# SPORT-SCAN DAILY BRIEF

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resolution, but big gap remains and time's ticking

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Anaheim Ducks 644616

NHL rejection could lead union to decertify

By Helene Elliott

The NHL on Wednesday turned down a five-year labor agreement proposed by the NHL Players' Assn., moving to the brink of losing December games and its All-Star festivities. Commissioner Gary Bettman, who has canceled games through Nov. 30 as well as the Jan. 1 Winter Classic, said the league's daily losses of \$18 million to \$20 million will affect its bargaining strategy.

"Any expectation that the offer is going to get better as time goes on is unrealistic," Bettman told reporters in New York.

The rejection, announced after the sides met twice at the league's headquarters, might spur the NHLPA to begin the decertification process, according to several people with knowledge of the situation but not authorized to discuss it publicly.

Decertification of the union — a strategy employed by the NFL Players' Assn. when it was locked out by the NFL in 2011 — would mean the NHLPA would no longer be the players' bargaining agent. Individual players could invoke antitrust laws and ask a federal court to end the lockout or sue the league for unfair business practices that are otherwise protected by a union-league relationship.

Ten NFL players, led by New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady, sued their league last year. The case was settled when their labor dispute was resolved. The NFLPA had been reclassified as a trade union but was recertified to negotiate benefits in the new collective bargaining agreement.

The decertification option is rarely invoked because it's time-consuming and complex. An NHLPA spokesman declined to comment on the union's potential next steps.

Players on Wednesday presented what they called a "comprehensive" proposal, and it appeared the financial differences could be bridged. Donald Fehr, executive director of the NHLPA, calculated the gap at \$182 million over the course of a five-year deal.

The NHLPA proposed a \$393-million "make-whole" provision to compensate players for the money they will lose by going from 57% of hockey-related revenue to 50% annually. That broke down to getting \$182 million the first season, \$128 million in the second season, \$72 million in the third and \$11 million in the fourth. The provision would be phased out by the final season.

However, the NHL did not move off its \$211-million "make-whole" offer and remained intent on securing a seven-year deal. The league also toughened a provision in its previous proposal and would delay eligibility for salary

arbitration by a year. Bettman said the league had moved on "a number of things" but won't move any more.

"We're still far apart," he said.

Fehr said NHL negotiators' lack of interest indicated they "had a lot better things to do on the night before Thanksgiving than hear what we got." He added, "On the big things there was, as of today, no reciprocity in any meaningful sense.'

NHL rules prohibit owners and team personnel from commenting on labor matters, but players expressed anger and frustration via social media. Montreal Canadiens forward Brandon Prust tweeted, "Gary Bettman's biography is in stores now. It's titled, 'How I destroyed a sport and a nation."

However, players' support might not be unanimous. According to a translation by Czech TV personality Roman Jedlicka, Washington Capitals defenseman Roman Hamrlik told the Czech publication Daily Sport that players "have to push Fehr to the wall to get a deal," and said that if the season is canceled, "he should leave and we will find someone new."

LA Times: LOADED: 11.22.2012 644617 Anaheim Ducks

NHL lockout talks break off again with frustration

By RONALD BLUM

NEW YORK - NHL labor talks broke off soon after they resumed Wednesday, with players maintaining their new proposal was a huge economic concession and Commissioner Gary Bettman pretty much saving the only deal he will agree to is the one management proposed last month.

On the 67th day of a lockout that already has wiped out more than a quarter of the regular season, the sides headed home for Thanksgiving with no end in sight to the sport's fourth work stoppage. The union's negotiating committee planned to brief players and get back in touch with management

Article Tab: NHL Players' Association executive director Donald Fehr, center, arrives for labor talks at NHL headquarters in New York with his brother, NHLPA counsel Steven Fehr, right.

NHL Players' Association executive director Donald Fehr, center, arrives for labor talks at NHL headquarters in New York with his brother, NHLPA counsel Steven Fehr, right.

LOUIS LANZANO, AP

"We're dealing with a union that really isn't trying to negotiate, make any deal that we can live with for the long-term health of this game," Bettman said outside the league's Manhattan office when questioned by a fan, 41year-old Jaymes Hall of Lancaster, Pa. "We're hoping that with the passage of time, the players' association will come to realize that what we have proposed has been more than fair. And the fact that we're keeping this proposal on the table, when it was contingent on an 82-game season, should be evidence of our desire to get this done the right way."

Informed of Bettman's comments, union head Donald Fehr said "my response is they seem to consider negotiating to be merely agreeing with them.'

"We've identified what's important to players, but they seem to be so far at least unwilling to treat those concerns in a serious way," Fehr said in a telephone interview.

Players made what both sides called a comprehensive proposal. Fehr said the sides were \$182 million apart in a five-year deal, which comes to \$1.2 million annually for each of the 30 teams.

"On the big things there was as of today no reciprocity in any meaningful sense, no movement on the players' share, no movement on salaryarbitration eligibility, no movement on free agency eligibility, no agreement on a pension plan," Fehr said as he left the talks.

Management wants to increase eligibility for free agency to 28 years of age or eight seasons of NHL service, up from 27 or 7.

Management also proposed Wednesday adding a year of service for salary arbitration eligibility, hiking it from 1-4 to 2-5 years of service, depending on the age a player signs, a person familiar with the bargaining said. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because that detail wasn't announced.

"There seems to be a lot of spinning and gamesmanship going on," Bettman said.

Winnipeg defenseman Ron Hainsey, among nine players at the bargaining, said the union was "disappointed with the response."

"There was no meaningful move in our direction on anything that we would consider," he said.

Fehr nearly said players found the day's two bargaining sessions, which totaled  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hours, to be a waste of time.

"A lot of the people that were there today, given the response we got, thought they had a lot better things to do on the night before Thanksgiving than hear what we got," he said.

The NHL on Oct. 16 proposed a 50-50 split of hockey-related revenue, down from the players' 57 percent portion of \$3.3 billion last season. With guaranteed contracts likely to push the players' share over the halfway mark at the start of the next deal, management wants that money to come out of future years to bring the overall percentage down to an even split over the length of an agreement.

Players previously had proposed they receive a guaranteed amount of income each year.

"Gary said we were \$900 million or a \$1 billion apart," Fehr said, referring to the gap over a five-year deal. "At the moment we are exactly \$182 million apart."

Fehr said players proposed they get \$393 million over the length of the deal, while the NHL is at \$211 million. Management wants a seven-year deal, which the union says is too long because less than half the current players will be active by the last season.

"To expect our best economic proposal to get better as the damage continues to increase isn't particularly realistic," Bettman said. "From an economic standpoint, we've given what we have to give. It was our best offer. And again, put it in the context that the business is probably losing between \$18 and \$20 million a day and the players are losing between \$8 and \$10 million a day."

This is the league's third lockout since 1994. The first settled on Jan. 11 and the last one led to Bettman announcing the cancellation of the 2004-05 season on Feb. 15.

The league has canceled 326 games through Nov. 30 plus the Jan. 1 Winter Classic between Toronto and Detroit at Ann Arbor, Mich. More cancellations are coming.

"That's something that we're going to have to look at on a daily basis," Bettman said. "I think that becomes inevitable as time goes on."

Orange County Register: LOADED: 11.22.2012

644618 Anaheim Ducks

If entire season is canceled, Selanne may call it a career

# By ERIC STEPHENS and TANYA LYON

Teemu Selanne has put aside annual thoughts of retirement in the past to defy time and continue to thrive on the ice in an NHL career that's destined to put him in the Hockey Hall of Fame.

Love of the game - especially of scoring goals - keeps him going. It could be that boardroom battles off the ice finally drive the Ducks icon into hanging up his skates for good.

Selanne said Wednesday he would strongly consider ending his career if the NHL canceled the rest of this season as a result of its continuing lockout of the players, reiterating what he said to Canada-based TSN last week. Endless workout sessions and intrasquad scrimmages with a smattering of teammates and other locally based NHL players at Anaheim Ice, the Ducks practice facility, aren't what Selanne signed up for last July after turning 42.

"A lot of times when I drive to the rink here and I know there's only four of five guys skating, I'm thinking, 'Right now, I'd like to call and say I'm done,'" Selanne said. "This is enough right now. I'm old enough to do something else and not play with the kids.

"Next time, I feel like I want to wait and see what happens. I have played so many games, so many years. This is not a big thing for me. If I have to retire like this, I'm still going to be a happy camper. But this is a sad way to go out, this way."

The lockout is now 67 days old and there still appears to be no quick solution in sight. NHL commissioner Gary Bettman said the two sides are still far apart after the players' union offered a new proposal during talks Wednesday.

Frustration is mounting among the players, many of whom believe the owners intended to lock them out all along and focused on getting a new collective bargaining agreement on their terms.

"The frustrating thing is I think that we could get a deal done right now and get going," Ducks captain Ryan Getzlaf said. "I feel like they're waiting until January so they can have their half season and playoffs."

The speed of today's NHL sent Hall of Fame sniper Brett Hull into retirement after the 310-day lockout that wiped out the 2004-05 regular season. Selanne, whose 663 goals put him 12th on the all-time list, hasn't ever had a problem keeping up with the boys on the ice.

It has usually been about others being able to stay with the player many have longer referred to as the "Finnish Flash." Every athlete, however, slows down at some point and Selanne said another canceled season might be too much for him and others.

"The last lockout, there were 240 players who never played another shift in the NHL," he said. "Obviously if they're going to (cancel) the whole season, there's going to be a lot more players this time.

"Obviously I don't know my situation but right now it's very hard to even think about the year after this."

Ducks center Saku Koivu has resisted the temptation to join the Finlandbased TPS Turku team that he and his brother, Minnesota star Mikko Koivu, have an ownership stake in. Koivu had stayed in Orange County so that his kids could remain in school.

But that could change if the lockout continues to drag on.

"If they do cancel the season, then obviously we have to, as a family, maybe think about playing somewhere for the next couple of months," Koivu said. "Hopefully we don't have to get to that point."

Left wing Bobby Ryan became the latest Ducks player to head overseas as he signed with Mora IK of Sweden's HockeyAllsvenskan, the country's second-highest professional league.

Ryan's agent, Mark Guy, said the four-time 30-goal scorer will join Mora next week after participating with many other players in a charity game Saturday night to benefit those impacted by super storm Sandy.

"Mora has an open spot for an import and he felt that it was best at this stage to begin playing," Guy said in an e-mail to the Register.

There is speculation that the NHL will cancel the All-Star game and the first two weeks of the December schedule on Friday. Getzlaf believes the league will ultimately make a deal when it is ready to.

"I'm still hopeful because I think the whole thing has been on a timetable [and] because they've shown nothing else," he said. "They haven't shown us anything in the fact that they want to sit down and get things done.

"We've got to be able to move both ways to get something done. Everything seems to be on a deadline now. We just don't know when the next one is."

Orange County Register: LOADED: 11.22.2012

644619 Boston Bruins

NHL CBA talks: players inch closer to owners' offer

It looked as though we would see some traction today in the NHL contract talks, with strong indications by late morning that the lockout could be coming to a close and the game finally returning to a rink year you.

The NHLPA, the players' union, this morning in New York City put an offer on the table that in significant portions mirrored what NHL owners offered them on Oct. 16.

But by shortly after 3 p.m., it was clear, based on comments by union leader Donald Fehr after talks broke off for the day, that the league remained unimpressed by the players' offer.

"No reciprocity in any meaningful sense," Fehr said, referring to some of the major issues the players' offer addressed.

Roughly an hour after the meeting broke up, NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman told the media, "We are still very far apart." However, he did acknowledge that the PA's offer moved toward the league's proposal and noted the day's talks yielded some traction.

It's possible that talks will resume Friday, following the Thanksgiving holiday.

It took the PA slightly more than five weeks to reckon with the harsh reality that the owners are serious about gaining major financial givebacks, and today's response by the union more closely resembled the "50/50" offer that owners put on the table in October when the lockout was but a month old. In essence, the players finally were prepared to split in half the game's gross revenues, which last year totaled some \$3.3 billion.

Today's offer had the players accepting the even split (a drop from their 57 percent share each of the last seven years) while also requesting that the owners allocate an additional \$182 million toward the contentious "Make Whole" provision that addresses the value of player contracts already on the books. In its last offer, the league earmarked \$211 million toward that provision, and now the players want a total \$393 million, paid over four years. No doubt that will take some protracted jawboning, especially in light of the league's negative overall response today.

Other than an offer to amend the contentious long-term back-diving contracts, which have been a way for teams to ease (read: cheat) salary cap burdens, the new players' offer did not address many of the key language/rights amendments that owners demanded in the Oct. 16 offer.

However, conventional wisdom in recent weeks has been that owners would relent on many/most of these provisions if the PA came around to the 50/50 revenue split and peace could be made on the "Make Whole" issue. No telling yet if that conventional wisdom proved true or was simply wiseguy speculation.

The two sides met for a couple of hours in the morning, then broke for lunch, and were back at the bargaining table around 1:30 p.m.

The players' offer was for five years, terminating at the end of the 2016-17 season. The league likely would prefer it last longer, by at least a year or two

Had the league offered at least, say, an encouraging opinion of the offer, it would have been be reasonable to think a new deal could be forged in a span of 3-7 days. If that had been the case, camps could have opened by the end of next week and a five-day training period could have seen regular-season games resume on or about Dec. 5. All of which would have provided enough time for a regular season of 50-60 games, a significant drop from the standard 82-game season.

Both sides, of course, will want to play as many games as possible, in order to recapture revenue and shore up a frustrated fan base and sagging sponsorship community. One way of regaining a portion of that money would be to lengthen the season to 84 games starting in 2013-'14. Over the remaining four years of the deal, that would restore eight of the games lost to this year's lockout and it would aid the league in generating that "Make Whole" revenue.

Boston Globe LOADED: 11.22.2012

644620 Buffalo Sabres

NHL declines key pieces of proposal by NHLPA, still no end to lockout

## John Vogl

The NHL lockout still shows no sign of ending. The league has rejected a new proposal delivered by the players' association today.

The NHLPA's offer took several steps in the league's direction, including an agreement to immediately split revenues 50-50 plus "make whole" contributions, but union leader Donald Fehr told reporters in New York this afternoon that the NHL declined to move off its previous proposal.

"We're still far apart," NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman told reporters. "But hopefully there's some momentum so we can bring this to a conclusion."

The union will conduct a conference call later today to determine its next step. The sides are reportedly expected to meet again Friday.

The "make whole" provision and player contracting rights continue to be prime obstacles to a deal.

The union wants to ensure that all existing contracts are honored, and it asked the league to contribute \$393 million over four years to the players. Fehr told reporters the league said it will not go above the \$211 million it offered in its previous proposal.

"On the big things there was, as of today, no reciprocity in any meaningful sense," Fehr said in New York.

The union took a stand on player contracting rights, agreeing only to find a way to end the front-loaded deals the NHL wants eliminated. The league also wants a cap on contract lengths and changes in free agency, among other things, but the NHLPA views them as "very, very, very important," Fehr said.

"Apologies to all the loyal, passionate fans out there," New York Rangers defenseman Michael Del Zotto said on Twitter. "We clearly do not have a willing negotiating partner."

The league's next step is likely to cancel more of the schedule. All games through Nov. 30 have been axed, and a new collective bargaining agreement needs to be in place by Friday in order for games to return Dec. 1. Several reports say the league will cancel an additional two weeks of games plus All-Star weekend in the next announcement, which is expected Friday.

Buffalo News LOADED: 11.22.2012 644621 Columbus Blue Jackets

NHL lockout: Union's latest offer rejected; All-Star Game might get axed Friday

By Aaron Portzline

The NHL Players' Association has made the last two proposals in collective-bargaining talks with the NHL. The first, three weeks ago, was shot down in 10 minutes. Yesterday's proposal in New York was rejected in 50 minutes. Sadly, that might be the only sign of progress.

