Deputy Commissioner Bill Daly and NHL Players' Association special counsel Steve Fehr led to the decision, Daly told Reuters via email.

Both Commissioner Gary Bettman and NHLPA Executive Director Donald Fehr are set to join the session, the first between the two groups in a week.

"I expect (a) relatively small (meeting), but Don and Gary and players and owners will both be present," Daly said.

He did not, however, raise hopes for a solution to a new collective bargaining agreement that would end the work stoppage, which has left players locked out by the owners since September 15.

"I have no expectations with respect to the meeting at this point," Daly said, "including with respect to whether any progress toward an agreement can be made."

The meeting comes as speculation rises that the league could cancel more games next week if progress is not made.

Already the NHL has called off all games through November 30 as well as its showcase New Year's Day Winter Classic, costing the league millions of dollars in revenue.

The NHLPA did not respond immediately to questions about Monday's meeting.

"We believe that it is more likely that we will make progress if we meet than if we don't," Steve Fehr said in a statement last week.

The work stoppage is the fourth in 20 years for the NHL, the last wiping out the 2004-5 season.

League owners would like to avoid long-term contracts, limiting them to five years, delay free agency until a player turns 28 or plays eight years, have two-year entry deals and limit salary arbitration until after five years of play.

They also want to reduce the players' share of \$3.3 billion in annual revenue to 50 percent from the current 57 percent.

Chicago Tribune LOADED: 11.18.2012

644449 Dallas Stars

Despite lockout, Stars' Gaglardi upbeat a year after purchase

MIKE HEIKA

Norman Green is holding a party Monday to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the decision to bring the Minnesota North Stars to Dallas.

On Sunday, Tom Gaglardi will celebrate a year of ownership of the Stars.

The NHL currently is in a lockout, just the same as it was one season after Green moved the team in 1993.

So is it logical to ask if Gaglardi is at risk of meeting the same fate as Green — a ton of red ink and a forced sale of the Stars in a couple of years?

"No, absolutely not," said Green. "Tom is in so much better shape than I was financially, and I think that's why the Stars will be just fine. I had already suffered a lot of losses in Minnesota, I had put so much attention into the hockey team that my shopping mall business in Canada was suffering, and the strike came at a bad time for me. No, I truly believe the Stars are going to be fine for many years going forward."

It will be a quiet birthday for Gaglardi's ownership.

His team hasn't made the playoffs in four years and there is very little hockey buzz in Texas. And yet, the new guy seems resolute that progress still can be made — and is being made right now.

"We feel really good about where we're going, and I do believe we will be able to reach our goal eventually of where we would like to be financially," Gaglardi said. "This [lockout] throws a wrench into the timeline, but we also understand that's part of the process, and it's part of being in a pro sports league."

Gaglardi said that the Stars are behind in their plan to bring fans back to hockey, and he said he really doesn't know how to forecast exact numbers because he really doesn't know how much damage is being done by the lockout. But he said the infrastructure is in place for on-ice success, marketing and ticket sales.

Gaglardi has hired chief executive Jim Lites, as well as vice presidents Jason Farris, Brad Alberts and Mike McCall. The new leaders have expanded the sales team and adjusted almost every department. The offices in Frisco have been redesigned and the staff is ready to sell.

Now, it now just needs a product.

But the longer the lockout goes on, the tougher the financial pressure becomes for Gaglardi. Employees are working four days a week while taking one day a week of vacation time. Executive-level employees have taken pay cuts and regular-level employees may soon have to do the same.

"We have contingency plans, and I know Jim is looking at a lot of different things," Gaglardi said of possible cutbacks. "If it's a full season, that's tough. In some cases, those decisions will be made for us. We've invested a lot in finding these people, and we want to make sure they're all OK."

In the meantime, Lites said everyone is thinking big. The team is looking at changing uniforms, logos and possibly even colors. They have discussed

moving the practice facility to downtown at some point and they are studying feasibility plans for that.

"In some ways, this is harder than when we first started back in 1993, because there is some cynicism and we have lost some fans who we may not get back," said Lites, who was team president from 1993-2008. "But, in some ways, it's easier, because we know what needs to be fixed and we know how to go about fixing it. Experience is going to be a huge help for us."

Lites already has tapped major sponsors who left the team and is hunting for more, and that's a group that felt lost when the banks took over the team for a couple of years. He has a handle on the media in the area and how to market his product, which could help speed the recovery.

Bottom line, he was part of a process that survived two previous work stoppages, and he said he believes the Stars will come out of this one in good shape.

"To succeed in Dallas in any sport, you have to win. And to win, it's going to cost some money," Green said. "I believe Tom Gaglardi is the perfect man for the job, because he's a hockey fan, and he can sustain some losses to get this team to be a winner. Once he does that, I honestly think the team will make plenty of money and be just fine."

Green should know. He saw it happen before.

Dallas Morning News LOADED: 11.18.2012

644450 Dallas Stars

NHL labor talks set to resume Monday

By Ira Podell

NEW YORK -- So much for a two-week break. Just over a week since the last set of failed negotiations, the NHL and the locked-out players' association will return to the bargaining table Monday night.

Conversations that restarted Friday between NHL deputy commissioner Bill Daly and NHLPA special counsel Steve Fehr produced enough positive movement Saturday to set up another face-to-face meeting that the sides hope will lead to an agreement to save the hockey season.

NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman suggested to union executive director Donald Fehr on Thursday the sides take two weeks off from negotiations. The union maintained its desire to keep talking, and now bargaining is back on.

Owners and players met for several consecutive days last week in New York, but made little progress. Negotiations ended in an angry exchange last Friday, but bargaining resumed two days later only to break off again in just over an hour.

Staying apart never appeared to be a good option, and the NHL now seems to agree.

All games through Nov. 30 have already been taken off the schedule, more cancellations are likely within a week.

Star-Telegram LOADED: 11.18.2012

644451 Detroit Red Wings

Nation + world: NHL CBA talks will resume Monday

Staff

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Detroit Free Press LOADED: 11.18.2012

644452 Detroit Red Wings

Ticker: Red Wings' Ian White's verbal shot at NHL commissioner Gary Bettman brings back memories

By Steve Schrader

Well, thank you, Ian White, for injecting a little old-time hockey lockout into the NHL's current labor strife.

Friday, White said of commissioner Gary Bettman: "I gotta be honest: I personally think he's an idiot. Since he's come in, I think he's done nothing but damage the game."

That takes you back, doesn't it, to another Red Wings defenseman, Chris Chelios, who said of Bettman during the 2004 lockout: "I find it ridiculous he still has a job after all this. He doesn't understand hockey. He's a numbers guy. He doesn't have a feel for this game, and nobody in his office does, either. From a marketing standpoint, the game has suffered since he got the job."

And that was toning it down from the 1994-95 lockout, when Cheli, still a Blackhawk, warned: "If I was Gary Bettman, I'd be worried about my family or I'd be worried about my well-being."

"Some crazed fan or even a player might take it into his own hands and figure if they get him out of the way, this might get settled."

Detroit Free Press LOADED: 11.18.2012

644453 Detroit Red Wings

Flashback: Amid Red Wings' great Terry Sawchuk's success, pain was relentless

By Helene St. James

The NHL is in a deep freeze thanks to a labor dispute, but at the Free Press, hockey always is on the hearth. So until there are Red Wings games on the horizon, we present Flashback Features.

Today's player: Terry Sawchuk.

The cold facts: Born Dec. 28, 1929, in Winnipeg, Manitoba; he died May 31, 1970, in New York after a scuffle with Rangers teammate Ron Stewart. Won a combined 501 regular-season and playoff games during a two-decade career playing for Detroit, Boston, Toronto, Los Angeles and the New York Rangers.

The warm memories: Began down the path to his Hall of Fame career after inheriting goaltending equipment from his older brother, who died of a heart attack at 17. Given a shot at the NHL as a fill-in for an injured Harry Lumley in January 1950, Sawchuk was so impressive the Wings traded Lumley to Chicago.

Sawchuk won the Calder Trophy as top rookie in 1951, then delivered Stanley Cups in 1952, '54-'55. He won the Vezina Trophy in '52-'53 and '55, and was selected as an All-Star in each of his first five seasons.

At a time when backup goaltenders were unheard of, the heavy workload took a toll on Sawchuk, who played his entire career with a partially immobile right arm after an elbow injury in his childhood never healed properly. His on-ice accomplishments were matched by steady trips to sick bay to treat everything from an appendectomy to a broken instep, a collapsed lung, ruptured disks and nearly permanent back pain from spending so much of his time crouched in his net. By the time he began wearing a face mask in 1962, his face had absorbed about 400 stitches.

After being traded to the Bruins, Sawchuk retired in '57 only to change his mind after being reacquired by Detroit. By the mid-60s he was playing in Toronto, where he led the Maple Leafs to the 1967 Stanley Cup. In his final years he bounced from Los Angeles to Detroit to New York, where he recorded his 103rd shutout on Feb. 1, 1970, four months before his death.

Sawchuk was inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame a year after his death, and his No. 1 was retired by the Red Wings on March 6, 1994.

Detroit Free Press LOADED: 11.18.2012

644454 Detroit Red Wings

Red Wings players say NHL's suggestion of two-week hiatus in talks makes no sense

Ansar Khan |

TROY – The NHL and the players union remain far apart in collective bargaining talks, more games are expected to be canceled next week, and the likelihood of the season being scrapped increases every day there is no agreement.

Is this really a good time to take a two-week hiatus from negotiations, as NHL commissioner Gary Bettman has suggested?