The sides are closer than the rancor and rhetoric would suggest, but still miles from a deal, leaving the 2012-13 season in peril.

On Friday, it's expected the league will cancel more games — at least two weeks' worth — and the 2013 NHL All-Star Game, scheduled to be hosted by the Blue Jackets at Nationwide Arena.

The Blue Jackets would not comment yesterday on the possible cancellation of the All-Star Game, but The Dispatch reported earlier this week that the midseason gala would be included when the next round of games are canceled by the league.

Now, the Jackets' chances to hold the game will be tabled until at least 2015. The Winter Olympics in Socci, Russia, in 2014 will preclude an All-Star Game for the 2013-14 season.

"We moved far more than halfway," NHLPA executive director Donald Fehr told reporters in New York. "Our expectation is the NHL is going to be willing to meet us if they're willing to reach an agreement."

That's what Fehr said before the NHL had perused the players' latest offer.

In it, the NHLPA asked for \$393 million toward the NHL's "make whole" provision, which bridges the gap between the owner's desire for an immediate 50-50 split of hockey-related revenue and the players' desire to have their existing contracts honored.

The league offered \$211 million toward the provision in its latest offer.

The players also agreed to accept a percentage of revenues beginning with the first year of the CBA, rather than an established dollar figures. It was that part of the offer, sources told The Dispatch, that had the players thinking the NHL would be receptive.

"Let's just say we didn't get the message coming out of the room that we hoped we would get," NHLPA negotiating committee member Ron Hainsey said.

What likely stopped the owners was an NHLPA demand for a guarantee that, after the second year of the CBA, their share of hockey-related revenue not be less (whole dollars) than it was in the previous season.

In other words, the salary cap would never dip below an estimated \$67.3 million.

Fehr struck a far different tone after the NHL responded.

"On the big things, there was no reciprocity in any meaningful sense," Fehr said. "No movement on the player's share, nothing on arbitration or free agency or a pension plan. They say they would like to get on that, but we've seen no action.

"I can tell you a lot of people who were here today, given the response we got, thought they had a lot better things to do the night before Thanksgiving."

NHL commissioner Gary Bettman rejected the notion that the NHLPA made meaningful movement toward the NHL's last proposal. While stopping short of saying the NHL is done negotiating, Bettman said the league's offer is not going to get any better.

The league, he said, is losing between \$18 million and \$20 million a day ... roughly \$10 million of that money that would be going to players.

"We went through their proposal point by point," Bettman told reporters in New York. "We talked about the things that were in the agreement, the things that we could modify, and the things we had no room to move on, and we explained our position on each of those elements.

"Any expectation that our offer is going to get better as time goes by is not realistic."

There are no plans for further negotiations. Bettman and Fehr, or their No. 2 men — Bill Daly of the NHL and Steve Fehr of the NHLPA — could chat by phone on Friday.

But neither side knows where to turn next. In 2004-05, during the last lockout, the season was canceled on Feb. 16.

Columbus Dispatch LOADED: 11.22.2012

644622 Boston Bruins

NHL CBA talks: players inch closer to owners' offer

Kevin Paul Dupont

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The union wants to ensure that all existing contracts are honored, and it asked the league to contribute \$393 million over four years to the players. Fehr told reporters the league said it will not go above the \$211 million it offered in its previous proposal.

"On the big things there was, as of today, no reciprocity in any meaningful sense." Fehr said in New York.

The union took a stand on player contracting rights, agreeing only to find a way to end the front-loaded deals the NHL wants eliminated. The league also wants a cap on contract lengths and changes in free agency, among other things, but the NHLPA views them as "very, very, very important," Fehr said.

"Apologies to all the loyal, passionate fans out there," New York Rangers defenseman Michael Del Zotto said on Twitter. "We clearly do not have a willing negotiating partner."

The league's next step is likely to cancel more of the schedule. All games through Nov. 30 have been axed, and a new collective bargaining agreement needs to be in place by Friday in order for games to return Dec. 1. Several reports say the league will cancel an additional two weeks of games plus All-Star weekend in the next announcement, which is expected Friday.

Buffalo News LOADED: 11.22.2012

644624 Carolina Hurricanes

NHL lockout: Optimism gives way to sense of dread

By Chip Alexander

The NHL Players Association made its most complete collective bargaining pitch Wednesday, as requested by the NHL.

The NHL then rejected it, leaving the talks stalled, everyone disappointed and the 2012-2013 season in peril.

The day began with promise, with the NHLPA offering a comprehensive, six-page proposal on collective bargaining issues. But it ended with the negotiations still stalemated and with no end in sight to the lockout.

NHLPA executive director Donald Fehr said he was not sure what the next move would be or when the next meetings would be held.

"On the big things there was, as of (Wednesday), no reciprocity in any meaningful sense," Fehr told reporters.

NHL commissioner Gary Bettman conceded "there was some movement in our direction" with the proposal but it was cautionary.

"We're still far apart," he said. "But hopefully there's some momentum so we can bring this to a conclusion."

Bettman said the league was losing \$18 million a day in revenue, but refused to set a deadline on when the season would have to be canceled.

Talking to the media at a noon break, Fehr confirmed the union no longer was insistent on a fixed financial guarantee, or "fixed target" – the players received more than \$1.8 billion last season – but would agree to accept a percentage of hockey-related revenue.

Fehr said the two sides were \$182 million apart over the course of a proposed five-year provision for honoring existing contracts.

The league is seeking to reduce the players' share of hockey-related revenue from 57 percent under the old agreement to 50 percent – in line with the percentage players in the NBA and NFL agreed to in their new

agreements. The union had proposed gradually reducing the players' share to 50 percent.

The league had proposed to "make whole" the contracts through deferred compensation, offering to move \$211 million from its hockey-related revenue share to fund it. The union wanted that total raised to \$393 million over four years.

Details of the proposal show that the breakdown on "make whole" was \$182 million in 2012-2013, then \$128 million the next season, \$72 million in the third year and \$11 million in the fourth. That would put the split at 50-50 in the fourth year.

Under the NHLPA proposal, in years two through five the players' share of the revenue would not be lower than the previous year.

Fehr said the proposal "was about as good as we can do."

The union proposed \$200 million in revenue sharing based on \$3.3 billion in hockey-related revenue. The figure would vary from year to year.

On contracting issues, the union did not make a proposal on contract lengths or free agency.

The union offered to do away with front-loaded, back-diving contracts. That would apply to existing contracts nine years or longer and any signed under the new agreement.

It also proposed that players making more than \$1 million who are in the American Hockey League be counted against their NHL team's cap, ending the practice of teams circumventing the cap by "hiding" high-salary players in the minors.

The NHL players have been locked out since Sept. 15 and the league has canceled 327 games, including the 2013 Winter Classic on New Year's Day.

After a players' skate Wednesday in Pittsburgh, Penguins star Sidney Crosby told the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette: "We're making a move in their direction, so I don't see why they wouldn't consider it. ...

"We wanted progress, but it takes both sides.

The Canadian Press reported Wednesday that the NHLPA sent a letter Monday to the Canadian parliament outlining its position on the lockout and offering an update on negotiations.

The letter said, in part, "The players understand the selfishness of the owners' position all too well. Countless people – from league and team employees, to hockey fans, to small business owners and their workers – are suffering unnecessarily as a result."

News Observer LOADED: 11.22.2012

644625 Carolina Hurricanes

No, thanks: NHL lockout talks break off again

By RONALD BLUM

NEW YORK -- Jaymes Hall had a question for NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman about the lockout, which already has wiped out more than a quarter of the regular season: Why not put aside the money in dispute and get back on the ice.

Hall tried to get in his question while Bettman was responding to media members outside the league's Manhattan office. When the commissioner was done, he turned his attention to the 41-year-old fan from Lancaster, Pa.

"When you're dealing with a union that really isn't trying to negotiate, make any deal that we can live with for the long-term health of this game, there isn't much else you can do," Bettman said while the audience came out of the Roundabout Theater next door following a Wednesday matinee.

"And we're hoping that with the passage of time, the players' association will come to realize that what we have proposed has been more than fair. And the fact that we're keeping this proposal on the table, when it was contingent on an 82-game season, should be evidence of our desire to get this done the right way."

NHL labor talks broke off soon after they resumed Wednesday, with players maintaining their new proposal was a huge economic concession and Bettman pretty much saying the only deal he will agree to is the one management proposed last month.

On the 67th day of the lockout, the sides headed home for Thanksgiving with no end in sight to the sport's fourth work stoppage. The union's negotiating committee planned to brief players and get back in touch with management on Friday.

Informed of Bettman's comments, union head Donald Fehr said, "my response is they seem to consider negotiating to be merely agreeing with them."

"We've identified what's important to players, but they seem to be so far at least unwilling to treat those concerns in a serious way," Fehr said in a telephone interview.

Players made what both sides called a comprehensive proposal. Fehr said the sides were \$182 million apart in a five-year deal, which comes to \$1.2 million annually for each of the 30 teams.

"On the big things there was as of today no reciprocity in any meaningful sense, no movement on the players' share, no movement on salary-arbitration eligibility, no movement on free agency eligibility, no agreement on a pension plan," Fehr said as he left the talks.

Management wants to increase eligibility for free agency to 28 years of age or eight seasons of NHL service, up from 27 years or seven seasons.

Management also proposed adding a year of service for salary arbitration eligibility, hiking it from 1-4 to 2-5 years of service, depending on the age a player signs, a person familiar with the bargaining said. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because that detail wasn't announced.

"There seems to be a lot of spinning and gamesmanship going on," Bettman said.

Winnipeg defenseman Ron Hainsey, among nine players at the bargaining session, said the union was "disappointed with the response."

"There was no meaningful move in our direction on anything that we would consider." he said.

Fehr nearly said players found the day's two bargaining sessions, which totaled 2 1/2 hours, to be a waste of time.

"A lot of the people that were there today, given the response we got, thought they had a lot better things to do on the night before Thanksgiving than hear what we got," he said.

The NHL on Oct. 16 proposed a 50-50 split of hockey-related revenue, down from the players' 57 percent portion of \$3.3 billion last season. With guaranteed contracts likely to push the players' share over the halfway mark at the start of the next deal, management wants that money to come out of future years to bring the overall percentage down to an even split over the length of an agreement.

Players previously had proposed they receive a guaranteed amount of income each year.

"Gary said we were \$900 million or \$1 billion apart," Fehr said, referring to the gap over a five-year deal. "At the moment we are exactly \$182 million apart."

Fehr said players proposed they get \$393 million over the length of the deal, while the NHL is at \$211 million. Management wants a seven-year deal, which the union says is too long because less than half the current players will be active by the last season.

"To expect our best economic proposal to get better as the damage continues to increase isn't particularly realistic," Bettman said. "From an economic standpoint, we've given what we have to give. It was our best offer. And again, put it in the context that the business is probably losing between \$18 and \$20 million a day and the players are losing between \$8 and \$10 million a day."

This is the league's third lockout since 1994. The first settled on Jan. 11 and the last one led to Bettman announcing the cancellation of the 2004-05 season on Feb. 15.

The league has canceled 326 games through Nov. 30 plus the Jan. 1 Winter Classic between Toronto and Detroit at Ann Arbor, Mich. More cancellations are coming.

"That's something that we're going to have to look at on a daily basis," Bettman said. "I think that becomes inevitable as time goes on."

News Observer LOADED: 11.22.2012

644626 Chicago Blackhawks

NHL, players still far apart on new contract

By Chris Kuc

What started as a day filled with promise that progress would be made in negotiations between the NHL and players' association on a new collective bargaining agreement ended with both sides frustrated with how far apart they remain on the core issues.

The NHLPA made a proposal to the league Wednesday in New York that edged closer to the owners' plans for hockey-related revenue and other issues, but it wasn't enough for the NHL's liking and the lockout concluded its 67th day with no end in sight.

"There was movement on some issues and that was appreciated," Commissioner Gary Bettman told reporters in New York. "There was movement by us on some issues but we're still far apart. Hopefully there will have been some momentum from (Wednesday's) session that we can build off that ... bring this process to a successful conclusion."

Bettman said league business was losing \$18 million to \$20 million in revenue per day during the lockout and the players are losing \$8 million to \$10 million.

"It's frustrating and disappointing for everybody that it has taken this long and that we're still far apart but we're going to stay at it," Bettman said.

The players made their presentation in an hour-long session Wednesday morning and after a 90-minute break the sides met for two more hours, after which NHLPA director Donald Fehr said the league wasn't receptive to the offer

"Nothing on significant economic issues," Fehr told reporters. "On the big things there was, as of today, no reciprocity in any meaningful sense.

"The players made a dramatic move by anybody's standards."

The sides could meet again at the end of the week but it's expected more of the schedule will be canceled this weekend, including the 2013 NHL All-Star Game in Columbus.

Chicago Tribune LOADED: 11.22.2012

644627 Chicago Blackhawks

NHL labor: League rejects players' proposal; no new talks set

By Helene Elliott

Any optimism that a deal between the NHL and the Players' Assn. might be imminent following the union's presentation of a "comprehensive" collective bargaining proposal Wednesday morning lasted only a few hours.

That's all it took for the sides to meet and for the NHL to reject the proposal, in which players said they had made moves toward the NHL's stance in several areas.

"We are still far apart. It's frustrating for everybody," NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman told reporters in New York.

He also said the league is losing \$18 million to \$20 million a day during the lockout, which it imposed on Sept. 15 when the previous collective bargaining agreement expired. Those losses are likely to be reflected in future proposals made by the NHL. The league already thinks the players are asking for too much money in the "make whole" provision that was designed to cushion the blow of escrow payments that players will have to make when their share of hockey-related revenue is reduced from last season's 57% to an agreed-upon 50%.

"To think our offer will be better as time goes on is not accurate," Bettman said.

NHLPA Executive Director Donald Fehr, speaking before Bettman met with reporters, said the union had conceded about as much as it felt it could concede in order to satisfy the league's demands.

"We've moved in their direction previously on a couple of the player contracting issues; the rest are very, very, very important to the players," Fehr said earlier Wednesday.

No additional negotiations are scheduled, though it's likely the two sides will at least touch base on Friday. The league is expected to extend its cancellation of games into December, after wiping out games through Nov. 30 and the Jan. 1 Winter Classic.

Chicago Tribune LOADED: 11.22.2012

644628 Chicago Blackhawks

Players make new offer in NHL talks

Sports Network

NEW YORK -- The NHLPA made a new collective bargaining agreement proposal Wednesday morning in an effort toward ending the NHL lockout.

The two sides are set to meet again Wednesday afternoon after the NHL reviews the latest offer.

Regular season games through the end of November have been wiped off the schedule, while the league also canceled the Winter Classic that was supposed to be held on New Year's Day in Ann Arbor between the Toronto Maple Leafs and Detroit Red Wings.

The two sides have been without a CBA since the previous one expired just before midnight on Sept. 15.

Chicago Tribune LOADED: 11.22.2012

644629 Chicago Blackhawks

NHL's Beckman says sides are still far apart

# By Associated Press

NEW YORK — NHL talks quickly broke off again Wednesday after the players made a new proposal they said left sides separated by less than \$40 million annually over a five-year contract and Commissioner Gary Bettman immediately rejected the plan, saying "we're still far apart."

On the 67th day of a lockout that already has led to the cancellation of more than a quarter of the regular season, the sides didn't set a date to get back together.

"On the big things there was as of today no reciprocity in any meaningful sense, no movement on the players' share, no movement on salary-arbitration eligibility, no movement on free agency eligibility, no agreement on a pension plan," union head Donald Fehr said.

Union officials and nine players went to the NHL office in the morning and spent about an hour making the proposal. After a 90-minute break, the sides met again for two hours, said there was nothing more to talk about for now and headed off for the Thanksgiving holiday.

"I think it's frustrating for everybody and disappointing for everybody that's it's taken this long and we're still far apart," said Bettman, in his third lockout as commissioner.

Fehr said players made a percentage-based proposal and said it reflected the economic impact the work stoppage had caused to the NHL, which had \$3.3 billion in hockey-related revenue last season.

"We have moved far more than halfway," Fehr said. "It is about as good as we can do."

Bettman on Oct. 16 proposed a 50-50 split of hockey-related revenue. With guaranteed contracts likely to push the players' share over the halfway mark originally, management wants that money to come out of future years to bring the overall percentage down to an even split over the length of an agreement.

Players previously had proposed they receive a guaranteed amount of income each year.

"Gary said we were \$900 million or a \$1 billion apart," Fehr said, referring to the gap over a five-year deal. "At the moment we are exactly \$182 million apart."

Fehr said players proposed they get \$393 million over the length of the deal, while the NHL is at \$211 million.

The league has canceled 326 games through Nov. 30 plus the Jan. 1 Winter Classic between Toronto and Detroit at Ann Arbor, Mich.

This is the league's fourth work stoppage in 21 years and third lockout since 1994. The previous lockout led to the cancellation of the 1994-95 season.

Attending the talks were San Jose center Adam Burish, free agent defenseman Chris Campoli, Detroit wing Dan Cleary, free agent wing Mathieu Darche, Winnipeg defenseman Ron Hainsey, St. Louis center Andy McDonald, Edmonton center Kevin Shattenkirk and Anaheim center Dan Winnik.

Chicago Sun Times LOADED: 11.22.2012

644630 Chicago Blackhawks

Lockout continues amid latest proposals

#### TRACEY MYERS

The NHL was still reviewing the NHLPA's latest proposal, one that looked to bridge the gap between the two parties, when the Blackhawks were wrapping up practice on Friday afternoon.

"This is really our effort to save the season," Jamal Mayers said at the time. "The reality is a lot of guys didn't want to go this far. But the hope is we can salvage a good chunk of the season if we can make a deal quickly here."

Jonathan Toews hoped it would lead to traction.

"Both sides need to show desperation and lack of carelessness, I guess, is one way to put it. We have to show we want to get things done for each other and the fans," he said post practice. "We'll see how they react to it."

By midday on Friday, however, it looked like the league wasn't reacting very favorably to it.

There was no progress made on Friday, day 67 of the lockout, when the NHLPA offered a new five-year proposal to the league in New York. Some details of the latest proposal were in a memo from Fehr to the players, which was leaked to the media. In the memo, Fehr told players that "it is now undisputed that the gap (between the league and PA) is only \$182 million over five years."

Other details, according to the memo:

Honouring Players' Contracts/Transition payments: Players' Share will equal 50 percent of HRR plus fixed payments in the first four years to partially honour player contracts and ease the transition to 50/50:

2012-13 - \$182M

2013-14 - \$128M

2014-15 - \$72M

2015-16 - \$11M

Total \$393M

The owners had previously proposed \$211M

Long-term back-diving contracts – Cap benefit recapture rule so clubs no longer benefit from front-loading contracts (move in the owners' direction)

Contracts in the minors – Clubs take a cap hit on contracts in the minors over \$1M (move in the owners' direction)

Four Recall Rule – Unlimited recalls after regular season (move in the owners' direction)

Salary Arbitration – Elimination of walk-away from arbitrator's decision, but clubs can still "walk-away" by not qualifying a player.

League commissioner Gary Bettman told reporters that the two sides were still "far apart," yet offered some optimism.

"Hopefully there's some momentum so we can bring this to a conclusion," he said

The NHLPA planned to have a conference call with players later today. Fehr didn't sound quite as optimistic as he departed Friday's talks.

"One of you is going to ask me what happens next," Fehr told reporters. "And the answer is I don't know."

Comcast SportsNet.com LOADED: 11.22.2012

644631 Columbus Blue Jackets

NHL lockout: Union's latest offer rejected; All-Star Game might get axed Friday

By Aaron Portzline

The NHL Players' Association has made the last two proposals in collective-bargaining talks with the NHL. The first, three weeks ago, was shot down in 10 minutes. Yesterday's proposal in New York was rejected in 50 minutes. Sadly, that might be the only sign of progress.

The sides are closer than the rancor and rhetoric would suggest, but still miles from a deal, leaving the 2012-13 season in peril.

On Friday, it's expected the league will cancel more games — at least two weeks' worth — and the 2013 NHL All-Star Game, scheduled to be hosted by the Blue Jackets at Nationwide Arena.

The Blue Jackets would not comment yesterday on the possible cancellation of the All-Star Game, but The Dispatch reported earlier this week that the midseason gala would be included when the next round of games are canceled by the league.

Now, the Jackets' chances to hold the game will be tabled until at least 2015. The Winter Olympics in Socci, Russia, in 2014 will preclude an All-Star Game for the 2013-14 season.

"We moved far more than halfway," NHLPA executive director Donald Fehr told reporters in New York. "Our expectation is the NHL is going to be willing to meet us if they're willing to reach an agreement."

That's what Fehr said before the NHL had perused the players' latest offer.

In it, the NHLPA asked for \$393 million toward the NHL's "make whole" provision, which bridges the gap between the owner's desire for an immediate 50-50 split of hockey-related revenue and the players' desire to have their existing contracts honored.

The league offered \$211 million toward the provision in its latest offer.

The players also agreed to accept a percentage of revenues beginning with the first year of the CBA, rather than an established dollar figures. It was that part of the offer, sources told The Dispatch, that had the players thinking the NHL would be receptive.

"Let's just say we didn't get the message coming out of the room that we hoped we would get," NHLPA negotiating committee member Ron Hainsey said.

What likely stopped the owners was an NHLPA demand for a guarantee that, after the second year of the CBA, their share of hockey-related revenue not be less (whole dollars) than it was in the previous season.

In other words, the salary cap would never dip below an estimated \$67.3 million.

Fehr struck a far different tone after the NHL responded.

"On the big things, there was no reciprocity in any meaningful sense," Fehr said. "No movement on the player's share, nothing on arbitration or free agency or a pension plan. They say they would like to get on that, but we've seen no action.

"I can tell you a lot of people who were here today, given the response we got, thought they had a lot better things to do the night before Thanksgiving."

NHL commissioner Gary Bettman rejected the notion that the NHLPA made meaningful movement toward the NHL's last proposal. While stopping short of saying the NHL is done negotiating, Bettman said the league's offer is not going to get any better.

The league, he said, is losing between \$18 million and \$20 million a day ... roughly \$10 million of that money that would be going to players.

"We went through their proposal point by point," Bettman told reporters in New York. "We talked about the things that were in the agreement, the things that we could modify, and the things we had no room to move on, and we explained our position on each of those elements.

"Any expectation that our offer is going to get better as time goes by is not realistic."

There are no plans for further negotiations. Bettman and Fehr, or their No. 2 men — Bill Daly of the NHL and Steve Fehr of the NHLPA — could chat by phone on Friday.

But neither side knows where to turn next. In 2004-05, during the last lockout, the season was canceled on Feb. 16.

Columbus Dispatch LOADED: 11.22.2012

644632 Dallas Stars

Stars would like to eventually move practice facility downtown

# MIKE HEIKA

I did a story today on the first anniversary of Tom Gaglardi being awarded the Stars in a Delaware bankruptcy court, and wanted to expand on a few points that were included.

One of the most interesting is the fact the team is studying a move of the practice facility to the downtown area. The Dr Pepper StarCenter in Frisco is state of the art, and is actually one of the nicest in the league. The locker room is huge, and the training facilities are fantastic.

What's more, the team has updated office space this year, so the entire building is in good shape.

Still...it's in Frisco, and that's a long way from downtown.

The Frisco site was chosen because of land controlled by former Stars owner Tom Hicks (who also controlled the Frisco Rough Riders). But in the time the Stars have been there, they have seen just how much they have lost in media coverage and accessibility to the public since the move from Valley Ranch (the former offices and practice rink were just down the street from the Cowboys offices). So, the idea of a downtown practice facility has been broached.

Now, the move would take years. First, they have to find a site and work out the details with the city (possibly Dallas or Highland Park). Second, they would have to build a new building. Third, they would have to find a good use for the current rink. It's a time-consuming and expensive proposition, but they are pondering the potential positives right now.

"We want to be where the majority of our fans are," said team CEO Jim Lites. "I think from media accessibility and fan accessibility, the appeal of moving to a more centrally-located area is there. But there's a lot to talk about in the mean time."

Lites said that he believes the organization has made a ton of progress behind the scenes since Gaglardi purchased the team and hired Lites and a new staff of vice presidents. In addition to a possible practice facility change, they have changed healthcare providers for the team, and reconnected with some major sponsors. They also are now poised to sell tickets and market heavily when games are played again.

"I definitely think we've made a lot of progress this year," Lites said. "I think we're positioned very well to move forward quickly."

Dallas Morning News LOADED: 11.22.2012

644633 Dallas Stars

NHL talks break off again with frustration

By Ronald Blum

NEW YORK -- NHL labor talks broke off soon after they resumed Wednesday, with players maintaining their new proposal was a huge economic concession and Commissioner Gary Bettman saying the only deal he will agree to is the one management proposed last month.

On the 67th day of a lockout that has wiped out more than a quarter of the regular season, the sides headed home for Thanksgiving with no end in sight to the work stoppage. The union's negotiating committee planned to brief players and contact management Friday.

"We're dealing with a union that really isn't trying to negotiate, make any deal that we can live with for the long-term health of this game," Bettman said when questioned by a fan, 41-year-old Jaymes Hall of Lancaster, Pa. "We're hoping that with the passage of time, the players' association will come to realize that what we have proposed has been more than fair. And the fact that we're keeping this proposal on the table, when it was contingent on an 82-game season, should be evidence of our desire to get this done the right way."

Informed of Bettman's comments, union head Donald Fehr said "my response is they seem to consider negotiating to be merely agreeing with them."

Dallas Morning News LOADED: 11.22.2012

644634 Detroit Red Wings

Red Wings' Danny Cleary on today's NHL talks: 'It didn't go well'

By Helene St. James

Red Wings forward Danny Cleary did not offer much encouragement after the latest round of talks geared toward getting the 2012-13 NHL season up and running, and December games are likely to be cancelled by the end of the week

After attending today's afternoon session in New York, Cleary told the Free Press, "it didn't go well. We pretty much agreed on everything, except stuff that matters. A lot of players today are extremely upset about this."

NHL owners and the players have been at odds over a new collective bargaining agreement since Sept. 16. More than 300 games already have been cancelled, including the Winter Classic scheduled for Jan. 1 between the Wings and Toronto.

Any chance of an early December start hinged on reaching an accord this week. The sides may meet again Friday, but the latest meeting revealed the two are still on opposite sides of a sizable chasm.

"As players, the word would be: Frustrated, disappointed," Cleary said. He was at the meetings as a player representative. "It's just, it seems almost after every proposal, we haven't gotten anything on our side, and we've continually moved towards them. I think as players, we really felt that we've come a long way. They just didn't budge on the bigger issues with us. It seems like a lot of give from players, and all the taking is on their side."

Asked if it feels like NHL wants players to give up everything, Cleary replied, "It's not what it feels like, it's what it is."

The PA delivered a five-year proposal in the morning; by afternoon, the NHL had deemed it untenable.

"We're still far apart," NHL commissioner Gary Bettman told reporters in New York, shortly after PA executive director Donald Fehr had said there was nothing significant gained on economic issues.

Cleary said the league "didn't move at all on the \$211 million" make-whole provision, which centers on how the league should fully honor existing contracts. Cleary also said there was "no movement in the player rights," such as capping contracts at five years.

Seven years after the last labor dispute ended up wiping out the entire '04-05 season, the '12-13 season could be similarly in peril. Bettman didn't cancel that season until mid-February, but given how Wednesday began with such optimism only to peter into pessimism, Cleary was hard put to find a path forward as December nears.

"It's hard to say," he said, "where we go from here."

Detroit Free Press LOADED: 11.22.2012

644635 Detroit Red Wings

Red Wings defenseman Brendan Smith thrives in Grand Rapids

By Helene St. James

The last time the Red Wings had to place a promising young defenseman in the American Hockey League during a labor dispute, the guy turned it into an award-winning season.

Smart, tough and offensively gifted, Niklas Kronwall, then 24, finished 2004-05 with a 53-point season that helped him clinch the Eddie Shore Trophy as top defenseman in the league. Smart, tough and offensively gifted, Brendan Smith has nine points in 14 games, helping the Grand Rapids Griffins to a six-game winning streak.

Smith, 23, would be with the Wings were it not for the lockout, which just entered its third month. The NHL Players' Association spent Tuesday holding internal meetings, attended by, among others, Wings forward Danny Cleary. Talks with the NHL regarding a new collective bargaining agreement will resume today.

Until there's labor peace in the NHL, there's playing in the AHL. Wings general manager Ken Holland said the time spent in Grand Rapids should benefit Smith.

"He's one of the veterans down there," Holland said. "On most nights, he's being used as a real minute muncher. He's playing very, very well. Absolutely, there's a comparison there to Nik Kronwall.

"Smith is matching up against the other team's best players. He's a powerplay guy. You need to learn those situations, and it's good to learn in the AHL. We think the time he's spending there is going to lessen the growing pains in the NHL."

Smith -- like Kronwall, a first-round pick -- spent 14 games with Detroit last season, producing a goal and six assists. There's never any question he has got an offensive upside, though it has been about learning to play on the defensive side of the puck. He has improved at that, and though it isn't the same as doing it in the NHL, he is playing in an AHL full of other promising NHL-ready players.

Any growth by Smith will be all the more welcome for the Wings, who are counting on him to help ease the transition from a defense that lost Nicklas Lidstrom and Brad Stuart during the off-season.

"When and if we do get playing," Holland said, "Brendan will be a big part of our team."

Detroit Free Press LOADED: 11.22.2012

644636 Detroit Red Wings

Talks end as NHL rejects new players union proposal

By Ted Kulfan

Detroit — A happy Thanksgiving it will not be around the world of the NHL.

What began with full-fledged optimism Wednesday morning, as the Players Association proposed moving on its guaranteed share of dollars, ended with another crashing thud.

The league was unimpressed with the offer in an afternoon meeting, and the two sides ended the day with no meaningful traction.

No further meetings are scheduled for this week, with the lockout reaching its 68th day Thursday.

"It's about as good as we can do," said Donald Fehr, the PA executive director, of Wednesday's offer.

The players agreed to a 50-50 split in hockey-related revenue (players had a 57 percent share in the last collective bargaining agreement), which the league had wanted. But the players asked the league to add \$182 million to its make-whole proposal (the league was offering \$211 million) to ensure players don't lose money off existing contracts.

The players' proposal also had safeguards built in to protect them in case revenue fell because of the lockout.

Fehr was scheduled to have a conference call with players later in the evening.

"Our task is to go back and report to the players," Fehr said. "What happens next ... the answer is I don't know."

Fehr estimated the two sides were \$182 million apart from a deal.

The PA also proposed that the upper limit of the salary cap shouldn't fall below \$67.25 million in a five-year agreement (it would have been \$70.2 million this season).

"There was some movement in our direction and it was appreciated," commissioner Gary Bettman said. "We're still far apart. But hopefully there's some momentum so we can bring this to a conclusion."

Bettman said the NHL is losing \$18-20 million of business per day with the lockout but the PA "expects our best offer to get better."

The league was expected to cancel more games, likely the first two weeks in December, before the end of the week.

Also expected to be canceled is the All-Star Game, scheduled for Jan. 27 in Columbus. The Winter Classic, scheduled for Jan. 1 between the Red Wings and Toronto Maple Leafs at Michigan Stadium, was canceled earlier this month.

Detroit News LOADED: 11.22.2012

644637 Detroit Red Wings

NHL rejects proposal from players union, talks break off with 'no progress,' as sides remain 'far apart'

# Ansar Khan

The league rejected a five-year proposal by the NHLPA, which the union said had moved "significantly" in the owners' favor.