"I think it just doesn't make sense," Detroit Red Wings player representative Niklas Kronwall said on Friday. "Of course, I don't think anyone on our side feels that's the way to go."

Players are incredulous that the league would want to stay away from the bargaining table for that long.

"Clearly, they just don't really want to talk," Red Wings defenseman Ian White said.

Kronwall said the NHLPA was discussing the matter internally and hadn't responded to the league's suggestion. The sides had five days of formal discussions in New York last week, but the talks ended Sunday on sour note, with owners and players far apart on contracting issues.

Do players feel Bettman asking for a break is a tactic to get them to pressure union chief Donald Fehr into making concessions?

"Me talking about it is just basically speculating on why they're doing it," Kronwall said. "Unfortunately, it looks like that's the route they want to take. Hopefully, we can talk them into doing otherwise."

"Stay with it, stay the course, make sure you're doing everything you can to get something done."

The NHL has canceled all games through November 30. The league reportedly will scrap the first two weeks of December by Wednesday.

"Every day I look at the calendar and look at the position, nothing's really changed," White said. "It's getting pretty close to being tragic."

But, Kronwall remains optimistic that the season can be salvaged.

"I can't imagine it going that far (cancellation of season)," Kronwall said. "But again, I didn't see this coming either (lockout lasting this long). I thought we were going to have everything locked up by the end of the summer."

"We'll just have to stay patient. It's going to be the same way going forward. Everyone is behind Fehr and his crew. We put all our trust in them. At the same time, we have our conference calls and everyone's staying updated and knows what's going on."

Michigan Live LOADED: 11.18.2012

644455 Minnesota Wild

Aeros play AHL game as hockey returns to X

MICHAEL RUSSO

What: American Hockey League game between the Chicago Blackhawks and Minnesota Wild affiliates .

Where: Xcel Energy Center. When: 5 p.m. Sunday.

Tickets: Free admission for season ticket holders, \$20 for all others. Available at Ticketmaster and the Xcel box office.

Aeros' top players: Forwards -- Charlie Coyle (7 goals, 10 points), Jason Zucker (7, 12), Justin Fontaine (4, 12), Johan Larsson, Brett Bulmer, Zack Phillips, David McIntyre, Nick Palmieri. Defensemen -- Marco Scandella, Brian Connelly, Chay Genoway, Tyler Cuma; Goalies - Matt Hackett, Darcy Kuemper.

Aeros' injuries: Mikael Granlund, Jonas Brodin, Chad Rau, Steven Kampfer, Jarod Palmer.

Ice Hogs' top players: Brandon Pirri, Marcus Kruger, Brandon Saad, Nick Leddy.

Food drive: The Wild will conduct the annual Toyota Food Drive to benefit Second Harvest Heartland, the Upper Midwest's largest hunger-relief organization. Fans can bring non-perishable food items and/or monetary donations to Gates 1, 2 and 5 from 4 p.m. through the start of the first period.

Star Tribune LOADED: 11.18.2012

644456 Minnesota Wild

Gophers lineup changes; NHL-NHLPA to meet Monday night

Posted by: Michael Russo

Evening from an empty Mariucci Arena, where the Gophers host Wisconsin in Round 2 of the "Border Battle" tonight at 8 p.m.

The game is on the Big Ten Network and 1500-AM.

Minnesota will make a couple lineup changes tonight.

Freshmen Ryan Reilly and A.J. Michaelson are scratched.

Tom Serratore moves from fourth-line left wing to center, and he'll be in the middle of two defensemen -- Jake Parenteau, who didn't play last night, and Justin Holl.

In addition, sophomore Jared Larson will make his season home debut as third-line left wing. Larson, who is from Apple Valley, played both games in Anchorage last weekend.

Adam Wilcox (5-1-2, 1.61 goals against average and .923 save percentage) will start his eighth consecutive game.

No changes for the Badgers, although I am not sure who starting in goal yet. Landon Peterson was dynamite last night with 41 saves. Joel Rumpel is 1-3-1 with a 2.37 goals against average and .919 save percentage.

Gophers lineup

FORWARDS

Kyle Rau-Nick Bjugstad-Christian Isackson

Nate Condon-Erik Haula-Zach Budish

Jared Larson-Travis Boyd-Seth Ambroz

Jake Parenteau-Tom Serratore-Justin Holl

DEFENSEMEN

Seth Helgeson-Ben Marshall

Brady Skjei-Nate Schmidt

Mike Reilly-Mark Alt

GOALIES

Adam Wilcox

Ryan Coyne

Badgers lineup

FORWARDS

Joseph LaBate-Jefferson Dahl-Tyler Barnes

Morgan Zulinick-Derek Lee-Michael Mersch

Ryan Little-Brendan Woods-Keegan Meuer

Brad Navin-Matt Paape-Sean Little

DEFENSEMEN

Kevin Schulze-John Ramage

Chase Drake-Joe Faust

Jake McCabe-Frankie Simonelli

GOALIES

Joel Rumpel

Landon Peterson

I just got to Mariucci from Xcel Energy Center, where I watched the Aeros practice and yucked it up with the Wild brass and coaching staff. I'll be doing a story for Monday's paper on the Aeros, most likely Charlie Coyle. If he keeps up his play, he's got a great chance to make the Wild's opening night roster ... if the lockout one day ends.

Fun to be back there actually watching hockey. Coach Mike Yeo has been running around town keeping busy. He met last week with the ridiculously good University of Minnesota women's team and is scheduled to return for a chalk talk.

He is just trying to stay busy, and all the coaches are excited to watch the Aeros on Sunday (5 p.m.) and praying they'll get back to work soon. Hopefully that will be coming down the pike.

The good news is that two-week moratorium reported across the league earlier this week has ended about 11 days early.

The NHL and NHLPA are set to get back to the bargaining table Monday. Keep your fingers crossed.

Star Tribune LOADED: 11.18.2012

644457 Minnesota Wild

Minnesota Wild coaches impressed by Charlie Coyle

By Bruce Brothers

Twin Cities fans hungry for pro hockey during the NHL lockout won't get to see Wild first-round draft picks Mikael Granlund or Jonas Brodin on the ice when the Houston Aeros take on the Rockford IceHogs in an American Hockey League game at 5 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 18, at the Xcel Energy Center.

Those coming to the X, however, will see former first-round draft pick Charlie Coyle, a 6-foot-2, 210-pounder who has caught the attention of Wild personnel in his first pro hockey season with the Aeros.

"I didn't think that Charlie would have the impact that he has on a daily basis," said Jim Mill, the Aeros' general manager and an assistant to the general manager with the Wild. "He's been consistently one of the top forwards on the team every single night. He's really impressive."

Mill says Coyle, a prototypical power forward who came to Minnesota with Devin Setoguchi in the deal that sent Brent Burns to the San Jose Sharks, looks to be the kind of player who should fit in well with the Wild once the NHL lockout ends. Not only is he big and strong, but he plays sound defense, skates well and plays smart.

"He's been fun to watch," Mill said.

Coyle, 20, has seven goals and three assists in 15 games for the Aeros. He left Boston University to play for the St. John Sea Dogs of the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League halfway through the 2011-12 season and totaled 15 goals and 23 assists in 23 games.

Granlund and Brodin are sidelined by injuries, Granlund by a sprained ankle and Brodin by a broken collarbone. But Wild coach Mike Yeo has been watching the Aeros closely and says Coyle looked like one of the team's top players even before Granlund and Brodin were hurt.

"You look at a guy that could potentially add some things that we could really use in our lineup," Yeo said as the Aeros worked out at the X on Saturday afternoon. "You talk about size, about net-front presence, about puck protection, these things are real important for the type of game we want to play, and he has demonstrated a lot of them."

Coyle, a native of Weymouth, Mass., says he's relishing his rookie season of pro hockey. Yes, he's a bit impatient about an end to the NHL lockout, but he's delighted to get a sniff of the Wild's home ice.

"It's a step up, playing in an NHL rink," he said. "We're happy where we're at, and being here is the next-best thing. Finally playing in this rink, a real game, is pretty exciting."

Houston (6-6-1-2) dropped a 2-1 decision to the IceHogs on Friday night and heads into the rematch in ninth place in the AHL's 15-team Western Conference.

That's fine with Mill, who recalled that under Yeo's guidance two seasons ago the Aeros were around .500 in December before up-shifting and advancing to the Calder Cup finals.

"It's a tough league to begin with," Mill said, "and when you add the fact that every single team has arguably two, three, four guys who belong in the NHL on any given night, obviously it's a challenge. It's a great atmosphere for these guys."

During the 2004-05 NHL lockout, the AHL featured numerous top prospects including Jason Spezza, Cam Ward, Ryan Miller, Dustin Brown and Eric Stahl who, Mill remembers, came into the NHL the following season and made an immediate impact.

"It's going to be a very similar situation to that whenever the NHL gets back to playing," he added. "So it's a great atmosphere. It's outstanding for these guys."

Aeros players will stick around after Sunday's game to sign autographs for fans.

Pioneer Press LOADED: 11.18.2012

644458 New Jersey Devils

League, Players Set to Resume Lockout Talks on Monday

By REUTERS

(Reuters) - National Hockey League (NHL) and players' union officials will meet again on Monday in New York in a bid to resolve the bitter two-month-old labor dispute, the league said on Saturday.

Weekend discussions between NHL Deputy Commissioner Bill Daly and NHL Players' Association (NHLPA) special counsel Steve Fehr led to the decision, Daly told Reuters via email.

Both Commissioner Gary Bettman and NHLPA Executive Director Donald Fehr are set to join the session, the first between the two groups in a week.