"No progress today," NHLPA executive director Donald Fehr said during his media briefing. "The players have done everything they could to get the game back on the ice."

The NHLPA's proposal sees the union move off its position on guaranteed players share dollars and shifts more to the owners' demand of a percentage base in the revenue split.

Fehr said the sides are \$182 million apart.

Fehr called it a dramatic move on the players' part, but said the owners aren't willing to budge from their position.

"On the big things, there was no reciprocity of any meaningful sense," Fehr said. "No movement on players' share, on salary arbitration eligibility, free agent eligibility, no movement on a pension plan."

NHL commissioner Gary Bettman said the sides are still "far apart" but hoped that there was some momentum to bring the lockout, which has reached 66 days, to a conclusion.

The sides might talk on Friday.

"There was movement on some issues by the Players Association, and that was appreciated, and there was movement by us on some issues," Bettman told reporters. "But we're still far apart. And hopefully there will have been some momentum from today's session that we can build off of to hopefully bring this process to a successful conclusion.

"I think it's frustrating and disappointing for everybody that it's taking this long. We're still far apart but we're going to stay at it."

Bettman said the league has made its best offer, particularly on economics, and that subsequent offers will only get worse as more money is lost. He said the league is losing \$18-20 million a day and players are losing \$8-10 million a day.

"To expect our best economic proposal to get better as the damage continues to increase isn't particularly realistic," Bettman said.

Michigan Live LOADED: 11.22.2012

644638 Detroit Red Wings

NHLPA makes what it feels is 'substantial' proposal, waiting for response from league

Ansar Khan

Here are some highlights of the NHLPA offer, according to tsn.ca:

Players' Share: A major move in the owners' direction by removing guarantees or fixed targets for Players' share.

Honoring Players' Contracts/Transition payments: Players' Share will equal 50 percent of HRR plus fixed payments in the first four years to partially honor player contracts and ease the transition to 50/50:

2012-13 - \$182M

2013-14 - \$128M

2014-15 - \$72M

2015-16 - \$11M

Total \$393 M

\*The owners had previously proposed \$211M

Long-term back-diving contracts: Cap benefit recapture rule so clubs no longer benefit from front-loading contracts (move in the owners' direction)

Contracts in the minors: Clubs take a cap hit on contracts in the minors over \$1M (move in the owners' direction)

Four Recall Rule: Unlimited recalls after regular season (move in the owners' direction)

Salary Arbitration: Elimination of walk-away from arbitrator's decision, but clubs can still "walk-away" by not qualifying a player

Here is the full NHLPA Proposal, per tsn.ca:

- Revenue Sharing
- --Pool of \$200 Million at \$3.303 B of HRR. Varies year to year with HRR.
- --Contributions to be raised per NHL formula. No discretion to increase individual team contributions beyond what formula provides
- --Existing level of distributions to be protected for 2 years. If additional funds needed, raised pro-rata from all teams
- --Revenue Sharing Oversight Committee (RSOC) has discretion to adjust amounts for Phase One distributions by up to  $\pm$ 15 percent per team, provided that all such adjustments are considered and decided upon at one time

- --RSOC by unanimous vote may move beyond +/- 15 percent limitation towards but not exceeding the straight pool value for regular season HRR. (Must therefore compute straight pool every year.)
- --Industry Growth Fund to be managed by the RSOC.
- --IGF will have callable dollars of up to \$20M in first year, \$40M in second year, and \$60M in each subsequent year of the agreement.
- --Need to establish criteria for which teams may apply for IGF funding and/or will submit plans.
- --IGF funding is available to any team by unanimous consent of RSOC
- --IGF funding also available for industry-wide programs or projects
- --RSOC has seven (7) members selected by the parties in their sole discretion, as follows
- --Four employer representatives, at least one of which must by an owner
- --Three (3) player representatives, at least one of which must be a player
- --Parties may name up to 2 Alternate RSOC representatives who will serve in the event of absence of a member
- --Need to spell out in drafting the process of the RSOC, and limited arbitral review of decisions
- 2. Defined Benefit Pension Plan
- --The parties will establish a defined benefit pension plan under US law per the NHLPA proposal.
- 3. Discipline
- --For on-ice discipline, there will be an appeal to a neutral arbitrator or to a panel of three arbitrators (one appointed by each side and one neutral). The standard of review will be whether the League's finding of a violation of the League Playing Rules was supported by substantial evidence, and, if so, whether the penalty imposed was within the League's reasonable discretion and consistent with past practice
- --For off-ice discipline, there will be an appeal to the impartial arbitrator. The issue will be whether the discipline was for just cause.
- 4. Player Contracting and System Issues
- --NHLPA liability for escrow is eliminated from the side letter.
- --NHLPA may set a higher percentage for escrow in a given year than the formula would provide. The NHL may also set a higher percentage than the formula would provide in the last year of the agreement, provided that any number so set is not unreasonable.
- -- The Playoff Pool is increased per the NHLPA proposal
- --Liquidated damages provisions in SPCs are prohibited. This applies only to new contracts, i.e., contracts entered into after a new CBA is in effect.
- -- Prompt mutual disclosure of European loan agreements, ATOs and PTOs.
- --NHLPA proposal on no trade / no move clauses
- --NHL proposal to prevent a team playing with less than the minimum of 18/2 is accepted provided limitation is the NHL minimum + \$100,000; counts against the share but not the cap.
- --Re-entry waivers are eliminated
- --Waivers will be required to loan a player who is on emergency recall if that player has played 10 games
- --NHLPA proposal on 13.23 waivers
- --Four Recall Rule
- --After the conclusion of the Regular Season, a Club may exercise an unlimited number of additional Regular Recalls provided that it may have no more than three (3) Players on its Active Roster who were recalled by way of Regular Recall after the Trade Deadline
- --Minimum salary continues to increase on the same schedule as previous CBA, \$25,000 every second year
- --Goepfert Rule as proposed by NHLPA
- --Performance bonus cushion in each year of the agreement

- --The Lower limit must be satisfied without consideration of performance bonuses.
- --Players and cash/cap trading. A team may have an unlimited number of Retained Salary Transactions up to 15 percent of the Upper Limit in any League year
- --The amount in excess of \$1M paid to a player while in the minor leagues or in Europe on an NHL contract counts against the cap (none counts against the share). This applies only to new contracts, i.e., contracts entered into after a new CBA is in effect.
- --NHLPA cap benefit recapture proposal.
- --Applies only to new contracts, i.e., contracts entered into after a new CBA is in effect.
- --Applies to contracts of 9 years or longer
- --35 year old rule changed to provide that the cap charge taken will be as per cap benefit recapture

Salary Arbitration

- --Walk away eliminated
- --Second buyout period will continue in its current form except that a Club may not buy out a player who was not on its Reserve List as of the most recent Trade Deadline
- --A Club may not buy out a player who has a cap hit of less than \$3 M

Critical dates calendar

- --Sec. 12.3(a) election moved per NHLPA proposal
- --Free agency interview period per NHLPA proposal

Salary Cap and Payroll Range

- --Growth Factor, Performance Bonus Cushion, Long-Term, injury continue except for any changes already agreed to or contained in this proposal
- +8M/-8M payroll range becomes +/- 20% of midpoint beginning in 2013/14
- --The Upper Limit may not fall below 67.25 M in any year of the agreement. This is half way between the 11/12 Upper Limit (64.3 M) and the 12/13 UL (70.2 M).
- 5. Players' --Our players' share proposal is identical to yours in all material respects except for the amount of the transition payments added to the 50 percent share. There are no guarantees or fixed targets, other than a requirement that, beginning with the second year of the Agreement, players' share, expressed in dollars, may not fall below its value for the prior season. This proposal allows us to determine players' share regardless of the effects of the lockout and its aftermath.
- --Player share will equal 50 percent of HRR, plus these fixed dollar payments attributable to the first four years of the agreement:
- --2012/13: \$ 182M
- --2013/14: \$ 128M
- --2014/15: \$ 72M
- --2015/16: \$ 11M
- --Payment of these amounts may be deferred for one year (specific payment date to be agreed upon), with the deferral accumulating interest rate equal to the sum of the prime interest rate in effect at The J.P. Morgan Chase Bank on the next June 15, plus 1 percent. Payment of these fixed dollar amounts is guaranteed by the League.
- --In years two through five of this Agreement, the players' share in dollars may not be less than it was in the previous year.

Attached are charts which show this proposal against your last in the format you provided after our last proposal.

6. Term of CBA

The term of the CBA will be for 5 years/seasons, and will end on September 15, 2017.

7. Transition Rules to be negotiated

May cover, among other things, compliance buyouts, pro-ration of status/service and statistical criteria/thresholds based on the length of the season, movement of deadlines, and any other relevant matters.

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644639 Detroit Red Wings

Red Wings scouting report: Drew Miller found his niche in Detroit as reliable role player

Ansar Khan

(MLive.com periodically will profile a Detroit Red Wings player while the NHL lockout lingers):

**Drew Miller** 

Position: Left wing/right wing

Age: 28

Height/weight: 6-2/178

How acquired: Claimed off waivers from Tampa Bay on Nov. 11, 2009.

Contract: This is his final season, with a salary-cap hit of \$837,500.

2011-12 stats: 80 games, 14 goals, 11 assists, 25 points, plus-6 rating, 20 penalty minutes.

Career stats: 280 games, 40 goals, 37 assists, 77 points, plus-5 rating, 68 penalty minutes.

What he's doing during the lockout: He has 13 points (three goals, 10 assists) in nine games with the Braehead Clan in Scotland, in Great Britain's Elite Ice Hockey League.

Strengths: Plays hard consistently, is a good penalty killer and a good shotblocker. Goes to high-traffic areas, despite his slight frame. Chips in offensively, with three consecutive seasons of double-digit goal totals.

Weaknesses: Could use some more bulk. Has probably reached his peak offensively.

2011-12 in review: Notched career highs in goals (14), points (25), gamewinning goals (four), shots on goal (131) and plus-minus rating (plus-6). ... Had at least one goal in a career-high three consecutive games on two occasions (Dec. 17-21, four goals and Jan. 1-Feb. 4). ... Led team's forwards in blocked shots (66). ... Charged with only nine giveaways, second-fewest on club behind Cory Emmerton (seven), among players with 50 or more games. ... Was a healthy scratch in two of the first six games, then played every game the rest of the season. ... Had one point (an assist) and an even plus-minus rating in five playoff games.

2012-13 outlook (season pending): He found his niche in Detroit as a reliable role player and should continue to do what he's been doing — checking, killing penalties, chipping in some offense. The team has plenty of third- and fourth-line players, so there will be a lot of competition. Miller brings experience and a proven track record, giving him an edge over some others. He had good chemistry with Darren Helm and Danny Cleary at one point last season and might end up playing with those two again. Miller's contract is expiring, and the club, which has a lot of young forwards in the system waiting for an opportunity, must decide whether to re-sign him.

How does Miller stack up to some of the team's other role players? If there is a season, should the club continue playing him regularly, or is there another forward you'd like to see get in more games?

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644640 Edmonton Oilers

Is Edmonton Oilers sniper Jordan Eberle still really lucky? Or is he just that good?

David Staples

Is Edmonton Oilers sniper Jordan Eberle still really lucky? Or is he just that good?

Super sniper Eberle continues to be a scoring chance machine and deadly finisher in OKC

One of the hottest topics of debate over the summer was whether or not the point scoring totals of Jordan Eberle, star sniper of the Edmonton Oilers, were sustainable.

Many, many, many blog posts and a few newspaper articles were written on the matter.

Eberle scored 34 goals and 76 points in 78 games last year, but he and his linemates cashed in on more shots than other NHLers tend to do. Eberle's shooting percentage was very high, 18.9 per cent, and the on-ice shooting percentage of his linemates was also high. This led some Oilers observers to conclude that Eberle got a lot lucky in 2011-12, and it was prudent to conclude that his point total was likely going to slide in 2012-13 to something in the range of 50 to 60 points.

The argument had some merit, but I never bought it fully. You see, Eberle creates scoring chances at a high, high rate. I figured that his ability to do so wasn't due to luck, it was due to skill. That skill isn't going to disappear. In fact, it was likely he would be able to increase his scoring chance output, given the fact he is still a young, developing player.

The only issue, in my mind, was whether or not Eberle and his teammates could continue to cash in on their scoring chances at a high rate. This is what they'd done in 2011-12. Of the 404 scoring chances (5.2 per game) that Eberle had helped to create, he had accumulated 76 points, a 0.19 per cent conversion rate, the highest rate on the Oilers. Ryan Nugent-Hopkins was at 0.18 and Sam Gagner and Taylor Hall, 0.17.

It was apparent from the data that the Oilers skill players cashed in on a higher rate of their scoring chances than other less-skilled players like Shawn Horcoff, 0.11, Ryan Smyth, 0.14, Ryan Jones, 0.15, and Ben Eager, 0.13.

Still, I've only been tracking scoring chances and their conversion rates for two years now, so I wasn't sure that skill players will almost always have higher conversion rates than non-skill players.

And I'm still not sure.

However, when I look at the early results from the Oklahoma City Barons, the skill players are again creating more chances and cashing in on more of them as well.

Eberle has continued to be a scoring chance machine in OKC. He has chipped in on 101 chances in 15 games, 6.7 per game. This is second on the Barons only to Justin Schultz, who has chipped in on 108 scoring chances. Ryan Nugent-Hopkins is third with 93 contributions to scoring chances.

Eberle's conversion rate on his chances is 0.19, the exact same as he had last season.

So far, so good for Eberle then.

And maybe, on an on-going basis, he's more good than lucky, and we can count on more 70-something point seasons from him in the National Hockey League, not 50-something point seasons.

I was already leaning towards that conclusion this past summer, and his early season play in Oklahoma City is giving me more certainty on this point.

If the NHL returns, and Eberle keeps putting up scoring chances at the same rate as last season, he should be able to have similar success when it comes to putting up points, give or take 10 points in either direction.

Edmonton Journal: LOADED: 11.22.2012

644641 Edmonton Oilers

Lack of league response to NHLPA proposal has Edmonton Oilers' Shawn Horcoff frustrated

By Robert Tychkowski

EDMONTON - Two hours after the NHL Players Association made what many consider to be its last best offer, the owners threw it back across the table and said it's not good enough.

Now what?

They'll be skiing in Phoenix before the union takes another backward step and the league is refusing to budge on any major issues.

It seems the only thing left to do is cancel more games and curse the entire process.

Needless to say, there were some very frustrated and angry players who emerged from the bargaining session Wednesday afternoon, including Shawn Horcoff.

"Extremely disappointed," said the Oilers captain, part of the NHLPA's team in New York. "It shows what we've been saying all along: Gary Bettman has a timeline of when he wants to get this done and it's not right now.

"We worked all day Tuesday on this, made significant moves in their direction. They looked at it, talked about it, called us back in after two hours and made zero moves on any of the major issues.

"It shows they're not prepared to get a deal done."

A lot of hockey people were optimistic the PA's offer would at least get the negotiations moving, instead, all it generated was a 'No.'

So there is no hockey.

"They did not move on single thing towards us," said Horcoff. "It's frustrating. It shows that it didn't matter what we gave. Unless we agreed to what they want, which is everything — everything — there's no deal to be done. There's not even a framework to move forward with."

The players made concessions on a couple of big issues, agreeing to a 50-50 revenue split in year one, provided the NHL is willing to negotiate on its \$211 million Make Whole provision (money used to honour existing contracts).

It isn't.

"We don't feel like \$211 was enough to make us whole and they moved zero dollars," said Horcoff.

That's what burns the players. The men who signed all those inflated contracts in the final hours of the old CBA are now willing to scrap the season rather than honour those contracts.

"The players, more than anything, just want them to commit to the contracts that they signed," said Horcoff. "And \$211 million isn't going to cut it."

So now what? The players aren't going to negotiate with themselves, and the NHL isn't willing to budge — "Any expectation that our offer is going to get better as time goes on is not realistic," said Bettman — so the season is in big trouble.

"Right now there's a lot of dejection," said Horcoff. "Even if they would have come to us on one or two things you could have continued to negotiate. But what's there to talk about right now?

"They didn't come our way on anything, it's really hard to continue negotiations. I'd be surprised if the negotiations don't get stalled because of this.

"We keep giving, giving, giving and get nothing in return. That's one thing now that the players are starting to question — there has to be something in this deal for us, also. As of now we're receiving nothing.

"We've already given two arms and a leg. We've only got one leg left. We're hopping around here."

Devan Dubnyk doesn't understand why Bettman insists on hacking away at players contractual rights, like term, free agency and arbitration, when they've already agreed to a 50-50 split.

"It doesn't seem to make sense," said Dubnyk. "Those are things that players fought for and missed an entire year for and they are literally proposing to take all of it back.

"If the percentage is set, I don't understand why they are fighting so hard to control where it goes."

Edmonton Sun: LOADED: 11.22.2012

644642 Los Angeles Kings

NHL rejection could lead union to decertify

By Helene Elliott

The NHL on Wednesday turned down a five-year labor agreement proposed by the NHL Players' Assn., moving to the brink of losing December games and its All-Star festivities. Commissioner Gary Bettman, who has canceled games through Nov. 30 as well as the Jan. 1 Winter Classic, said the league's daily losses of \$18 million to \$20 million will affect its bargaining strategy.

"Any expectation that the offer is going to get better as time goes on is unrealistic," Bettman told reporters in New York.

The rejection, announced after the sides met twice at the league's headquarters, might spur the NHLPA to begin the decertification process, according to several people with knowledge of the situation but not authorized to discuss it publicly.

Decertification of the union — a strategy employed by the NFL Players' Assn. when it was locked out by the NFL in 2011 — would mean the NHLPA would no longer be the players' bargaining agent. Individual players could invoke antitrust laws and ask a federal court to end the lockout or sue the league for unfair business practices that are otherwise protected by a union-league relationship.

Ten NFL players, led by New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady, sued their league last year. The case was settled when their labor dispute was resolved. The NFLPA had been reclassified as a trade union but was recertified to negotiate benefits in the new collective bargaining agreement.

The decertification option is rarely invoked because it's time-consuming and complex. An NHLPA spokesman declined to comment on the union's potential next steps.

Players on Wednesday presented what they called a "comprehensive" proposal, and it appeared the financial differences could be bridged. Donald Fehr, executive director of the NHLPA, calculated the gap at \$182 million over the course of a five-year deal.

The NHLPA proposed a \$393-million "make-whole" provision to compensate players for the money they will lose by going from 57% of hockey-related revenue to 50% annually. That broke down to getting \$182 million the first season, \$128 million in the second season, \$72 million in the third and \$11 million in the fourth. The provision would be phased out by the final season

However, the NHL did not move off its \$211-million "make-whole" offer and remained intent on securing a seven-year deal. The league also toughened a provision in its previous proposal and would delay eligibility for salary arbitration by a year. Bettman said the league had moved on "a number of things" but won't move any more.

"We're still far apart," he said.

Fehr said NHL negotiators' lack of interest indicated they "had a lot better things to do on the night before Thanksgiving than hear what we got." He added, "On the big things there was, as of today, no reciprocity in any meaningful sense."

NHL rules prohibit owners and team personnel from commenting on labor matters, but players expressed anger and frustration via social media. Montreal Canadiens forward Brandon Prust tweeted, "Gary Bettman's biography is in stores now. It's titled, 'How I destroyed a sport and a nation."

However, players' support might not be unanimous. According to a translation by Czech TV personality Roman Jedlicka, Washington Capitals defenseman Roman Hamrlik told the Czech publication Daily Sport that players "have to push Fehr to the wall to get a deal," and said that if the season is canceled, "he should leave and we will find someone new."

LA Times: LOADED: 11.22.2012

644643 Minnesota Wild

No, thanks: NHL lockout talks break off again with accusations & frustration after union offer

## **RONALD BLUM**

NEW YORK - Jaymes Hall had a question for NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman about the lockout, which already has wiped out more than a quarter of the regular season: Why not put aside the money in dispute and get back on the ice.

Hall tried to get in his question while Bettman was responding to media members outside the league's Manhattan office. When the commissioner was done, he turned his attention to the 41-year-old fan from Lancaster, Pa.

"When you're dealing with a union that really isn't trying to negotiate, make any deal that we can live with for the long-term health of this game, there isn't much else you can do," Bettman said while the audience came out of the Roundabout Theater next door following a Wednesday matinee.

"And we're hoping that with the passage of time, the players' association will come to realize that what we have proposed has been more than fair. And the fact that we're keeping this proposal on the table, when it was contingent on an 82-game season, should be evidence of our desire to get this done the right way."

NHL labor talks broke off soon after they resumed Wednesday, with players maintaining their new proposal was a huge economic concession and Bettman pretty much saying the only deal he will agree to is the one management proposed last month.

On the 67th day of the lockout, the sides headed home for Thanksgiving with no end in sight to the sport's fourth work stoppage. The union's negotiating committee planned to brief players and get back in touch with management on Friday.

Informed of Bettman's comments, union head Donald Fehr said, "my response is they seem to consider negotiating to be merely agreeing with them."

"We've identified what's important to players, but they seem to be so far at least unwilling to treat those concerns in a serious way," Fehr said in a telephone interview.

Players made what both sides called a comprehensive proposal. Fehr said the sides were \$182 million apart in a five-year deal, which comes to \$1.2 million annually for each of the 30 teams.

"On the big things there was as of today no reciprocity in any meaningful sense, no movement on the players' share, no movement on salary-arbitration eligibility, no movement on free agency eligibility, no agreement on a pension plan," Fehr said as he left the talks.

Management wants to increase eligibility for free agency to 28 years of age or eight seasons of NHL service, up from 27 years or seven seasons.

Management also proposed adding a year of service for salary arbitration eligibility, hiking it from 1-4 to 2-5 years of service, depending on the age a player signs, a person familiar with the bargaining said. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because that detail wasn't announced.

"There seems to be a lot of spinning and gamesmanship going on," Bettman said.

Winnipeg defenseman Ron Hainsey, among nine players at the bargaining session, said the union was "disappointed with the response."

"There was no meaningful move in our direction on anything that we would consider," he said.

Fehr nearly said players found the day's two bargaining sessions, which totaled 2 1/2 hours, to be a waste of time.

"A lot of the people that were there today, given the response we got, thought they had a lot better things to do on the night before Thanksgiving than hear what we got," he said.

The NHL on Oct. 16 proposed a 50-50 split of hockey-related revenue, down from the players' 57 percent portion of \$3.3 billion last season. With guaranteed contracts likely to push the players' share over the halfway mark at the start of the next deal, management wants that money to come

out of future years to bring the overall percentage down to an even split over the length of an agreement.

Players previously had proposed they receive a guaranteed amount of income each year.

"Gary said we were \$900 million or \$1 billion apart," Fehr said, referring to the gap over a five-year deal. "At the moment we are exactly \$182 million apart."

Fehr said players proposed they get \$393 million over the length of the deal, while the NHL is at \$211 million. Management wants a seven-year deal, which the union says is too long because less than half the current players will be active by the last season.

"To expect our best economic proposal to get better as the damage continues to increase isn't particularly realistic," Bettman said. "From an economic standpoint, we've given what we have to give. It was our best offer. And again, put it in the context that the business is probably losing between \$18 and \$20 million a day and the players are losing between \$8 and \$10 million a day."

This is the league's third lockout since 1994. The first settled on Jan. 11 and the last one led to Bettman announcing the cancellation of the 2004-05 season on Feb. 15.

The league has canceled 326 games through Nov. 30 plus the Jan. 1 Winter Classic between Toronto and Detroit at Ann Arbor, Mich. More cancellations are coming.

"That's something that we're going to have to look at on a daily basis," Bettman said. "I think that becomes inevitable as time goes on."

Star Tribune LOADED: 11.22.2012

644644 Minnesota Wild

Players reportedly to make presentation to NHL this morning

Michael Russo

Bargaining continues this morning at 9 a.m. CT in New York when the NHL Players' Association is expected to make some sort of proposal to the National Hockey League.

Deputy Commissioner Bill Daly has said he had no expectations, but the league made clear to the union on Monday night that it wanted to see a first full, formal proposal from the union. The league has made clear that any guaranteed, fixed share at this point would be unacceptable due to the damage that has occurred in the league due to the lockout.

We'll see where this goes. Obviously, because of the way this process has gone to this point, there's not a lot of optimism in the air. But, let's wait and see if the NHL is receptive and begins a give-and-take compromise.

In the meantime, at some point in the very near future, the NHL is expected to cancel games the first two weeks of December and the January All-Star Game in Columbus.

At some point, the NHL is going to have to float some sort of drop-dead date. Even Blackhawks defenseman Steve Montador, very involved in negotiations as a member of the NHLPA negotiating committee, told the Chicago Tribune yesterday that he didn't know if the union would be giving an actual proposal and that we're not close to the season being canceled.

Too many people believe that the drop dead date isn't until Feb. 16 because the 2004-05 season wasn't canceled until Feb. 16. I am led to believe this season will be in jeopardy a lot sooner, and as I diagramed last Friday, the math equation gets more difficult to solve every ticking day because of the impossible-to-calculate accurately lost revenue the NHL is enduring.

A deal needs to be made soon.

I will be keeping one eye on negotiations today, but I'm also covering Gophers availability early this afternoon. So, I'll be back later, but pay attention to my Twitter as well at russostrib.

Star Tribune LOADED: 11.22.2012

644645 Minnesota Wild

NHL lockout talks break off again with frustration

## By RONALD BLUM

NEW YORK—NHL labor talks broke off soon after they resumed Wednesday, with players maintaining their new proposal was a huge economic concession and Commissioner Gary Bettman pretty much saying the only deal he will agree to is the one management proposed last month.

On the 67th day of a lockout that already has wiped out more than a quarter of the regular season, the sides headed home for Thanksgiving with no end in sight to the sport's fourth work stoppage. The union's negotiating committee planned to brief players and get back in touch with management on Friday.

"When you're dealing with a union that really isn't trying to negotiate, make any deal that we can live with for the long-term health of this game, there isn't much else you can do," Bettman said outside the league's Manhattan office when questioned by a fan, 41-year-old Jaymes Hall of Lancaster, Pa. "And we're hoping that with the passage of time, the players' association will come to realize that what we have proposed has been more than fair. And the fact that we're keeping this proposal on the table, when it was contingent on an 82-game season, should be evidence of our desire to get this done the right way."

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Fehr nearly said players found the day's two bargaining sessions, which totaled 2 1/2 hours, to be a waste of time.

"A lot of the people that were there today, given the response we got, thought they had a lot better things to do on the night before Thanksgiving than hear what we got," he said.

The NHL on Oct. 16 proposed a 50-50 split of hockey-related revenue, down from the players' 57 percent portion of \$3.3 billion last season. With guaranteed contracts likely to push the players' share over the halfway mark at the start of the next deal, management wants that money to come out of future years to bring the overall percentage down to an even split over the length of an agreement.

Players previously had proposed they receive a guaranteed amount of income each year.

"Gary said we were \$900 million or a \$1 billion apart," Fehr said, referring to the gap over a five-year deal. "At the moment we are exactly \$182 million apart."

Fehr said players proposed they get \$393 million over the length of the deal, while the NHL is at \$211 million. Management wants a seven-year deal, which the union says is too long because less than half the current players will be active by the last season.

"To expect our best economic proposal to get better as the damage continues to increase isn't particularly realistic," Bettman said. "From an economic standpoint, we've given what we have to give. It was our best offer. And again, put it in the context that the business is probably losing between \$18 and \$20 million a day and the players are losing between \$8 and \$10 million a day."

This is the league's third lockout since 1994. The first settled on Jan. 11 and the last one led to Bettman announcing the cancellation of the 2004-05 season on Feb. 15.

The league has canceled 326 games through Nov. 30 plus the Jan. 1 Winter Classic between Toronto and Detroit at Ann Arbor, Mich. More cancellations are coming.

"That's something that we're going to have to look at on a daily basis," Bettman said. "I think that becomes inevitable as time goes on."

Pioneer Press LOADED: 11.22.2012

644646 Montreal Canadiens

Bettman: NHL, players 'still far apart'

## JAMES MIRTLE

Despite an in-depth new proposal from the players, NHL commissioner Gary Bettman said the two sides remain "far apart" in attempting to end the more than two-month-long lockout.

Bettman spoke briefly with reporters in New York on Wednesday after a day of meetings with the NHLPA in which the union proposed a revamped deal that dropped the financial gap to only \$182-million.

Donald Fehr, executive director of the NHL Players' Association, speaks to the media following talks after meeting with the NHL, Friday, Nov. 9, 2012, in New York.

"There was some movement in our direction and it was appreciated," Bettman said. "We're still far apart. But hopefully there's some momentum so we can bring this to a conclusion."

Two key issues remain between the sides.

One is the amount of money in a "make whole" proposal, with the owners offering \$211-million and the players countering with \$393-million.

The other is a series of contractual rights, where the players offered far less movement on Wednesday.

The two sides are expected to meet again later in the week.

Bettman said on Wednesday that the league is losing between \$18- and \$20-million a day during the lockout, missing revenue that makes coming to an agreement with players even more difficult.

The commissioner remarked that it was unrealistic for owners to have to pay a larger share of that lost revenue than the players.

"It's frustrating for everybody," he said of the negotiations.

Frustrations aren't just limited to the NHL and the union, however. At one point during the press conference, Bettman was interrupted by a heckling fan, who was later revealed to be Jaymes Hall from Lancaster, Pa.

After he finished speaking with reporters, Bettman had a conversation with Hall and thanked him for being a fan.

Attending the talks were San Jose center Adam Burish, free agent defenceman Chris Campoli, Detroit wing Dan Cleary, free agent wing Mathieu Darche, Winnipeg defenceman Ron Hainsey, St. Louis center

Andy McDonald, Edmonton centre Kevin Shattenkirk and Anaheim centre Dan Winnik.

Toronto Globe And Mail LOADED: 11.22.2012

644647 Montreal Canadiens

Fehr: NHL, players now just \$182-million apart

JAMES MIRTLE

The players made their push to save the NHL season on Wednesday morning in New York.

With a 68-game season starting on Dec. 1 still a possibility, the NHLPA proposed a five-year agreement that executive director Donald Fehr said is only \$182-million away from the NHL's last offer.

"It was comprehensive," Fehr told the reporters in attendance. "It's an effort, about as good as we can do, to try and see if there's an agreement that can be reached."

The NHLPA proposal by the numbers

An integral part of the players' proposal is \$393-million in "make whole" money over the five years, which is substantially more than the \$211-million the owners last had on the table but less than the \$592-million the NHLPA had previously asked for.

Included was a proposal by the union on eliminating heavily front-loaded contracts, the only element of the disputed contract rights the NHLPA opted to put in its offer.

"We've moved in their direction previously on a couple of the player contracting issues," Fehr said. "The rest are very, very important to the players."

Fehr also added that the players' proposal for the first time deals in percentages as opposed to a guaranteed share.

The two sides were locked in meetings discussing the offer throughout Wednesday afternoon.

"We're making a move in their direction so I don't see why they wouldn't consider it," Penguins star Sidney Crosby told the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette.

The meetings took place two days after the NHLPA provided an update to members of Canadian parliament in a letter to every MP.