"I expect (a) relatively small (meeting), but Don and Gary and players and owners will both be present," Daly said.

He did not, however, raise hopes for a solution to a new collective bargaining agreement that would end the work stoppage, which has left players locked out by the owners since September 15.

"I have no expectations with respect to the meeting at this point," Daly said, "including with respect to whether any progress toward an agreement can be made."

The meeting comes as speculation rises that the league could cancel more games next week if progress is not made.

Already the NHL has called off all games through November 30 as well as its showcase New Year's Day Winter Classic, costing the league millions of dollars in revenue.

The NHLPA did not respond immediately to questions about Monday's meeting.

"We believe that it is more likely that we will make progress if we meet than if we don't," Steve Fehr said in a statement last week.

The work stoppage is the fourth in 20 years for the NHL, the last wiping out the 2004-5 season.

League owners would like to avoid long-term contracts, limiting them to five years, delay free agency until a player turns 28 or plays eight years, have two-year entry deals and limit salary arbitration until after five years of play.

They also want to reduce the players' share of \$3.3 billion in annual revenue to 50 percent from the current 57 percent.

(Reporting by Gene Cherry in Salvo, North Carolina, editing by Nick Mulvenney)

New York Times LOADED: 11.18.2012

644459 New Jersey Devils

Inuit Prospect Skates the Ice Less Traveled

By JEFF Z. KLEIN

SARATOGA SPRINGS, N.Y. — Neil Sinclair, the hockey coach at Skidmore College, described the difference in having a player like Dave Dupuis.

"How many kids who go to a private liberal arts college can say that they've hunted a wolf, a walrus, tracked a polar bear or set up a fishing net on a fall salmon run to help feed his community?" Sinclair said.

Dupuis, in his junior year with the Division III Thoroughbreds, is among the first Inuit to play N.C.A.A. hockey, if not the first. He is from Kuujuaq, an Inuit town in subarctic Quebec, more than a thousand miles north of Saratoga Springs.

"For me, life in Kuujuaq was pretty normal, but when I tell people how it was, they're usually pretty surprised," Dupuis said as he sat in a crowded mall restaurant. He talked about playing in the 22-hour daylight of summer and 22-hour night of winter; driving a snowmobile across the tundra at 8, aware that to lose the trail meant risking death ("It really teaches you responsibility, he said"); speaking Inuktitut with his mother and friends and French with his father; and learning English from television shows.

Dupuis, a third-line left wing with four goals and eight assists in his 47-game Skidmore career, memorized the old Bob and Doug McKenzie routines.

"We do the 'Great White North,' " said his teammate Brad Schuler, "and he claims to be from the North Pole."

Far more remarkable than Dupuis's hockey ability is the way he got from the remote Nunavik region to Skidmore, and how a timely phone call from a former N.H.L. player changed his path.

Dupuis, who turns 22 next month, was born and raised in Kuujuaq (pronounced kooj-wak) by his mother, Shirley, an Inuk and a nurse, and father, Jean, a French Canadian who moved north from Montreal at 17 to work for an airline. His parents were politically active. Jean Dupuis, a competitive speedskater, wound up leading the regional government and helping to get an indoor rink built. Then N.H.L. stars started visiting.

"I killed my first caribou with Larry Robinson," Dave Dupuis said, referring to the Hall of Fame defenseman. "I think I was 7."

By that age, Dupuis was accompanying his father on seal hunts in a boat to procure food for older relatives for winter. He played hockey for a Kuujuaq youth team and on the frozen streets.

His parents said they regretted not having moved to a city for their older children but decided to do so for David, their youngest. At 12, he and his father left Kuujuaq, population 2,300, for Montreal, population 1.8 million. They lived in the English-speaking west side of town, where Dupuis went to

high school and dreamed the dream of most hockey players in the province: playing in the quasi-professional Quebec major junior league.

At 15, Dupuis was drafted by the league's Chicoutimi Saguenéens.

"I was in camp, and I thought it was amazing," Dupuis said. "The way they did the drills, the skills, I just loved it."

The camp gave Dupuis the sense of professionalism he craved. He was also aware that two players from Kuujuaq had made it to the Quebec major juniors, and that one Inuk had reached the N.H.L., Jordin Tootoo, with the Nashville Predators.

Still, Dupuis said he had his doubts about the league.

"There were fights left and right in camp," he said, "and at that time, there was a documentary that showed how bad it could be: they'd hold your allowance if they didn't like how you played, and you could get traded, just like in professional hockey. A kid from the Maritimes got traded three times within a few hours."

Then Dupuis got a call from Joe Juneau, a Quebecer who graduated from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute with an engineering degree and then played 13 years in the N.H.L. Juneau had recently started a hockey and youth development program in Kuujuaq and the 13 other villages that make up the area called Nunavik.

"I had met him for maybe five minutes," Dupuis said. "But he called me up and said, 'If you don't leave there, I will drive up to Chicoutimi, eight hours, pick you up and personally take you out of there.'"

Juneau wanted the youngsters in Kuujuaq to realize the possibilities of higher education.

"He was furious," Dupuis said. "He said there's a different route you can take."

Were Dupuis to step onto the ice in a Chicoutimi uniform during a game, he would become ineligible for an N.C.A.A. team, Juneau reminded him.

"I told him if you have the will in life to learn things in school, you can go to university," Juneau said. "And if you're meant one day to be a pro player, you'll get there."

Juneau's intervention left its mark on Dupuis. Three times in the 11th grade he was called up by Chicoutimi, but each time, he went off to visit Kent, a prep school in northwest Connecticut that his girlfriend attended. That preserved his N.C.A.A. eligibility.

Dupuis eventually enrolled at Kent, where he repeated 11th grade and played two years of prep hockey. From there, he was accepted by Skidmore, one of the most selective colleges in North America.

"Hockey is not an incredibly diverse sport, so our diversity comes from international students who speak different languages," Sinclair said. "David obviously brings a lot of diversity and different kind of experiences than what a traditional recruit might look like. And he's a terrific young man, so that was an easy sell for us."

Dupuis had trouble at Skidmore at first. "I'll be honest, I struggled a lot throughout my freshman year," he said. "I thought at one point I'd have to transfer out of here."

But Dupuis accepted tutoring from other students, including teammates, and learned to devote nights to study. He became a business major. He has thrived and, Sinclair said, his positive attitude has been important in the dressing room.

In the season opener on Nov. 2, Dupuis scored Skidmore's first goal 14 seconds into the Thoroughbreds' 9-4 victory at the University of New England. But he was hit from behind in the third period and sustained a concussion that has kept him out since.

"This is how great a teammate Dave is," Schuler said. "We lost a tough one last Friday and he didn't play, but still he came in after the game and gave us a good speech, right from the heart, and fired us up. On Saturday, we came from behind and won. He didn't play, but he was there for his teammates and still played a huge role on the team."

Dupuis says he recognizes that with the advantages he had because of his parents and others, he has come a long way.

"There are people in Kuujuaq who have university degrees, who have gone to McGill," he said, referring to a top university in Montreal. "Our generation

is really starting to get out and explore the world, and coming back and using it."

Juneau said: "Dave is important for the kids of Nunavik. He's always going to be recognized as a kid from Kuujuaq who made it to the States playing some pretty good hockey, and he's going to earn a degree. It's a nice model."

Dupuis has worked with a Canadian organization called the National Aboriginal Role Model Program, speaking to First Nations groups at schools and on reserves. He has also gone back to Kuujuaq the last two summers to work at the youth center. When he goes hunting, he takes children from families that cannot afford the trip; fuel costs about \$12 a gallon and a bottle of Gatorade is more than \$10.

"Besides, it's light out at midnight, and they don't want to go to bed," Dupuis said, recalling life in his hometown. "Then the two hours of darkness you've got the Northern Lights."

"I've been seeing them all my life, but I still want to look at them."

New York Times LOADED: 11.18.2012

644460 New Jersey Devils

NHL season: What might have been

Rich Chere/

As the ongoing NHL lockout creates more bad vibes, you have to wonder if comments late last week from deputy commissioner Bill Daly should be viewed as rhetoric or reality.

Daly said he was "more discouraged now than at any point in the process" of reaching a collective bargaining agreement.

The season was scheduled to open Oct. 11, but games have been canceled through the end of November. So what have we missed had the season actually started on time?

THE OPTIMISTS' LIST

- 1.) In a blockbuster trade late in training camp, the Devils send Ilya Kovalchuk and Adam Larsson to the Washington Capitals for Alex Ovechkin and Dennis Wideman. Fifteen games into the season, Kovy and Ovie are battling for the league scoring title with 20 goals apiece.
- 2.) Setting the tone for the season, the Devils and Rangers meet in Newark on Oct. 17. Goalies Martin Brodeur and Henrik Lundqvist get into a fight during the pregame warm-ups. Unbeknownst to those watching the brawl, coaches Pete DeBoer and John Tortorella are duking it out in the hallway between their dressing rooms.
- 3.) Zach Parise returns to the Prudential Center on Nov. 11 and scores a hat trick for the Minnesota Wild. But the Devils win the game and Parise is given several standing ovations from appreciative New Jersey fans.
- 4.) With Rick Nash and Brad Richards leading the way, the Rangers win their 16th straight game. Their 16-0-0 record shatters the NHL mark of 10 wins at the start of a season, previously shared by the 1993 Maple Leafs and 2006 Sabres.

5.) Flyers owner Ed Snider, saying he is looking for good karma in an effort to win his first Stanley Cup since 1975, significantly lowers ticket prices. When the Flyers go on a winning streak, every other NHL team follows suit.