The letter, seen below, was believed to be in response to a member of parliament threatening Canadian government intervention into the lockout and demanding an update on the situation on behalf of angry constituents:

Dear Member of Parliament:

As the lockout approaches the eleventh week, I wanted to provide you with a brief update of the status of bargaining between the NHLPA and the NHL.

On October 26, 2012, the league officially informed the NHLPA that they had withdrawn their latest proposal and had cancelled regular season games until the end of November. This move was deeply disappointing for all hockey fans and everyone who makes their living from hockey, including the players. Since that time, the NHL has also cancelled the Winter Classic.

In an attempt to move the discussions forward, we met with the NHL last week for a series of meetings in New York. Unfortunately, they continue to insist that they will not move off their "take-it-or-leave it" approach to bargaining. The players have proposed that their share of hockey-related revenue move towards the NHL's stated desire for a 50-50 split, with the only condition being that they honour contracts they have already signed. Honouring contracts signed between owners and players is a reasonable request.

We have repeatedly advised the owners that the players are prepared to sit down and negotiate on any day, with no pre-conditions.

To be clear, the lockout was a unilateral decision taken by the owners. It is the third lockout in eighteen years. Hockey has lost more games to work stoppages than the three other professional sports leagues combined, virtually all as the result of owners' lockouts.

Given that the NHL has just enjoyed seven straight seasons of record revenues, we believe the owners have no justification for their actions. The players have repeatedly offered to open the season and play without a new contract in place. Negotiations could have continued while games were played. It did not have to come to this.

The players understand the selfishness of the owners' lockout position all too well. Countless people – from league and team employees, to hockey fans, to small business owners and their workers – are suffering unnecessarily as a result.

While we recognize that we can't help everyone that has been affected by the owners' decision, we're committed to doing what we can, where we can.

As a start, we have reached out to a number of small business owners to offer assistance, even if it's only in a modest way. In addition, a number of our players have been working with minor hockey teams across Canada to provide coaching support. To date, there have been 88 player visits to 55 different practices. Players have also initiated and organized a number of charity hockey games in Chicago, Minnesota, Vancouver, and a number of games in Quebec. There are plans to play a game in Winnipeg as well.

I have taken the liberty of including a package of pictures and clippings of our recent activities that you might find of interest.

The players remain committed to negotiating until a deal is reached that is fair for both sides, and, more than anything, look forward to getting back on the ice.

Sincerely,

Alexandra Dagg

**Director of Operations** 

National Hockey League Players' Association

Toronto Globe And Mail LOADED: 11.22.2012

644648 Montreal Canadiens

Cole carves Hamrlik, not surprised by NHL's rejection

Dave Stubbs

To say that Habs forward Erik Cole is angry with Washington Capitals veteran Roman Hamrlik for the latter's boat-rocking comments Wednesday would be to greatly understate the truth. Cole, not the least bit surprised the NHL rejected the NHLPA's proposal earlier in the day, spoke candidly with The Gazette and HIO Wednesday evening.

• Author's note: This story has garnered a great deal of reaction from the moment it was posted and has been picked up by various media outlets in Canada and beyond. My take on what follows: Roman Hamrlik sees what might be his final NHL season slowly slipping down the drain and he's angry about that. Erik Cole is a fellow veteran who believes the lockout is bigger than any one player, the sacrifices made being for the good of the players still to come into the NHL. With careers generally short and a lot of money at stake, tempers during the lockout will be short and opinions will be widely divergent. That's what the story below illustrates to me.

Locked-out Canadiens forward Erik Cole is happy that he's not sitting in a suburban dressing room across from fellow NHL veteran Roman Hamrlik, a locked-out defenceman for the Washington Capitals.

It wouldn't be a pretty sight.

Hamrlik made headlines from the Czech Republic on Wednesday as the first obvious wedge in the NHLPA's battle with the NHL to produce a new collective bargaining agreement, the players having been thrown out of work since the league called the lockout on Sept. 15.

Hamrlik, the 38-year-old former Canadiens rearguard, gave an interview with Daily Sport in his native Czech Republic that more than rocked the NHLPA's boat Wednesday.

In it, Hamrlik called out NHLPA executive director Donald Fehr and, by extension, the NHLPA's negotiating committee as the lockout lumbered through Day 67.

"I am disgusted," Hamrlik is quoted in the interview, his comments translated by TV Nova Sport's Roman Hedlicka and devoured by the hockey world in a series of tweets on the social-media Twitter platform.

"We have to push Fehr to the wall to get the deal. Time is against us. We lost a quarter of the season, it is \$425 million. Who will give it back to us? Mr. Fehr? There should be voting between players. Four questions – yes or no – then count it. If half of players say let's play, then they should sign new CBA. If there is no season, he should leave and we will find someone new. Time is our enemy."

From his upstate New York home, where he and his family will spend U.S. Thanksgiving, Cole was fairly bursting to offer his view on the point of view of Hamrlik, who might be hearing a loud ticking of the final year of his Capitals contract.

"I am bent on this one, yeah," Cole, 34, said Wednesday evening, so angry that for the first minute or two of our conversation he spoke in phrases and half-sentences, stopping to reconstruct his thoughts.

"This (Hamrlik) is one guy out of 700-plus guys (in the NHLPA), this is the one guy who's actually tried to have conversations with some of the guys we've skated with (during the lockout) and they've all just been, 'Hammer, seriously, wake up.'

"For him to come out and say this, it's the most selfish thing I've heard during the lockout. Without a doubt. It's just disappointing. You'd think the veteran guys are the guys who'd take more pride in what other veteran guys sacrificed in the last lockout, how we all benefited from that as a group. Some guys never played again.

"That's ... I don't know, for me, and I'm not over 35 or anything, but being an older player, (expletive), I feel grateful to the guys who gave me the opportunity to earn what I've earned in this game. Out of that I feel a responsibility, not entitlement. Maybe that's just the difference between Hamrlik and me."

Cole wouldn't hear of Hamrlik's comments, as reported in English, being the product of dicey translation or remarks that were taken out of context.

"If he (says) that then I wouldn't believe him," he said of Hamrlik, "because of the things he's said previously to the guys who have been in the (barnstorming charity) Tournée des joueurs.

"Because of his conversations with Josh (Habs NHLPA rep Josh Gorges), some of the things he's said to him in private conversations and Josh has been just like, 'Is this guy serious?' We couldn't believe what his stance was on certain things.

"If he were sitting in a dressing room across from me tonight..." Cole said, the rest of that sentence off the record. "I'd be all over him on the ice. I'm pissed at him. If that's his opinion, then he should just stay over there (in the Czech Republic).

"As a veteran guy, especially him, he's been around awhile... other veteran players have sacrificed their careers for the last CBA, missed out on a year, 240 guys never played another game," Cole continued.

"For me, I don't look at this lockout and see what I'm not earning as the entitlement to, 'Let's get a deal done and let's get playing.' I see it as an opportunity to repay an opportunity that was given to me.

"That's what this is supposed to be about, that's what makes hockey players different. You sacrifice something for the people coming behind you. That's where the respect factor comes in. Whoever's kid is the best kid on your son's hockey team, you want that kid to have the same opportunity that you've had. That's what it's about. Hamrlik is unbelievable."

The Hamrlik story was only a subplot in a day that saw the NHL reject an NHLPA proposal that the players believed would seriously prepare the foundation of a new CBA.

Its rejection hardly surprised Cole, the Canadiens' alternate player rep who was on a conference call Tuesday night in advance of the proposal's presentation in New York, and another call after the league turned it down.

"It was basically another dismissal but (the NHL was) smart enough not to do it within 10 minutes," Cole said, referring to the league's rejection of three NHLPA proposals in Toronto a few weeks ago.

"They made it seem (Wednesday) as though they were contemplating so we'd not go to the fans and say, 'They took 10 minutes again and then shunned our proposal.' But they basically (rejected it) across the board. It

clearly showed how close we are to having a deal done and they continue to view it in another light.

"And on top of that, on a lot of the stuff they were hinting at once this gets settled, that we'll talk about player contract and rights, we'll have some wiggle room, well, that's not necessarily the case. So we're stuck here again."

There was talk during the day that a decertification of the NHLPA as a union would expedite a settlement. Cole dismissed that.

"That's not something that we're taking about," he said. "People think it's out there so it's the next step but I don't think so. We all have confidence in what Don is doing and how he's handling our negotiation. There's only so much this guy can do to put an end to this thing.

"I've said for awhile now the league have this thing well calculated, they know what they're doing. Unfortunately for everyone else involved, it's just a matter of time for us to sit here and wait and see when they finally decide that we're allowed to play again."

Cole isn't on Twitter, but says a group of Canadiens have their own corner of cyberspace "that's a little bit better than Twitter," a lockout thread on which a player can text message another, the message available to all.

So while new Canadien Brandon Prust caused a stir with this tweet late Wednesday afternoon – "Gary bettman's autobiography is in stores now. It's titled 'how I destroyed a sport and a nation' " – Cole read it on the players' private thread, as he's read about some of the other heated comments tweeted in recent days by a number of locked-out NHL players.

"Yeah, guys are legitimately mad," he said.

Is this season toast? he was asked.

"Before today, we were saying, 'There's no way (owners) won't take this deal,' and we were thinking we couldn't believe we can be starting up soon. But now guys are like, 'That's it, the season's a write-off, these (owners) don't want to play hockey this year.'

"Fast-forward about another month. If we're sitting here just after New Year's and it's pretty much the same (in negotiations), I'd say it's toast."

Cole said he's aware that some have been offended by the hat he had made up that reads "Puck Bettman/2012-13/NHL Lockout" and has been worn by a number of players in recent days. He's had a conversation with the NHLPA about the hat, which he had privately produced for use by players.

"I wouldn't call it heat," he said of his communication with union brass. "I did receive a (PA) text, yeah, saying, 'It's probably not a good idea.' I got a text saying we need to refrain from making personal attacks. I said that, technically, it's not a personal attack, but rather voicing a small gesture of our displeasure. My thing back to the PA was, 'Why can't people see the humour in some things? This was more to lighten the mood of the guys.'"

That said, Cole said he won't wear the hat in interview situations to avoid the perception that it's NHLPA-approved.

"But I'm not going to stop wearing it," he said, chuckling, "because it's a pretty comfy hat, to be quite honest with you. I don't see where it's all that harmful to anything, quite frankly.

"Some of the messages I receive from people say it's a legitimate thing and we probably could sell them to raise a lot of money for charity. That's a possibility and I'll look into it, that's for sure."

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NHLPA's latest offer still not good enough for Bettman

Stu Cowan

NHLPA executive director Donald Fehr said the new six-page proposal he made to the league on Wednesday morning in New York was "about as good" as the players could do in an attempt to end the lockout.

It wasn't good enough for NHL commissioner Gary Bettman.

"There was some movement in our direction and it was appreciated," Bettman told reporters in New York Wednesday afternoon. "We're still far apart. But hopefully there's some momentum so we can bring this to a conclusion."

The Canadian Press reported that the union proposed a 50-50 split of revenues during the five-year deal along with \$393 million in deferred make whole payments throughout the agreement. Two weeks ago, the league offered \$211 million and a 50-50 split.

You can read more by clicking here.

To read the NHLPA memo outlining the latest proposal, .

The Canadiens' Brandon Prust tweeted after Bettman rejected the proposal: "Gary bettman's autobiography is in stores now. It's titled 'how I destroyed a sport and a nation'"

You can read more player tweets by clicking here.

To read about a tweet comparing Bettman to an annoying manager at a McDonald's restaurant, .

Former Hab Roman Hamrlik expressed his frustration in an interview with Czech-publication Daily Sport:

"I am disgusted," Hamrlik was translated as saying. "We have to push Fehr to the wall to get the deal. Time is against us. We lost 1/4 season, it is \$425 million. Who will give it back to us? Mr. Fehr?

"There should be voting between players. Four questions – YES or NO – then count it. If half of players say let's play, then they should sign new CBA. If there is no season he should leave and we will find someone new. Time is our enemy."

Read more on Hamrlik by clicking here.

"(The players) are suffering right along with the fans," Fehr told reporters in New York. "We made an enormous move in the owners direction to try and end it — at least as of today that hasn't been successful."

You can Watch video of Fehr and Bettman addressing the media in New York by clicking here.

No further meetings have been scheduled and Thursday marks the beginning of the long U.S. Thanksgiving weekend.

Below is video of a recent interview Wayne Gretzky did with NBC about the lockout:

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644650 Montreal Canadiens

1992-93 Habs season flashback: Injury bug hits Brunet again in loss to Senators

Stu Cowan

As we wait and hope for an end to the NHL lockout, Canadiens fans can relive the 1992-93 season – the last year the Habs won the Stanley Cup – at HIO as we post game stories from that season.

The Habs took a 14-5-2 record into a game against the Ottawa Senators at the Forum on Nov. 21, 1992. Here is Red Fisher's story from that game.

Habs lose two players; Brunet, Savard both on sidelines

Benoit Brunet and Denis Savard have renewed their membership in Team Clinic – Brunet for at least 10 days, Savard for perhaps as long as a week.

Left winger Brunet, a hard-luck guy who's lost a considerable amount of time to injuries in his last three seasons, has a sprained knee. That's the good news. The bad news is that there's no certainty his injury is confined to his knee ligament.

"I don't think it's the case," said Dr. Eric Lenczner yesterday, "but I'll be giving him a test in the next day or two to see whether or not there's damage to his cartilage, as well as to the ligament. We'll take a look at it to make certain. I'd be surprised, though, if his cartilage were damaged. Right now, it doesn't look that way to me."

"We're saying he's out for eight to 10 days," said Dr. Lenczner. "If it's only his ligament that's damaged, he won't be out any longer that."

Brunet suffered his injury when he fell into the boards in the third period of Saturday's 3-1 victory over the Ottawa Senators – the third consecutive season he's been sidelined with injuries. Two seasons ago, he ripped up his knee during the Canadiens' exhibition tour in Russia, which is why he played only 17 games at the major- league level. Last season, another injury allowed him to play in only 18 games with the Canadiens.

Savard isn't playing tonight against the Washington Capitals and, probably, in Hartford on Wednesday, because he's taking antibiotics for a severe cold. He took himself out of the lineup at the start of the third period on Saturday.

He could miss the entire week – and more if his antibiotics don't get the required results quickly.

The absence of Brunet and Savard leaves room for Patrik Carnback and Patric Kjellberg to play tonight against the Washington Capitals. Both were recalled yesterday from Fredericton, where left- winger Carnback led his team in scoring. He scored seven goals and 17 assists in 24 games.

Kjellberg has played in only eight games, which is why his record is a modest 4-2-6.

Apparently, Carnback has been on fire with the American Hockey League team. He had spent the entire training camp with the Canadiens, but was delivered to Fredericton as soon as the regular seaon started. He's a sixfooter, and weighs 187 pounds. In other words, he's big enough to get involved in the traffic.

The Canadiens had an uncommon amount of trouble with the Senators on Saturday. They were outshot in each period and, in the final analysis, backup goaltender Andre Racicot was the difference.

The reason? Canadiens players, who didn't practice yesterday, pointed to a heavy schedule which had them playing five games in eight days. The reality, though, is that the Senators were on top of the Canadiens most of the game. The Senators dumped the puck into the offensive zone all night, and for one reason or another, the Canadiens' only reaction was to dump it out. In other words, no flow.

"There was a lot of hooking and holding in the game," said Bellows yesterday. "We just couldn't really seem to shake loose."

Canadiens coach Jacques Demers hopes to resolve the problem tonight with line changes made necessary by the unavailability of Brunet and Savard.

Vincent Damphousse, who scored the Canadiens' third goal on Saturday, replaces Brunet on a line with Stephan Lebeau and Mike Keane. That means John LeClair will be on a line with Bellows and Kirk Muller.

They meet a team which has been struggling since the start of the season, but Washington turned it around yesterday with a 6-4 victory over the redhot Quebec Nordiques.