THE PESSIMISTS' LIST

- 1.) Before he takes even one hit, Sidney Crosby announces his retirement. He plans to open several driving ranges in Halifax, Nova Scotia, and the Pittsburgh area.
- 2.) Goalie Martin Brodeur shuts out the Islanders for career victory No. 666. His brother convinces him to retire with an appropriate number for a Devil rather than pursue 700 wins.
- 3.) The new CBA allows owners to renege on previously signed contracts, so Ilya Kovalchuk and Alex Ovechkin both decide to sit out under protest. They are suspended by their respective clubs.

4.) Jeff Vanderbeek's deal to refinance and keep control of the Devils falls through. The club is taken over by the league, which announces the franchise will be moved to Quebec City.

5.) After being called up by the Devils, Stephane Matteau, the club's first-round draft pick last June, says he's had a change of heart and cannot play for the team. He asks to be traded and a benevolent Lou Lamoriello deals Matteau to his father's former team — the Rangers.

Star Ledger LOADED: 11.18.2012

644461 Ottawa Senators

Cowen out for up to eight months after hip surgery

by Ken Warren

OTTAWA — The Ottawa Senators are preparing for life without defenceman Jared Cowen for the next six to eight months.

As expected, Cowen had hip surgery to replace a torn labrum in New York Saturday. The long rehabilitation process means there's no chance Cowen will play again this season, either in Ottawa or with Binghamton of the American Hockey League.

"First of all, we're very disappointed for Jared, because this was a big year for him to get more ice time, lots of playing time in Binghamton until we're going to play in the NHL," Senators general manager Bryan Murray said in an audio message provided by the team.

The team will monitor his recovery closely "to make sure he's completely ready to play when he steps on the ice again."

Cowen, 21, scored five goals and 12 assists with the Senators in his rookie year last season, while also delivering solid defence.

Assigned to Binghamton during the NHL lockout, he suffered the injury on Oct. 19.

Cowen initially took a hit along the boards and following what Murray described as a "freaky" type of play a few minutes later, Cowen felt "a pop."

Surgery, Murray said, was the only option, but there is no connection between the hip injury and Cowen's previous knee issues.

With Cowen unavailable to play, Binghamton defencemen André Benoit, Mark Borowiecki, Patrick Wiercioch and Erik Gryba will all be looked at closely for a spot in the NHL when the lockout ends.

"It certainly opens the door for another candidate," said Murray. "We think we have some good young players. Three or four are very close."

Ottawa Citizen LOADED: 11.18.2012

644462 Ottawa Senators

Ottawa Senators defenceman Jared Cowen out for season after hip surgery

By Bruce Garrioch

Even if the NHL returns to action this winter, you won't get to see Jared Cowen at Scotiabank Place before next September.

As reported by the Sun Tuesday, the Senators' big blueliner is gone for the season after he had hip surgery Saturday in New York to repair a torn labrum he suffered in Binghamton that's expected to keep him out of action 6-8 months.

The 21-year-old Cowen suffered the injury Oct. 19 against the Hershey Bears. The Senators were initially hopeful he'd be able to get rest and be able to return, but a specialist in New York confirmed surgery was the only route.

"It's quite a long-term injury. It appears that he would not be able to play at all this year, whether there's games in the NHL or in the (AHL)," said Senators GM Bryan Murray. "That, in itself, is disappointing."

"The length is one of the items that we'll monitor closely and we want to make sure that he's completely ready to play when he steps on the ice again."

Murray said the injury has nothing to do with the ACL surgery the 6-foot-5 Cowen had while playing junior with the WHL's Spokane Chiefs in 2008-09. He was selected No. 9 overall by the Senators in the NHL draft that spring.

"It's been made very clear there's no relationship whatsoever," said Murray. "It's just one of those things. He did take a hit and a little later on in a freaky kind of situation he felt a pop. After much evaluation, and finally going to a doctor in New York, we were told there's no result other than have surgery."

Losing Cowen is a big blow. He played in all 82 games last season and saw his role expand as the year went on.

As a result of changes on the blue line this off-season, Cowen would likely have seen an increase in playing time in 2012-13.

The Senators assigned him to Binghamton during the lockout because he was on a two-way contract and Murray didn't want Cowen sitting around waiting to play with locked-out players while he could be developing.

"We're disappointed for Jared," said Murray. "This was a big year for him to get more playing time in Binghamton until we're going to play in the NHL."

"It's disappointing from his point of view and very disappointing from the organization's point of view in that a good, young player is going to be sidelined for a (long) period of time."

The injury means Murray is going to have to look at the club's options on the blue line.

The Senators signed Mike Lundin from the Wild as a free agent, but lost Matt Carkner to the Islanders as an unrestricted free agent.

Cowen's injury could mean a break for a current Binghamton defenceman.

Murray said the club will keep a close eye on the AHL, where Andre Benoit, Mark Borowiecki, Patrick Wiercioch and Eric Gryba may all get a chance to push for playing time here.

"It certainly opens the door, not that we wanted to open the door, but it certainly opens the door for another candidate," said Murray. "We think we have some good young players coming. It will accelerate that opportunity if there's NHL games this year."

"Very definitely there are three or four people down there that will look like they are NHL ready or very close and this will give them a light at the end of the tunnel for opportunity."

Ottawa Sun LOADED: 11.18.2012

644463 Philadelphia Flyers

Inside the Flyers: Shameful NHL labor impasse is imperiling the game

Sam Carchidi

Stop wasting our time, NHL.

Same goes for you, NHL Players' Association.

For more than two months, you have teased us. There have been off-and-on negotiations and hints that your very public labor war was about to end.

In reality, you are no closer to a settlement than you were in September.

Your rhetoric has gotten older than the Phillies' roster.

Your bickering has become as annoying as the guy who whines about his fantasy football injuries.

Your lack of progress and your disregard for the fans - the folks who supplied you with a record \$3.3 billion in revenue last season - have threatened to put hockey somewhere between badminton and roller derby on sports' popularity chain.

Shame on you.

You have done a great disservice to the men who built the NHL into such a wonderful game. From greats such as Gordie Howe, Bobby Orr, and

Wayne Gretzky, to grinders such as Bobby Clarke, Gary Roberts, and Dale Hunter.

Maurice "The Rocket" Richard, who reportedly never made more than \$25,000 per season in his legendary career, is probably rolling over in his grave because of the way you have ignored those who came before you - and that includes players, front-office executives, and fans who planned their nights around your games.

In other words, compromise for the good of the sport.

You are causing irreparable harm to the game, and your mind-boggling resistance (read: stupidity) in hiring a mediator has created an apathetic fan base.

And that's not easy to do when you consider the game never seemed healthier (though some owners would disagree) than after the 2011-12 season. Revenue had climbed to an unprecedented level. The Winter Classic had been wildly successful, introducing new fans to the sport. Heck, you even had a TV contract with NBC.

Latest Flyers Videos

Despite all that, you have created apathy with your greed and you have put the entire season in jeopardy.

In 2004-05, the NHL became the first professional sports league in North America to have an entire season wiped out because of a labor dispute.

This, then, could be the second season erased in the last nine years - both on commissioner Gary Bettman's watch.

Bettman, who on Thursday suggested a two-week break in talks (the sides later agreed to meet Monday), and the NHL deserve their share of blame. You can argue the league set the tone for negotiations with its ridiculously one-sided opening offer: changing the definition of hockey-related revenue and asking the players' share to drop from 57 percent to 43 percent.

But Donald Fehr, executive director of the players' union, is not immune from criticism. He's the one who kept putting off the start of negotiations until late June, costing the sides about nine months that could have been spent at the bargaining table.

Yes, he has compromised a bit on some issues, but more is needed when you consider that 18 of the 30 NHL teams reportedly are losing money.

Granted, some of the losses are because of the ridiculous contracts the teams have given to players. But they at least are trying to put together a system that controls their spending to a certain extent - and still enables the players to average about \$2.5 million per season.

Tuesday is the unofficial deadline to have a collective bargaining agreement in place to give players time to return from Europe, have a one-week training camp, and start the season Dec. 1. That would make a 64-game, conference-only schedule easy to accommodate.

But that deadline is going to come and go, and more games are expected to be canceled soon. If by chance CBA talks are progressing in, say, a month, we may see projections for a 48-game season.

Forty-eight games. That's just 58.5 percent of a normal 82-game season. All of which would make the season phony, with the Stanley Cup champion forever having an asterisk attached. As in, "title was cheapened by shortened season."

Meanwhile, fans have started Twitter campaigns to boycott the season if it ever returns. They are sick of being taken for granted, sick of following the labor "news."

Their cries, we can assume, are taken lightly by the NHL because the league's honchos know the fans came back in force after the 2004-05 lockout. In the season before that lockout, the NHL averaged 16,534 fans per game. In the season after the lockout, the league's average increased to 16,954.

This time, based on the hundreds of e-mails and tweets I have received, I'm not so sure fans are going to flock back if the NHL returns. In fact, if I'm reading this correctly, the owners and players are going to have a lot less revenue to divide because ticket sales are going to drop significantly.

Both sides need to kick that around when they decide to meet again.

Philadelphia Inquirer / Daily News LOADED: 11.18.2012

644464 Philadelphia Flyers

Giroux injured in Germany

Frank Seravalli

Friday was a strange day for the Flyers' two stars skating in Germany: neither Claude Giroux nor Danny Briere registered a point in their 4-3 overtime loss with Eisbaren Berlin, a definite rarity for two players who have taken the German Elite League by storm.