The Capitals had gone into Quebec with four consecutive losses, 15 points behind their pace of last season.

One from the clinic

Brunet: "I've had injuries in each of the last three seasons with this team, and each time I've worn the same suit."

Reporter: "So?"

Brunet: "When I got home on Saturday, I burned the suit."

Reporter: "Here's 20 bucks. Buy a new one."

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644651 Nashville Predators

NHL players make new offer

Ronald Blum

NEW YORK — Negotiations aimed at ending the NHL lockout have broken up for the day.

Union head Donald Fehr said Wednesday's talks produced "no movement" on the major issues.

Earlier, players gave management a new proposal that the union said left sides less than \$40 million apart annually over a five-year contract.

No date for the next bargaining session was set.

After a day away from bargaining for internal discussions, union officials and nine players were at the NHL office for an hour. There was little optimism as they took a 90-minute break. The two sides resumed discussions in the afternoon and adjourned after about an hour.

On the 67th day of a lockout that already has led to the cancellation of more than a quarter of the regular season, Fehr said players made a percentage-based proposal and said it reflected the economic impact of the work stoppage.

"We have moved far more than halfway," Fehr said. "It is about as good as we can do."

Players had proposed they receive a guaranteed amount each year.

"(NHL Commissioner) Gary (Bettman) said we were \$900 million or \$1 billion apart," Fehr said, referring to the gap over a five-year deal. "At the moment we are exactly \$182 million apart."

Tennessean LOADED: 11.22.2012 644652 Nashville Predators

As NHL lockout continues, more eyes turning to AHL

John Kekis

SYRACUSE, N.Y. — Bare-chested and dripping with sweat after a brief morning skate, Syracuse Crunch left winger Cory Conacher stood at the edge of the rink and tested the feel of a new hockey stick.

"Are there illegal curves in this league," Conacher asked Friday with a devilish smile before retreating to the dressing room.

Indeed, the NHL lockout was an afterthought, at best, at that moment for Conacher, who is busy carving out a career in the American Hockey League. A player, just 22 years old, who fits those classic sports clichés right now — upside, potential, you name it — Conacher, like so many others in the league that they call the "A," has no time to be concerned with the league that's not playing hockey these days.

All that matters, is he's playing somewhere.

And he's making the most of it.

"Everyone thinks about it, but right now there's no NHL and I don't even really worry about it," said Conacher, who had 39 goals and 80 points to earn AHL rookie of the year honors last season. "I'm not a guy that does research. I don't know what the talks are like. There will be stuff on Twitter every once in a while, but I'm more worried about playing here and continuing to develop.

"It's only my second year of professional, so it's important for me to continue to grow and stay consistent."

That's good news for the home team and the entire AHL. Fans and the media are showing great interest in Conacher and Co., as the lockout rages on.

So far, all NHL games through Nov. 30-327 and the New Year's Day outdoor Winter Classic — have been canceled, and more cancellations are likely if a deal isn't reached soon. The All-Star Game, in Columbus, Ohio, could be next off the list, as talks continue to produce little.

Though everybody would like to see the impasse end sooner than later, the atmosphere in the AHL has never been better.

At midweek, overall attendance in the 30-team AHL stood at 970,416 after 184 games, an average of 5,274 per game. Five clubs were averaging more than 7,000 and another 10 were over 5,000 nightly. Hershey led with

an average attendance of 8,684 in six home games, while Syracuse had attracted 5,440 per game for the first four home dates, ahead of 2011-12.

"We're way ahead in everything — tickets, sponsorship," said Crunch owner Howard Dolgon, who switched NHL affiliations from Anaheim to Tampa Bay prior to the season. "I don't think that's all related to the lockout. I think, for us, a part of that is the excitement over the change in affiliations and the quality of the teams."

Tennessean LOADED: 11.22.2012

644653 Nashville Predators

Nashville Predators decline to participate in labor talks

Josh Cooper

The NHL Players' Association says any of its members can take part in negotiation sessions with the NHL.

But since the lockout began on Sept. 15, no Predators have attended.

"Guys have families and kids and those types of things," Predators forward and union representative David Legwand said. "It's different for us to be home right now and spending time with them, but any player who wants to go is more than welcome to go, and (executive director Don Fehr) has expressed that throughout the whole process. He even told us that a year or two ago. He likes having players there and players putting in their input and speaking their minds."

Family is obviously a factor for some of the older players, such as Legwand, who has two young children. Others said they don't want to lose several days of training.

"I think some guys enjoy it," Predators forward Mike Fisher said. "I'd rather sit here and train and do other things than sit there with guys across the table. We know there are adequate guys to do the job, and some guys enjoy that, some guys don't. I don't really enjoy that, and I'll leave it at that."

None of the Predators' owners have attended the bargaining sessions either.

Bettman rhetoric: Several NHL players have resorted to scathing insults for Commissioner Gary Bettman.

Red Wings defenseman Ian White called Bettman an "idiot" and Panthers forward Kris Versteeg referred to Bettman and deputy commissioner Bill Daly as "cancers."

Some players have frowned on the use of such harsh words.

"The name calling and whatever stuff going back and forth is kind of childish," Predators enforcer Brian McGrattan said. "Everybody is grown men, they're all professionals."

Erat staying: Predators forward Martin Erat has waffled on whether he will go to Europe to play there for the duration of the lockout.

On Tuesday, he intimated he'd like to stick around Nashville until the lockout ends.

Erat has a newborn son. He's also had back issues in recent years.

"I'm not hurrying somewhere to just go there and play for a couple of weeks or a month and come back to play a regular season," Erat said. "I think I'm old enough to know it's a good thing to rest my body more and be ready when the season starts."

Tennessean LOADED: 11.22.2012

644654 Nashville Predators

NHL lockout talks break off again with frustration

Ronald Blum

NEW YORK (AP) — NHL labor talks broke off soon after they resumed Wednesday, with players maintaining their new proposal was a huge economic concession and Commissioner Gary Bettman pretty much saying the only deal he will agree to is the one management proposed last month.

On the 67th day of a lockout that already has wiped out more than a quarter of the regular season, the sides headed home for Thanksgiving with no end in sight to the sport's fourth work stoppage. The union's negotiating committee planned to brief players and get back in touch with management on Friday.

"We're dealing with a union that really isn't trying to negotiate, make any deal that we can live with for the long-term health of this game," Bettman said outside the league's Manhattan office when questioned by a fan, 41-year-old Jaymes Hall of Lancaster, Pa. "We're hoping that with the passage of time, the players' association will come to realize that what we have proposed has been more than fair. And the fact that we're keeping this proposal on the table, when it was contingent on an 82-game season, should be evidence of our desire to get this done the right way."

Informed of Bettman's comments, union head Donald Fehr said "my response is they seem to consider negotiating to be merely agreeing with them"

"We've identified what's important to players, but they seem to be so far at least unwilling to treat those concerns in a serious way," Fehr said in a telephone interview.

Players made what both sides called a comprehensive proposal. Fehr said the sides were \$182 million apart in a five-year deal, which comes to \$1.2 million annually for each of the 30 teams.

"On the big things there was as of today no reciprocity in any meaningful sense, no movement on the players' share, no movement on salary-arbitration eligibility, no movement on free agency eligibility, no agreement on a pension plan," Fehr said as he left the talks.

Management wants to increase eligibility for free agency to 28 years of age or eight seasons of NHL service, up from 27 or 7.

Management also proposed Wednesday adding a year of service for salary arbitration eligibility, hiking it from 1-4 to 2-5 years of service, depending on the age a player signs, a person familiar with the bargaining said. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because that detail wasn't announced.

"There seems to be a lot of spinning and gamesmanship going on," Bettman said.

Winnipeg defenseman Ron Hainsey, among nine players at the bargaining, said the union was "disappointed with the response."

"There was no meaningful move in our direction on anything that we would consider," he said.

Fehr nearly said players found the day's two bargaining sessions, which totaled  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hours, to be a waste of time.

"A lot of the people that were there today, given the response we got, thought they had a lot better things to do on the night before Thanksgiving than hear what we got," he said.

The NHL on Oct. 16 proposed a 50-50 split of hockey-related revenue, down from the players' 57 percent portion of \$3.3 billion last season. With guaranteed contracts likely to push the players' share over the halfway mark at the start of the next deal, management wants that money to come out of future years to bring the overall percentage down to an even split over the length of an agreement.

Players previously had proposed they receive a guaranteed amount of income each year.

"Gary said we were \$900 million or a \$1 billion apart," Fehr said, referring to the gap over a five-year deal. "At the moment we are exactly \$182 million apart."

Fehr said players proposed they get \$393 million over the length of the deal, while the NHL is at \$211 million. Management wants a seven-year deal, which the union says is too long because less than half the current players will be active by the last season.

"To expect our best economic proposal to get better as the damage continues to increase isn't particularly realistic," Bettman said. "From an economic standpoint, we've given what we have to give. It was our best

offer. And again, put it in the context that the business is probably losing between \$18 and \$20 million a day and the players are losing between \$8 and \$10 million a day."

This is the league's third lockout since 1994. The first settled on Jan. 11 and the last one led to Bettman announcing the cancellation of the 2004-05 season on Feb. 15.

The league has canceled 326 games through Nov. 30 plus the Jan. 1 Winter Classic between Toronto and Detroit at Ann Arbor, Mich. More cancellations are coming.

"That's something that we're going to have to look at on a daily basis," Bettman said. "I think that becomes inevitable as time goes on."

Tennessean LOADED: 11.22.2012 644655 Nashville Predators

After new offer from players, NHL says sides 'far apart'

Ronald Blum

NEW YORK (AP) — NHL talks quickly broke off again Wednesday after the players made a new proposal they said left sides separated by less than \$40 million annually over a five-year contract and Commissioner Gary Bettman immediately rejected the plan, saying "we're still far apart."

On the 67th day of a lockout that already has led to the cancellation of more than a quarter of the regular season, the sides didn't set a date to get back together.

"On the big things there was as of today no reciprocity in any meaningful sense, no movement on the players' share, no movement on salary-arbitration eligibility, no movement on free agency eligibility, no agreement on a pension plan," union head Donald Fehr said.

Union officials and nine players went to the NHL office in the morning and spent about an hour making the proposal. After a 90-minute break, the sides met again for two hours, said there was nothing more to talk about for now and headed off for the Thanksgiving holiday.

"I think it's frustrating for everybody and disappointing for everybody that's it's taken this long and we're still far apart," said Bettman, in his third lockout as commissioner.

Fehr said players made a percentage-based proposal and said it reflected the economic impact the work stoppage had caused to the NHL, which had \$3.3 billion in hockey-related revenue last season.

"We have moved far more than halfway," Fehr said. "It is about as good as we can do."

Bettman on Oct. 16 proposed a 50-50 split of hockey-related revenue. With guaranteed contracts likely to push the players' share over the halfway mark originally, management wants that money to come out of future years to bring the overall percentage down to an even split over the length of an agreement.

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The league has canceled 326 games through Nov. 30 plus the Jan. 1 Winter Classic between Toronto and Detroit at Ann Arbor, Mich.

This is the league's fourth work stoppage in 21 years and third lockout since 1994. The previous lockout led to the cancellation of the 1994-95 season.

Attending the talks were San Jose center Adam Burish, free agent defenseman Chris Campoli, Detroit wing Dan Cleary, free agent wing Mathieu Darche, Winnipeg defenseman Ron Hainsey, St. Louis center Andy McDonald, Edmonton center Kevin Shattenkirk and Anaheim center Dan Winnik.

Tennessean LOADED: 11.22.2012

644656 Nashville Predators

NHL players offer new plan on 67th day of lockout

Ronald Blum

NEW YORK (AP) — NHL players gave management a new proposal Wednesday that the union said left sides less than \$40 million apart annually over a five-year contract.

After a day away from bargaining for internal discussions, union officials and nine players were at the NHL office for an hour. There was little optimism as they took a 90-minute break. The two sides resumed discussions early Wednesday afternoon.

"We did give them the proposal," union head Donald Fehr said. "They indicated they're going to have a response to us a little later on."

On the 67th day of a lockout that already has led to the cancelation of more than a quarter of the regular season, Fehr said players made a percentage-based proposal and said it reflected the economic impact the work stoppage had caused.

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NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman on Oct. 16 proposed a 50-50 split of hockey-related revenue. With guaranteed contracts likely to push the players' share over the halfway mark originally, management wants that money to come out of future years to bring the overall percentage down to an even split over the length of an agreement.

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Tennessean LOADED: 11.22.2012

644657 Nashville Predators

NHL labor talks resume

# **Associated Press**

NEW YORK (AP) — NHL owners and union officials are negotiating again at league headquarters Wednesday, the 67th day of the lockout.

The two sides are trying to work out impasses on core issues such as splitting revenue and player contracts. On Tuesday, union leaders met for internal discussions.

About a dozen players arrived at the league's headquarters Wednesday morning, along with lawyers and union executives.

If a deal is not struck soon, more games will have to be canceled in an already shortened season. The lockout has wiped out 327 games so far. The next games still scheduled are in December.

Tennessean LOADED: 11.22.2012

644658 New Jersey Devils

No, Thanks: NHL Lockout Talks Break Off Again

# By THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK (AP) — Jaymes Hall had a question for NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman about the lockout, which already has wiped out more than a quarter of the regular season: Why not put aside the money in dispute and get back on the ice.

Hall tried to get in his question while Bettman was responding to media members outside the league's Manhattan office. When the commissioner was done, he turned his attention to the 41-year-old fan from Lancaster, Pa.

"When you're dealing with a union that really isn't trying to negotiate, make any deal that we can live with for the long-term health of this game, there isn't much else you can do," Bettman said while the audience came out of the Roundabout Theater next door following a Wednesday matinee.

"And we're hoping that with the passage of time, the players' association will come to realize that what we have proposed has been more than fair. And the fact that we're keeping this proposal on the table, when it was contingent on an 82-game season, should be evidence of our desire to get this done the right way."

NHL labor talks broke off soon after they resumed Wednesday, with players maintaining their new proposal was a huge economic concession and Bettman pretty much saying the only deal he will agree to is the one management proposed last month.

On the 67th day of the lockout, the sides headed home for Thanksgiving with no end in sight to the sport's fourth work stoppage. The union's negotiating committee planned to brief players and get back in touch with management on Friday.

Informed of Bettman's comments, union head Donald Fehr said, "my response is they seem to consider negotiating to be merely agreeing with them."

"We've identified what's important to players, but they seem to be so far at least unwilling to treat those concerns in a serious way," Fehr said in a telephone interview.

Players made what both sides called a comprehensive proposal. Fehr said the sides were \$182 million apart in a five-year deal, which comes to \$1.2 million annually for each of the 30 teams.

"On the big things there was as of today no reciprocity in any meaningful sense, no movement on the players' share, no movement on salary-arbitration eligibility, no movement on free agency eligibility, no agreement on a pension plan," Fehr said as he left the talks.

Management wants to increase eligibility for free agency to 28 years of age or eight seasons of NHL service, up from 27 years or seven seasons.

Management also proposed adding a year of service for salary arbitration eligibility, hiking it from 1-4 to 2-5 years of service, depending on the age a player signs, a person familiar with the bargaining said. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because that detail wasn't announced.

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"To expect our best economic proposal to get better as the damage continues to increase isn't particularly realistic," Bettman said. "From an economic standpoint, we've given what we have to give. It was our best offer. And again, put it in the context that the business is probably losing between \$18 and \$20 million a day and the players are losing between \$8 and \$10 million a day."

This is the league's third lockout since 1994. The first settled on Jan. 11 and the last one led to Bettman announcing the cancellation of the 2004-05 season on Feb. 15.

The league has canceled 326 games through Nov. 30 plus the Jan. 1 Winter Classic between Toronto and Detroit at Ann Arbor, Mich. More cancellations are coming.

"That's something that we're going to have to look at on a daily basis," Bettman said. "I think that becomes inevitable as time goes on."