More importantly, Giroux suffered a neck injury as a result from a check to the head, which required him to leave the game and be sent to the hospital by team doctors for evaluation.

In messages exchanged late on Saturday night in Berlin time, Giroux told the Daily News that it was "just a little neck injury" and to "not read too much into it."

He said he was feeling fine. As far as a timetable, Giroux said he couldn't guess, but published reports in Germany suggested he could return to practice as soon as Tuesday.

Giroux, 24, has 19 points in 9 games for Berlin.

LOCKOUT UPDATE: The NHL and NHLPA are tentatively scheduled to resume negotiations on Monday night in New York to end an 8-day hiatus in talks. On Thursday, the NHL had suggested a two-week moratorium in talks.

Philadelphia Inquirer / Daily News LOADED: 11.18.2012

644465 Philadelphia Flyers

Red Wings' Ian White calls Gary Bettman 'an idiot'

Matt Romanoski

The lights have been off at the Wells Fargo Center and other NHL arenas for more than a month and the frustration - and anger - level is growing.

Following a workout Friday, veteran Red Wings defenseman Ian White told the Detroit News exactly how he feels about NHL commissioner Gary Bettman.

"I personally think he's an idiot," White said. "Since he's come in, he's done nothing but damaged the game."

"The moves he's made, teams that are struggling seem to be ones he put in places where there's not viable markets for hockey."

"Three lockouts (under Bettman's regime, including the entire 2004-05 season). I don't know if he's in control of the owners or what he's saying. (Eight) of the owners have to agree to have something passed - you'd think it would be at least 50 percent. It just doesn't seem like they're running a democratic process, if you will."

The league has canceled all games through Nov. 30 and is currently not negotiating with the players association.

Philadelphia Inquirer / Daily News LOADED: 11.18.2012

644466 Pittsburgh Penguins

NHL face finds his lockout voice

Rob Rossi

The Kid picked up hockey after the last NHL lockout.

Sidney Crosby's task is tougher during this one.

644467 Pittsburgh Penguins

NHL talks slated for Monday

By Dave Molinari

It looks as if the NHL's labor negotiations won't be shutting down for two weeks after all.

Deputy commissioner Bill Daly said via email Saturday that talks for a new collective bargaining agreement likely would resume in the near future and subsequently confirmed that a session is planned Monday.

That meeting is being held at the behest of the NHL Players' Association.

The sides have not met in a week, and the NHL subsequently floated the concept of putting negotiations on ice for a couple of weeks, although Daly downplayed that idea Saturday.

When the talks pick up again, they will do so against a backdrop of reports that NHL commissioner Gary Bettman might no longer enjoy the unqualified support of the owners he represents.

A story in the Philadelphia Daily News Saturday suggested that Flyers owner Ed Snider -- long viewed as one of the hard-line management figures in the NHL's ongoing lockout -- is softening his stance and might pressure Bettman to bring the dispute to a quick end.

That contention was attributed to multiple, but unnamed, sources. Team employees and owners, it should be noted, can be fined if they publicly discuss anything related to the lockout in terms of which Bettman does not approve.

Snider issued a statement that characterized the Daily News story as "absolutely erroneous" and himself as "a solid supporter" of Bettman "in this unfortunate situation."

While the story got attention across North America, the greatest interest locally likely stems from a reference in the closing paragraphs.

It said that, "Despite their on-ice rivalry, there seems to be some thinking that the Flyers are interested in teaming up with the midmarket but high-revenue Pittsburgh Penguins to sway more governors toward a swift resolution."

The Penguins have been regarded as moderates throughout the dispute, and co-owners Mario Lemieux and Ron Burkle never have seemed to be particularly close with Snider.

Although the Penguins would not comment on the Daily News story, a person with ties to ownership said that, while it seems unlikely that Lemieux and Burkle would team with Snider in the way the story suggested, it can't be ruled out because the Penguins hope to salvage as many games as possible from the 2012-13 season.

Post Gazette LOADED: 11.18.2012

644468 Pittsburgh Penguins

Hockey fans ask only this: When?

By Shelly Anderson

Erin Rudert plays hockey on two men's teams and a traveling women's team. Her brother and father play hockey. For the past five years, she has shared a Penguins season-ticket plan with a group, going to 10 or 15 games a season.

The NHL lockout, instituted by owners when the previous collective bargaining agreement with the NHL Players' Association expired Sept. 15, has Rudert upset.

"It's frustrating to have paid for your tickets and then not be able to watch hockey," Rudert, 30, a lawyer from Wexford, said. "It's cold outside, and it's

He is the most recognized face of the NHL and the most far-reaching voice of its Players' Association — a man who must think big picture but also stay on message during a two-month lockout that has blocked his presumed triumphant return from two years of concussion hell.

"It's been tough because you have to try and understand both sides, but on top of that I'm a player," Crosby said. "Being all these things combined, and I'm a fan too, you have to try and weigh all that.

"I've really tried to understand everyone's position. That's why, after doing that, it's been pretty frustrating — because I really believe this could have been an easier process."

The NHL will return eventually — group negotiations will resume Monday — and at that point, it will turn to a formula more proven than its lockout-for-gains methodology:

Sell Crosby — to diehard Canadian fans that marvel at his quick wrists, to casual American observers that know his name, to New York-based corporate sponsors that love his looks, to citizens in the City of Brotherly Love that miss booing him.

"There is only one hockey player that everybody talks about, and that is Sidney," said Lynn Lashbrook, founder of Portland-based Sports Management World Wide.

"More than any athlete in North America he is the face of his league, his sport — and that is what makes his participation during this lockout, his articulation of how he sees things going, so very important. He'll be the guy who has to bring hockey back when this is over, so he should be having his say right now in this moment that has a lot of us scratching our heads."

The NHL lacked proven, reliable draws upon its return from a canceled 2004-05 season.

Mario Lemieux still skated for the Penguins, but his second act as a player was clearly into its final scene, and he was more identifiable as an owner. Wayne Gretzky, the most famous star in hockey history, was a first-year coach with Phoenix.

Lemieux was Crosby's landlord. Gretzky had predicted Crosby might break many of his NHL records.

Within two years of Crosby's NHL debut, which coincided with the league's post-lockout return, he was a scoring champion, MVP and the only player in the sport that had Madison Avenue appeal.

His endorsement deals, reported to total \$2.2 million in 2011, were not regionally specific to Canada and/or Pittsburgh, but global because of brands such as Pepsi and Reebok.

Crosby cut through a perceived anti-NHL bias as Penguins highlights occasionally appeared in the A-block on "SportsCenter." Super Bowl champion Steelers players wore his No. 87 jersey while attending Penguins playoff games. NBC turned a one-off outdoor game near Buffalo into an annual extravaganza targeted for big markets such as Chicago, Boston and Philadelphia because of the snowy shootout goal Crosby scored in the 2008 Winter Classic.

This past week Crosby spent four of five days carefully toeing a line while opining on a labor dispute that has bathed owners and players in a dark light — a war for which he, unlike Lemieux and Gretzky previously, has accepted frontline battle.

There was a day this month when Crosby stood behind Players' Association executive director Donald Fehr at a Toronto news conference, then returned to the Sewickley guest house owned by Lemieux. Crosby is staying there and at the Downtown apartment of a friend while his Sewickley house is being constructed.

Crosby's conundrum is best exemplified on the free agent matter.

He believes a player should test the market as soon as possible, but he never wants to check it out for himself. That is one reason he signed a 12-year, \$104.4 million extension a year before his current Penguins contract expired — and now his union is fighting to restrict max contract limits that owners insist is necessary for the NHL to prosper.

"It's like an only-lose spot for Sid," Penguins goalie Marc-Andre Fleury said. "He is our face, but he will have to be their face. Everybody wants to hear what he has to say, especially now, and everybody will look at him when we come back because when you think of the NHL, you think of Sid."

Tribune Review LOADED: 11.18.2012

hockey season. It's very difficult as a fan when all you want is to watch hockey."

But she will be back as soon as what she considers to be a confounding stalemate between the owners and the players ends and games begin again. The season was scheduled to start Oct. 11. Games have been canceled through the end of this month.

Rudert isn't the only season ticket-holder who will continue to embrace the team after the labor dispute is resolved.

In a city where the NHL club has a sellout streak of 254 games that carried over from the Civic Arena to Consol Energy Center, the fans who have made the most direct financial investment -- via season tickets -- are struggling with a love/not-so-keen relationship right now.

They miss the sport, but they also are troubled by the lockout.

"I'm going back for hockey itself," said Ron Valerino, 55, a sales account manager for a biotechnology company and an assistant coach of Duquesne University's club team, who has had some sort of season ticket almost continuously since the 1970s. "I never considered boycotting. Those things don't work. I'm a hockey fan foremost."

The same goes for Kevin Baverso, 42, a graphic designer and vice president of sales and marketing for a training and promotions company.

"I have mixed emotions on it," said Baverso, of Mt. Lebanon, who has been part of a season-ticket group for more than a decade. "I understand the business side of it. They're trying to get things worked out for the players and the owners.

"I'll be back. I'll be happy they're playing. But I think I miss it mostly because my children can't go to the games with me. They're at that age now [8 and 11] where they really enjoy it. They're asking, 'When is hockey starting up?' I say, 'No clue.'"

Taking sides

Valerino wonders if teams in markets that have had historically weak attendance might struggle coming out of the lockout, but Baverso isn't concerned.

"That's not happening with hockey fans," he said. "They're going to be just fine. I think they know that."

Perhaps that is why NHL owners might figure they can hold firm to their demands for as long as it takes -- an idea that disenchants Lisa Klein, even though she plans to continue to go to games when the lockout ends.

"I would say I'm angry," said Klein, 33, of West Deer. A data analyst for a health insurance company, she has had full season tickets since 2006, shortly before the Penguins instituted a waiting list for season tickets.

"You make this investment," she said. "It's all about the fans for these teams."

Until it's all about the collective bargaining agreement.

"I'm really not happy about it," said Don Canofari, 54, of Baldwin. He's a manager at UPMC and has had season tickets for five years. He also had them for eight years through the earlier Cup years and goes back to the 1960s when he watched the minor-league Hornets at Civic Arena.

"Initially, when I heard the owners might lock out the players, I thought it probably wouldn't last too long. It's lasting longer now than I thought." Canofari said.

"You hear [league commissioner] Gary Bettman before talking at all these events, saying that hockey fans are the greatest fans in all of sports. He doesn't seem to project that now."

Season ticket-holders are left on the outside trying to decide which, if either, side they support in the labor dispute.

Klein wavers. She gets angry at the players, then shifts.

"They make enough money," she said. "I understand that everybody wants their share, but come on, you should love to play the sport. I understand there is some risk, but I think there should be passion for the players.

"It's aimed at the organizations, too. I guess it's more the situation."

Others side with the union.

"I kind of understand where the players are coming from," said Stuart Eicholtz, 43, a systems administrator from Robinson who has shared a half-season plan with a co-worker since he moved to the area in January 2005, the middle of star center Sidney Crosby's rookie season and the first season played after the previous lockout wiped out the 2004-05 season.

"It seems to me the last lockout, the players made concessions," Eicholtz said. "But I just want hockey back. I hope the players can negotiate an equitable deal, but I just want hockey back."

The last time

The 2004-05 lockout ended when the NHLPA agreed to institute a salary cap and players took a 24 percent pay cut but gained in several areas of contract rights. At the same time, the league improved the on-ice product through rules changes and enforcement and added the shootout element.

The game flourished. Although teams in some markets, specifically in the U.S., have struggled, overall NHL revenues blossomed to a record \$3 billion last season. The league and players now are trying to settle on a new division of revenues -- it seems as if some sort of 50-50 split is most likely -- as well as revenue-sharing among clubs. The league also wants to scale back some of the player contract rights.

Baverso said in terms of the issues in this lockout, he's "indifferent because fans have no control," but he understands that the stakes have changed.

"What they were up against back in 2004 was a much bigger hurdle to jump over," he said. "I think this one is just a matter of both sides posturing and what one side or the other is willing to give up. I don't think the game is in jeopardy like it maybe was before."

Rudert sides with the players when it comes to their demand that their signed contracts be honored in full.

That doesn't mean she is taking aim at Penguins ownership, especially at Mario Lemieux, a Hall of Fame center who led the team to its first two Cups and was a co-owner when Crosby, Evgeni Malkin et al. won another in 2009.

"It's the owners collectively," Rudert said.

Lemieux and all other NHL team owners and employees are forbidden by the league from addressing the lockout publicly.

No pretending

The Penguins offered season ticket-holders the option of leaving their money in their account and earning modest interest or getting refunds at the end of each canceled month.

Canofari said he didn't ask for refunds "because I assumed they would come back sooner than this."

Valerino also left his money with the Penguins. "I know if I take it out, I'm just going to spend it," he said, and he's been happy that the club has reached out to season ticket-holders in other ways.

"I have been getting emails from the Penguins with some contests for giveaways for season ticket-holders to the [basketball] City Game, to Carrie Underwood and some [presale opportunities]," he said. "That's a nice thing."

But Valerino does not condone the lockout.

"I can be mad about it, but I'm not going to pretend I'm not going back," he said. "I've been invested so long in it, that's probably why."

"But how are they going to spin that this is a good thing? They can't. Every fan knew that the last lockout was needed. [The league] was broken. They got the salary cap. Everyone can be competitive. Now, they set a record with \$3 billion in revenues. Someone tell the fans, what is this about?"

And, some season ticket-holders wonder, why are they being taken for granted?

"The part that gets me is that they feel they can do that and just expect fans will come back," Eicholtz said.

"But, honestly, I think most of the fans WILL go back. I don't see most of the season ticket-holders bailing."

Post Gazette LOADED: 11.18.2012

644469 San Jose Sharks

from here...there's going to be a lot of things that need fixing once we do get back to playing."

Marleau: Contract rules would hinder GMs;

Joe Pavelski is currently on KHL Minsk's injury report, but it doesn't appear to be anything too severe.

Kevin Kurz

In a text message to CSNCalifornia.com, Pavelski's agent said his client "banged up his knee a bit," but "it's nothing serious."

SAN JOSE – There are myriad reasons why the NHL and players' association haven't been able to reach a collective bargaining agreement yet, as the lockout surpassed the two-month mark on Friday.

In seven games with Minsk, Pavelski has just one assist, six penalty minutes and is a minus-4.

The latest point of contention that is seemingly keeping the two sides at odds is player contract rights. Since their first proposal back in July, the owners have insisted on a five-year maximum length for all future deals, as well as no more than a five-percent variance on money from year-to-year. Essentially, the league's owners want to prevent the kind of front loaded, salary cap circumventing deals that have become commonplace for the most sought after free agents (see Parise, Zach; Suter, Ryan).

The San Francisco Bulls are down to a single NHL player, and he still has no plans to suit up for the first-year ECHL club.

Despite making progress on economic issues like revenue sharing and paying out the current deals in full, the owners have not moved off of their contract demands since their opening offer. In fact, it's been reported that Gary Bettman said, "we're past the point of give-and-take" in the previous bargaining session nearly a week ago. The two sides are set to resume negotiations on Monday, according to multiple reports.

Defenseman Theo Peckham requested his release from the Bulls this week, as originally reported by CHED's Dan Tencer, after going scoreless in four games with 11 penalty minutes. Peckham is in the last year of his deal with the Edmonton Oilers and will be a restricted free agent next summer.

Sharks center Patrick Marleau said on Friday that those contract demands from the league, should they be implemented, would adversely affect the way league general managers do business.

Sharks forward Ryane Clowe continues to practice with the Bulls, but it's unlikely he'll play in a game at this point.

Comcast SportsNet.com LOADED: 11.18.2012

644470 Toronto Maple Leafs

"I think it would be tough for any team to work under those conditions," Marleau said. "The salary cap already kind of hindered GMs and what they could do, so you would just be handcuffing them that much more."

Ben Scrivens off to slow start with Toronto Marlies: Feschuk

By Dave Feschuk

That could be true for some teams, but others - likely the majority - would welcome the new rules. And the Sharks are probably at the top of that list.

For Ben Scrivens, the NHL lockout was supposed to be his way in.

It's true that some clubs, specifically the big spenders, would have to re-evaluate the way they do business. Only a select few are willing to sign players to decade-long, nine-figure contracts, and it wasn't difficult to figure out which teams would be in play for the best free agent talent each summer. Evening out the playing field with new contracting rules would give many more clubs the opportunity to at least explore adding top-level talent in the open market.

A season after he dominated the American Hockey League while making 12 appearances for the Maple Leafs, Scrivens was supposed to be using the current labour stoppage to shore up his reputation as a big-league-ready stopper. The idea of Scrivens as a credible backup for Leafs goalie James Reimer — heck, the prospect of Scrivens as a possible challenger for the Leafs' starting gig — well, even if it was hypothetical, it was a comforting best-case scenario for fans of the team with the league's longest post-season drought.

In fact, Marleau plays for a club that may be the absolute best example of why new contracting restrictions might be welcomed.

Not only would Scrivens represent a genius-stroke of a free-agent signing by Leafs GM Brian Burke, who inked Scrivens to a two-year deal worth \$1.25 million (U.S.) in September. Scrivens, if he kept his improvement curve pointing skyward while carrying the Marlies this autumn, could even be the key to avoiding the risky proposition of Roberto Luongo, the proven NHL backstop with the albatross contract who, though he plays in Vancouver and resides near Miami, has long lived atop Toronto's short list of desperation acquisitions.

The Sharks have avoided the kind of deals that the league is trying to outlaw while remaining competitive for many years, making the playoffs for eight straight seasons, including three trips to the Western Conference Finals. There is no Rick DiPietro/Wade Redden/Ilya Bryzgalov contract here, casting a large shadow over the organization's future.

Maybe Scrivens will one day be remembered as all those things and more. But five weeks and a day since the campaign began, Scrivens hasn't convinced anyone he'll be a post-lockout saviour. On too many nights, he's been a minor-league struggler.

The Sharks have just seven players signed after the 2013-14 season, and four of those will be in the last year of their current deal in 2014-15 (Brent Burns, Marc-Edouard Vlasic and Adam Burish are the only players signed after that). A logical case can be made that San Jose is one of the teams pushing for more restrictive contracting rules in order to be more competitive in the free agent market, although an NHL gag order prohibits the team from discussing anything related to the lockout.

"He's had some bad luck in the net. ... I think there's been a few nights where he'd like some of the goals back," Dallas Eakins, the Marlies head coach, said. "But listen, development for players — it is an ongoing thing. The best way to put it is this: Two years ago, Ben Scrivens was up and down from the East Coast league. Last year was basically his first year in the American league; he was basically a rookie and he got on a run ..."

Already known as one of the more desirable destinations in the league, the Sharks could become much more active players in free agency than they have been in recent years.

That may or may not have been Eakins' way of saying that Scrivens is lucky that the Leafs don't currently have an affiliation with a franchise in the ECHL. It was less than a couple of weeks ago, after all, in the midst of Toronto's epic eight-game road trip that saw them cover some 11,700 kilometres while going 27 days between home games, that Eakins had pronounced Scrivens "in a fight" for the Marlies' starting job.

Marleau, incidentally, has two years remaining on his contract with the Sharks that would have paid him \$6.9 million this season, making him the second highest paid player on the team. He stated a couple weeks ago that he was exploring options in Europe, but gave the impression on Friday that he's not close to committing to anything overseas at the moment.

Indeed, the goalie that put up a .935 playoff save percentage in last spring's run to the Calder Cup final emerged from Saturday's 6-1 win over Hamilton stopping pucks at an .888 rate. A season after he led the AHL with a goals-against average of 2.04, Scrivens had given up an average of 2.87 goals a game with a 4-4 win-loss record.

Dan Boyle told CSNCalifornia.com on Friday that he was concerned about the damage the lockout might have on the sport that has treated him so well over the years.

Marleau, too, is worried that there may be fan backlash whenever the lockout ends. In fact, it may have happened already.

"I think he's starting to get his fire back," Eakins said of Scrivens. "I think he understands that his work, his attention to detail, his development will never

"Yeah, definitely. I think there's already been damage and you're going to lose fans," he said. "From where we were at, we've taken steps backwards. I think the game was going this way, up and up and up, and where it goes

end. And it never does for a player. You get 10 years pro, 12 years pro — you still have to do all these little things to prepare. It just never ends. I think that's probably part of it. He may have gotten a little comfortable. But I think for the most part for Ben, he's just had a whole bunch of bad luck here."

Minor leaguers getting comfortable? So much for Burke's Day One vow to eradicate the scourge of Blue and White Disease; even Leafland's AHLers are regularly being nudged by their coach for alleged complacency.

"The thing Dallas and I both agree on is that I'm not playing up to the level that I need to play at," Scrivens said. "I don't need him to say it in the media. I don't need anyone to tell me when I'm not playing to my capabilities. The onus falls on my shoulders to correct that."

To be fair, plenty has changed in Scrivens' world since last season's successes. The Leafs jettisoned goalie coach Francoise Allaire, replacing him with Rick St. Croix, even as Reimer and Scrivens spoke of their devotion to Allaire's methods. The Marlies, meanwhile, have introduced a Randy Carlyle-inspired defensive system that has taken some getting used to. Oh, and the Cornell University alumnus got married in June to his Ivy League sweetheart.

"Yeah, it's my wife's fault, right?" Scrivens deadpanned.

He was joking. But he is not smiling.

"It's not like I don't think I'm working hard," Scrivens said. "Sometimes maybe you think you're working as hard as you can but there's still a little more to give, but it takes something — you've got to be pushed from behind in order to (realize), 'Oh, I've got that extra gear.'"

Scrivens spent much of Saturday being pushed from the front by the steady stream of Hamilton players who seemed to find their way into the Toronto crease. Eakins has been critical of the Bulldogs for what he sees as their deliberate runs at the Marlies goalie. On Saturday Scrivens — who was also in net for Friday's 6-3 loss in Hamilton — acknowledged he was fed up. When Hamilton's Brendan Gallagher found his way into Scrivens' personal space during third-period garbage time, Scrivens engaged Gallagher in an on-ice wrestling match. The goalie was assessed a double roughing minor for shoving what appeared to be his blocker into what appeared to be Gallagher's throat. Never mind the Allaire way; go for the airway.

Certainly the shenanigans were from another era. During the melee Hamilton goaltender Robert Mayer had to be held back by an official as he made a beeline for Scrivens' crease.

"Even if he came down I don't know if I would have fought him. That's not my job. The last thing you want to do is break a hand or twist a knee (doing) something silly like that," Scrivens said. "If I could do it again, I probably wouldn't (wrestle with Gallagher). But sometimes, when you've got a guy laying on you a couple of times, it's a breaking point."

For Scrivens, perhaps Saturday will be a turning point. Leafs Nation can only hope.

Toronto Star LOADED: 11.18.2012

644471 Toronto Maple Leafs

OHL profile: Kitchener Rangers rookie Justin Bailey gets wake-up call from knockout blow

Daniel Girard

If OHL rookie Justin Bailey had any doubts he was playing against bigger, faster and stronger competition this season, they were erased very quickly.

In the third period of just his third game, the Kitchener Rangers' 17-year-old centre got caught with his head down trying to take a pass in the neutral zone and was drilled by Windsor's Patrick Sieloff, a Calgary Flames prospect.

Bailey, ranked as a potential first-round pick in next spring's NHL entry draft, missed the next five games. But he says he learned a valuable lesson.

"It was kind of an eye-opener," says the six-foot-three, 190-pound native of Williamsville, N.Y. "Since I've come back from my concussion I've been more aware and I think that's actually going to help me in the long run.

"Playing with kids my own age last year I could probably get away with that (leaving himself vulnerable on the ice). But this year, I can't do that."

People describe him "as green or raw and I have to agree," says Steve Spott, the Rangers' head coach and general manager. "But I can't imagine what he's going to be like at 23 or 24 or 25 years of age because of the fact you can't teach his skill set or hockey sense."

Spott says one of the biggest adjustments for Bailey in making the "giant leap" from midget to the OHL is in the area of "learning to play the game with other people." That entails such things as sharing the puck, managing the length of his shifts and developing his skills in the defensive end of the ice.

Bailey, the son of former NFL linebacker Carlton Bailey, who played in three Super Bowls with the Buffalo Bills, lived with his mom in a condo where neighbours included former Sabres Matthew Barnaby, Michael Peca and Rob Ray. Last season, he moved to the AAA major midget Long Island Royals, where he played for and lived with Hockey Hall of Famer Pat LaFontaine.

"It was great to have a guy like that, especially when you're living with him, you're able to talk about the game that just happened on the car ride home," Bailey said. "He breaks down the game in ways the average hockey player wouldn't and he knows all the ins and outs about everything in the game."

Bailey starred with the Royals, scoring 21 goals and 13 assists in 22 games. He had two goals and an assist in a Tier 1 national championship victory.

Admitting "the calibre of hockey I played last year wasn't as hard as it could have been," Bailey struggled with where to play this season. He appeared headed for Michigan State University, but in the end, after visiting with the Rangers, who had his OHL rights, and talking with family and friends — including Barnaby, a former Quebec junior league player — he chose Kitchener.

"I know this is the right path for me," Bailey says.

Justin Bailey

Centre, Kitchener Rangers

BORN: July 1, 1995

HOMETOWN: Williamsville, N.Y.

HEIGHT: Six-foot-three

WEIGHT: 190 pounds

STATISTICS

16 GP, 5 G, 2 A, 7 Pts., +6, 6 PIM

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- Had the first two points of his OHL career — a pair of goals — in a 5-2 win over the Kingston Frontenacs on Oct. 21.

- Played for Team USA at the under-18 2012 Ivan Hlinka Memorial tournament.

- Won 2012 under-16 Tier 1 U.S. midget national championship with the Long Island Royals.

Toronto Star LOADED: 11.18.2012

644472 Vancouver Canucks

Wickenheiser tournament a hit with Mexican women

By ELLIOTT PAP,

BURNABY — Like many a female athlete, Fernanda Chavez gravitated to a sport because her dad played and her brothers were playing and she wanted in on the action, too.

What makes her story unique is that Fernanda Chavez is a hockey player from Mexico City. That's ice hockey – not field hockey, not street hockey, not ball hockey.

Ice hockey in Mexico City? Now that is growing the game.

Chavez, 17, began playing when she was 10. She's now a member of the Mexican women's national team, which is participating in the third annual Hayley Wickenheiser International Women's Hockey Festival at Burnaby 8-Rinks. The Mexicans are one of 62 teams taking part in the Thursday-to-Sunday event.

Chavez responded like a seasoned veteran Saturday when queried about her start in the sport.

"Good question," she replied in near perfect English. "Well, my dad when he was little, he played in Mexico. Then he taught my brothers and I how to play. My little brother is a goalie for the under-14s and my older brother doesn't play anymore because he is going to university."

She was a little at a loss for words, however, when asked to describe what specifically she liked about the game.

"Everything," she said. "It's a sensation... the action... I can't explain. I love checks. I play with boys and I like to be hit and I can hit them. Fighting? No. Just checks."

Hockey is still in its infancy in Mexico. According to Wickenheiser, there are 22 rinks in the entire country, six of them in Mexico City. Last summer, she touched base with the head of the Mexican Ice Hockey Federation and national team coach Diego Da La Garma during a development camp in Finland.

She told them about her tournament – often referred to as WickFest – and they indicated an interest in participating.

"So they called us and here they are," Wickenheiser chuckled. "It's crazy. They're really putting a lot of money into hockey in Mexico. It's pretty basic what they need. They're not skilled and I think, for some of them, it's the first time they've even had their skates sharpened properly. So it's a whole other world for them and I'm really happy they came."

The Mexicans are playing competitively in the midget portion of the tournament but they were also treated to a special practice Saturday morning led by Wickenheiser herself. Fernanda Chavez admitted she didn't know a lot about Wickenheiser when she first heard about her team's trip to Canada. So she did what anyone with a computer would do.

"I searched her on Google and I found her story," said Chavez. "It's amazing. She's one of the best players in the world."

Da La Garma, the national women's coach, is an old goalie who has spent time in Ontario playing and working in summer hockey camps. He admitted hockey in Mexico has a long way to go, especially when it comes to facilities.

"The rinks in Mexico City? Honestly? Terrible," he said. "The ice is, like, pretty bad but we are building two new rinks that will be top class. Actually, we're bringing everything in from Canada, boards, ice maker, everything. But, right now, it's not that good. The boards are not good and most of the rinks are in shopping malls, which doesn't help. We only have three or four that are specific for sports. Hopefully that is going to change pretty soon."

According to Da La Garma, there is plenty of hockey interest in Mexico even if there are few quality rinks.

"Believe it or not, we are huge hockey fans," he said. "We probably get four or five NHL games on TV a week so that's not bad at all."

The Mexicans' appearance at WickFest is another feather in the cap of Wickenheiser, who seems to have no shortage of energy and no lack of ideas.

Now 34, she's still working on her kinesiology undergraduate degree at the University of Calgary, still considering medical school, still playing for the national team and still suiting up for the women Dinos when her schedule permits. She opted to skip the school's weekend series at Saskatchewan to attend WickFest.

"I think, in the greater scheme of things, this is the right thing to do," she explained. "It's four days out of my life and I feel it's important to be here on site and not just put your name behind something and not show up. It's worked out well. It's a challenge but it also fills me up with energy. It's been kind of everything that I hoped it would be to this point."

"I started out with an idea in mind to build a legacy for women's hockey and do something that's a little different and outside the box," she added. "It's a hockey tournament but it's so much more than that. We're looking to the development of the whole player. This is our third year and it seems to be our best so far."

Vancouver Sun: LOADED: 11.18.2012

644473 Winnipeg Jets

Local lads missing their Winnipeg Jets

By Ken Wiebe

The NHL lockout has brought back a refrain that is all too familiar around these parts — bring back the Winnipeg Jets.

Although a host of youth hockey players we spoke to are upset by the NHL lockout, the majority of them said they won't look at hockey differently once it finally comes to an end.

The overwhelming theme was that they miss their Jets and can't wait until they get back out on the ice playing games again at MTS Centre.

"It's pretty frustrating," said James Barclay, who plays for the Winnipeg Hawks bantam team. "The Jets come back and then they're gone again. It's kind of annoying."

Several young hockey players have found themselves on an emotional roller-coaster during the past few weeks, especially when signs of optimism are reported by the media.

"I'm actually really disappointed because my dad was going to take me to the season opener this year," said Logan Mask, who plays defence for the Fort-Garry Flyers bantam girls team. "I didn't get to go and I was excited because I thought (the lockout) was going to end, but then it didn't end. Again. I just don't know anymore."

Mask went to three Jets games last season and, like many others, was swept away by the euphoria and buzz created with the return of the NHL after a 15-year absence.

The highlight came when she was one of the ScotiaBank skaters for a game against the New York Rangers last November and led the Jets out onto the ice prior to the singing of the national anthems.

Not having the chance to tune into NHL games have left a void.

"There's nothing really to watch on TV sports-wise," said Mask. "I'm not really interested in the other sports."

"We usually watch it all the time, especially the Jets," added Meghan Hodgins, who plays for the Sturgeon Heights Huskies high school team. "We would totally enjoy every single game."

The consensus seems to be that enthusiasm towards the game among youth players in this city won't dampen, regardless of when the lockout comes to an end.

"I love hockey," said Abbey Mondor of the Bord-Aire Wings bantam girls team. "The Jets are my favourite (team)."

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Out the mouths of babes

"It's ridiculous ... because it's about a bunch of people with lots of money wanting more. I blame the NHL and the players ... They should stop being babies."

— Brayden Solberg, A2 Bantam Selkirk Steelers

"I'm more disappointed because I love watching hockey and I love playing it, too, and I just want to see the NHL and I want to see great players playing. This leaves nothing to do in winter."

— Nico Morrow-Litke, A2 Bantam Selkirk Steelers

"I'm kind of disappointed. Just try to please the fans and if you don't, why should they come and watch you?"

— Erik Olson, A2 Bantam Selkirk Steelers

"I hate it. I love watching hockey and it just sucks. I don't like watching basketball."

— Riley Thomson, A1 Bantam Fort Garry Flyers

"I blame both because the players are showing that they're just playing for the money and Gary Bettman because he doesn't want to negotiate with them at all ... Gary Bettman hasn't done anything good for the game since he got employed."

— John Higgs, Bantam 1 Fort Garry Flyers

"I'm not liking (the lockout). I'm hoping the NHL will solve something with the NHLPA, but so far I'm doubting there is going to be a season."

— Gavin Combe, Bantam St. James Canadians

"I blame the players because they are too greedy."

— Jake Turnbull, A1 Atom Deer Lodge Blades

"It's the players' (fault). I'm mad because they're getting greedy and they want more. I don't think that's really fair. They sound like a bunch of overpaid cry babies."

— James Barclay, Bantam Winnipeg Hawks

"I absolutely hate it. I'm used to sitting with my family and watching hockey every night. I don't blame anybody. I don't know who to blame. It's kind of confusing."

— Abbey Mondor, Bord-Aire Wings Bantam Girls

"I think they should just make a deal and play."

— Kristopher Beatty, A1 Atom Deer Lodge Blades

"I'm really sad that they can't have an NHL season this year because I'm really interested that the new Jets are back, and it really sucks that we can't have the NHL this year."

— Michael John Cromarty, A3 Minor Atom Corydon Comets

"The players should accept the agreement. It seems like the players are playing for money almost, instead of just playing for the love of the game and for fans. They're being a little greedy with how much they get paid. The owners should still pay out the contracts the players signed and then go to 50-50. That seems fair."

— Tristin Swan, Bantam A2 Assiniboine West Wildcats

Winnipeg Sun LOADED 11.18.2012

644474 Winnipeg Jets

Toews didn't expect homecoming like this

By Ken Wiebe

This was not the homecoming Jonathan Toews was envisioning.

Yes, it was a Saturday in Winnipeg and a sold-out crowd was in attendance, but the only Chicago Blackhawks' jerseys found were in the stands.

As Captain Serious took to the ice before more than 1,700 fans at Max Bell Arena, he was sporting an NHLPA sweater and doing his best to put on a show for the hockey-starved folks who filled the building to watch a group of locked-out players combine with the Winnipeg Patrolmen Hockey Club for the Goals for Dreams Hockey Challenge.

"The fans were great and you could tell they were excited to watch some hockey and have their Jets back," said Toews. "Everyone knows it was an exciting year last year and I was excited to get my chance to come back here and play here in October and that didn't happen unfortunately."

"This is a pretty good substitute, for the time being."

The charity game itself raised \$80,000 for the Children's Hospital Foundation and the Dream Factory and was about as entertaining as a non-contact game could possibly be.

There was plenty of skill on display and the Golden Jet, Bobby Hull, stopped by along with former Jets captain Ab McDonald for the ceremonial faceoff.

Perhaps the best news coming out of Saturday was that there won't actually be a two-week moratorium on negotiations and that the two sides are going back to the bargaining table on Monday, at the request of the NHLPA.

"We're cautiously optimistic, that's pretty much the way to put it," said Toews. "We knew coming into it that we had to be patient. It's been a thing the league likes to do, they toy with the emotions of the players and the fans especially, when they say there is progress. Everyone gets excited and starts thinking there is going to be a deal made and the next thing you know, the rug gets pulled out from underneath our feet pretty quick."

"Fans are starting to understand that and getting as frustrated as players are with that type of thing. We know not to take it too seriously until things get done."

Going through his first lockout has been a frustrating experience for Toews.

"It feels really unnecessary, for so many reasons," he said. "For us, it would just be nice to see the same mutual effort to try and work towards a deal. Everyone talks about a timeline and it has been that way. (The owners) have that idea of how they're going to go about their business and if they don't like what they see, they're going to wait it out and try to capitalize on the frustration from players and fans. That's what you've seen so far."

Toews has taken an active role during the lockout and is one of the high-profile players — much like Sidney Crosby — who hasn't been afraid to stand up and take a stand.

"Even though he's so young, he's someone that everybody looks up to and looks to when this stuff is going on," said Jets captain Andrew Ladd, who played with Toews on the 2010 Stanley Cup winning Blackhawks. "He definitely has taken a leadership role with the NHLPA and that's great. We need the top guys to take those roles on."

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644475 Websites

ESPN / NHL: Labor talks resume Monday

By Pierre LeBrun

NHL bargaining talks will resume Monday in New York City, the league told ESPN.

The two sides haven't met since Nov. 11 and exchanged harsh words during the past week.

NHL deputy commissioner Bill Daly and NHL Players' Association outside counsel Steve Fehr spoke Saturday to decide the next step in the labor logjam.

SN: A possible break in NHL labor talks

"We can confirm that we have tentatively agreed to get back together on Monday, either late in the afternoon or early evening," Daly said. "The meeting was requested by the union and it's their agenda. We will see what they have to tell us."

Multiple sources told ESPN that commissioner Gary Bettman suggested Wednesday that the two sides take a two-week moratorium, as they remained divided on how to share revenue and player contract issues, as well as who should shoulder the financial burden of the losses incurred as a result of the lockout.

"I don't see the point behind that," Rangers captain Ryan Callahan said of the reprieve. "I know we want to negotiate."

Callahan called Bettman's suggestion of a two-week hiatus a "waste of time."

"It doesn't make sense to me," he said.

With scant optimism that a new collective bargaining agreement will be reached soon, reports surfaced Thursday that the next round of cancellations could be on the horizon.

The league already has been forced to cancel 327 regular-season games -- through Nov. 30 -- as well as the annual Winter Classic. There also has been speculation that the fate of the season may be in jeopardy soon.

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