New York Times LOADED: 11.22.2012

644659 New Jersey Devils

Players Offer League a New Proposal in Labor Talks

By REUTERS

(Reuters) - The National Hockey League (NHL) was given a new economic proposal by the players' association on Wednesday, though there still appeared little hope of a breakthrough to end their bitter, two-month-old labor dispute.

The union presented its latest offer while the two sides met for an hour at the league's offices in New York and were expected to get a response when negotiations resumed on Wednesday afternoon after a 90-minute break.

"At the moment we are exactly \$182 million apart," NHLPA Executive Director Donald Fehr told reporters about the gap between the parties over a five-year deal.

"We've moved far more than halfway and our expectation is the NHL's going to be willing to meet us if they want to reach an agreement."

Fehr, representing players who have been locked out by the owners since September 15, said the NHLPA's new proposal had been based on dividing hockey-related revenue on a percentage base.

Wednesday's talks took place just two days after the two sides had met at the same venue with no progress being made in the bid to broker a new collective bargaining agreement that would salvage the season.

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

The work stoppage is the fourth in 20 years for the NHL, the most recent 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.

New York Times LOADED: 11.22.2012

644660 New Jersey Devils

N.H.L. Rejects Union Offer

By JEFF Z. KLEIN

The N.H.L. on Wednesday rejected the latest players union proposal despite significant concessions from the union 67 days into the lockout.

Slap Shot

If it happens on ice and it involves hitting and scoring, The Times's Slap Shot blog is on it.

"We're still far apart, but hopefully there's some momentum so we can bring this to a conclusion," Commissioner Gary Bettman said. "There was some movement in our direction, and it was appreciated."

Donald Fehr, the union's executive director, said the league responded to the offer with "nothing on significant economic issues" and "no reciprocity" in the talks at the N.H.L. office in Manhattan.

"The players have done an awful lot here," Fehr said. "Still, it doesn't appear to be enough."

Winnipeg defenseman Ron Hainsey, who has been present at nearly every negotiating session, described the league as being less categorical in its rejection of the union's proposal than it has been in past sessions, particularly on Oct. 18, when Bettman took 15 minutes to turn down three union offers.

"I would not say it was a blanket no," Hainsey said. "They responded to our proposal, but there was no meaningful move in our direction in anything that we would consider a major issue."

No further talks were scheduled, but Bettman said he hoped to hear from the union on Friday.

With no deal imminent, the first half of the December schedule is expected to be canceled as early as Friday. Thus far, the league has canceled 327 games

The next cancellation is also expected to include the Jan. 27 All-Star Game, scheduled for Jan. 27 in Columbus, Ohio. The financially ailing Blue Jackets had been counting on the All-Star weekend to fill their coffers, but those hopes may soon be dashed.

The union offered to accept 50 percent of revenue in the first year of a new deal rather than a guaranteed amount. It was the first time the union agreed to take a percentage of revenue.

The union also agreed to a league demand to curb front-loaded contracts.

Fehr characterized the union offer as leaving the sides just \$182 million apart over five years. But the league rejected that notion, as it has previous union assertions that the two sides were close.

"Today isn't the first time the union has come out of a session and talked about how wonderful their offer is or how close we were, when in fact the reality was they were misleading you," Bettman said.

He also criticized the union for using "spin," "gamesmanship" and "stalling" during the negotiations.

Bettman estimated the lockout was costing the league and its players \$18 million to \$20 million a day in lost revenue.

"We made what was our best offer in order to save an 82-game season," Bettman said, referring to a league proposal earlier this month. "That offer was summarily rejected. But to expect our best economic proposal as damage continues to increase isn't particularly realistic.

"We've given what we have to give," Bettman added. "It was our best offer."

New York Times LOADED: 11.22.2012

644661 New Jersey Devils

NHL lockout update: Gary Bettman says NHL, NHLPA 'still far apart' after today's meeting

Charles Curtis

With a day to go before Thanksgiving, there would appear not to be a lot to be thankful for in the current lockout discussions.

But there's this turkey leg to chew on: "Hopefully there's some momentum so we can bring this to a conclusion. There was some movement in our direction and it was appreciated," said commissioner Gary Bettman. via CBSSports.com's Brian Stubits.

After the NHL asked the NHLPA to make a formal proposal, the union complied this morning. ESPN's Pierre LeBrun obtained the letter that contained the offer, with a good summary from The Star-Ledger's Rich Chere. It included an ease into a 50/50 split of hockey related revenue, "unlimited recalls" after the regular season, a cap hit to teams on contracts in the minor leagues over \$1 million and "elimination of walk-away from arbitrator's decision" in salary arbitration.

After the meeting ended, Donald Fehr said there was "no reciprocity in any meaningful sense" on the bigger issues, according to NHL.com's Dan Rosen.

Bettman, meanwhile, brought up the owners' offer when he spoke to the media.

"Quite frankly we have proposed a long-term agreement that we think is fair and balanced. Assuming we can dig our collective way out of the hole that we're digging ourselves into we expect that the players would make under the seven year term that we proposed between \$12 and \$14 billion. We're having a tough time understanding why what we have proposed and what we have proposed previously hasn't been accepted," he said, via Stubits.

So, now what? Darren Dreger of TSN has the details: The NHLPA reportedly has a conference call, the two sides could talk on Friday. ... and "expect All Star festivities in Columbus to be cancelled on Friday."

Star Ledger LOADED: 11.22.2012 644662 New Jersey Devils

NHL lockout: No new CBA for Thanksgiving

Rich Chere

There will be no end to the NHL lockout before Thanksgiving.

In what commissioner Gary Bettman begrudgingly called minor progress, the NHL Players' Association made a proposal to the league today for a five-year collective bargaining agreement that would be based on a percentage of hockey-related revenues rather than a fixed number.

The Players' Association plan would be a 50/50 revenue split immediately, but it asks for \$393 million over four years. The owners have offered \$211 in their proposal on Nov. 8.

After reviewing the proposal today for about two hours, the NHL rejected the plan.

No future meetings are scheduled at this point.

"We're still far apart," Bettman told reporters in New York, "but hopefully there is some momentum so we can bring this to a conclusion. There was some movement in our direction and it was appreciated."

Bettman said the NHL is losing \$18-20 million per day. He estimated the players are losing between \$8-10 million each day.

After presenting the owners with the players' proposal, NHLPA executive director Don Fehr said: "We have moved far more than halfway. It's about as good as we can do."

The players have now offered to accept the NHL's proposed 50/50 revenue split beginning in the first year. But they proposed a 'make whole' provision that guarantees \$393 million. That was a deal-breaker for the league.

The league's rejection left several players angry.

Rangers defenseman Michael Del Zotto tweeted: "Apologies to all the loyal, passionate fans out there. We clearly do not have a willing negotiating partner."

Forward Mike Rupp tweeted: " 'M-I-C-K-E-Y M-O-U-S-E' -- The 3 Other Sports"

Fehr said the union insisted on guaranteeing the players' share will not drop at any point of the CBA because of the numerous concessions made. He said the players moved much closer to what the owners are asking.

"The players have done everything they could to get the game back on the ice," he said.

Fehr made the entire proposal available to the media and issued this statement:

"Here are a few significant details from our proposal:

Players' Share: A major move in the owners' direction by removing guarantees or fixed targets for Players' share.

Honoring Players' Contracts/Transition payments: Players' Share will equal 50 percent of HRR plus fixed payments in the first four years to partially honor player contracts and ease the transition to 50/50:

- 2012-13 \$182M
- · 2013-14 \$128M
- 2014-15 \$72M
- 2015-16 \$11M
- Total \$393M
- \*The owners had previously proposed \$211M

Long-term back-diving contracts: Cap benefit recapture rule so clubs no longer benefit from front-loading contracts (move in the owners' direction)

Contracts in the minors: Clubs take a cap hit on contracts in the minors over \$1M (move in the owners' direction)

Four Recall Rule: Unlimited recalls after regular season (move in the owners' direction)

Salary Arbitration: Elimination of walk-away from arbitrator's decision, but clubs can still "walk-away" by not qualifying a player."

So what happens now?

"Our task is to go back and report to the players," Fehr said to reporters. " One of you is going to ask me what happens next and the answer is I don't know."

The previous CBA expired Sept. 15. All games through the end of November have been canceled and more cancellations are imminent unless a deal comes together before the weekend. The Jan. 1 Winter Classic has also been scrapped.

Star Ledger LOADED: 11.22.2012 644663 New Jersey Devils

NHL lockout: Players make proposal for five-year CBA

Rich Chere

The NHL Players' Association stepped up today and made a proposal to the league for a five-year collective bargaining agreement that would be based on a percentage of hockey-related revenues rather than a fixed number.

The Players' Association plan would be a 50/50 revenue split immediately, but it asks for \$393 million over four years. The owners have offered \$211 in their proposal on Nov. 8.

Representatives from the league have been discussing the proposal, which NHLPA executive director Don Fehr called "about as good as we can do," and are likely to respond early this afternoon.

Fehr said the offer takes the lockout into consideration.

"We've moved far more than halfway," he said.

Here is the NHLPA's proposal, according to Fehr and reported by TSN's Bob McKenzie in Canada:

In honoring players' contracts/transition payments, players' share will equal 50 percent of HRR plus fixed payments in the first four years to partially honor player contracts and ease the transition to 50/50:

2012-13 - \$182M

2013-14 - \$128M

2014-15 - \$72M

2015-16 - \$11M

Total \$393M

Long-term back-diving contracts: Cap benefit recapture rule so clubs no longer benefit from front-loading contracts.

Contracts in the minors: Clubs take a cap hit on contracts in the minors over \$1M.

Four Recall Rule: Unlimited recalls after regular season (move in the owners' direction).

Salary Arbitration: Elimination of walk-away from arbitrator's decision, but clubs can still "walk-away" by not qualifying a player.

In any case, it is almost certain that there is more work to be done on various issues before a new CBA can be put in place. Even the length of the new CBA may not be acceptable.

To date, games have been canceled through November, with further cancellations imminent if an agreement is not reached this week.

Star Ledger LOADED: 11.22.2012

644664 New Jersey Devils

NHL lockout still far from over as little progress made again - commissioner Gary Bettman presiding over the dysfunction

By Pat Leonard

NHL Players' Association executive director Donald Fehr (c.) arrives for labor talks at NHL headquarters in New York with his brother, NHLPA counsel Steven Fehr.

The NHL handled the rejection of the union's latest proposal professionally, but the league's response still wasn't what anyone wanted to hear.

"There was movement on some issues by the players' association and that was appreciated," commissioner Gary Bettman said Wednesday in Manhattan. "There was movement by us on some issues, but we're still far apart."

"Thanks, but you have to agree to what we say," is how union executive director Don Fehr described the league's reaction to the players' latest five-year offer. "On the big things, there was no reciprocity."

"I would just say that the response wasn't what we in the room were looking for," said Winnipeg defenseman Ron Hainsey, the most involved player during a lockout that drags into Day 68.

The union is scheduled to touch base with the NHL again on Friday, but without agreement on how to split revenue and structure player contracts, hockey's early December schedule is assuredly off the board, even if the NHL hasn't made it official yet.

"That's something that we're going to have to look at on a daily basis," Bettman said. "I think that becomes inevitable as time goes on."

Bettman and the owners had asked Monday night for a "comprehensive" union proposal, and that's what they got Wednesday.

The league was pleased the union backed off its demand of a guaranteed annual dollar amount owed to players and instead agreed to an annual 50-50 split of revenue. But it bristled at several major financial points of the proposal, led by the union's request for an additional \$393 million spread over four years to offset damage done to current player contracts — \$182 million more than the owners' offer.

The players also asked for guarantees that the salary cap wouldn't drop below \$67.25 million and that from the second year on, the players' share would never be less than that of the previous season.

"To expect our best economic proposal to get better as the damage continues to increase isn't particularly realistic," Bettman said.

The NHL at least entertained the offer, reviewing its contents during a recess between the day's two meetings and responding "point-by-point," according to Bettman.

Still, bad blood remains.

Bettman did not appreciate that the union's proposal had leaked to reporters before the league had a chance to respond.

"There seems to be a lot of spinning and gamesmanship going on for your benefit, and I don't think that's going to help us get to where we have to go," the commissioner said.

A frustrated Flyers fan, Jaymes Hall, 41, of Lancaster, Pa., even interrupted Bettman's media scrum, then later got a one-on-one with the commish to vent his frustrations.

"I appreciate it," Hall said after the quick chat, "and I apologize for raising my voice."

"No, no, no. Happy Thanksgiving," said Bettman, the smiling face of a dysfunctional league.

New York Daily News LOADED: 11.22.2012

644665 New Jersey Devils

NHL rejects new giveback

By MARK EVERSON

Who says the NHL isn't playing games?

Nothing on ice — no, but plenty in the board room. Commissioner Gary Bettman is dealing up Gimme, Gimme, and the players are hitting on 19.

Bettman looked Wednesday as if, rightly or not, he smelled blood. As the two sides in the NHL labor dispute met again in Manhattan, the players offered up another huge concession, which the commissioner promptly turned down, with thanks, to put in his pocket along with a Dec. 5 Board of Governors meeting schedule.

While there is outrage in the union ranks at being rejected again, without compromise, in a week or two this union offer toward a 50-50 revenue split will no longer seem a great concession.

Despite a union official's suggestion that it should take its offer off the table, it won't go away now, just as Bettman's October offer of 50-50 remains alive, despite supposedly expiring more than a month ago.

No, Wednesday's sweeping union giveback will shortly become the New Normal, the next starting place from where the appeasers in the union who forced Donald Fehr to produce this play will make their next concession to get themselves on ice and cashing checks. By accepting the owners' demand of percentage share rather than specified amounts, the players moved to the place where only numbers are an issue, the place where a deal can be made.

Despite the union's anger, there is now hope for Christmas hockey. But it didn't feel that way to the union.

"A lot of people that were there today, given the response they got, thought they had a lot better things to do on the day before Thanksgiving," Fehr

said. Of his offer, he said the league's response was 'thanks, but no thanks.'

"They appreciated it, but reiterated that they can't move. 'Thanks, but you have to agree to what we said,' "Fehr said.

Bettman concurred.

"That was appreciated, but we're still far apart," the commissioner said. "Hopefully, there will be some momentum from today's session to bring this process to a successful conclusion. It's frustrating and disappointing to everybody that it's taken this long, but we're going to stay at it.

"We made what was our best offer [in September], particularly to save an 82-game season. That offer was summarily rejected. To expect our best economic proposal to get better, as the damage continues to increase isn't particularly realistic.

"The business is probably losing between \$18-20 million a day and the players are losing \$8-10 million a day. I don't think it's realistic for anyone to expect the economic deal to get any better," Bettman said.

New York Post LOADED: 11.22.2012

644666 New York Islanders

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"That was appreciated, but we're still far apart," the commissioner said. "Hopefully, there will be some momentum from today's session to bring this process to a successful conclusion. It's frustrating and disappointing to everybody that it's taken this long, but we're going to stay at it.

"We made what was our best offer [in September], particularly to save an 82-game season. That offer was summarily rejected. To expect our best economic proposal to get better, as the damage continues to increase isn't particularly realistic.

"The business is probably losing between \$18-20 million a day and the players are losing \$8-10 million a day. I don't think it's realistic for anyone to expect the economic deal to get any better," Bettman said.

New York Post LOADED: 11.22.2012

644667 New York Islanders

NHL union offers five-year proposal, but sides still far apart

By STEVE ZIPAY

It's not a Happy Thanksgiving for the NHL, its players, or its fans as the lengthy lockout continues, and with little progress in negotiations Wednesday, a slate of games in December could be canceled soon.

A day that began with a six-page CBA proposal from the union ended with commissioner Gary Bettman declaring that while there was some movement, the sides remain far apart. No further talks were scheduled for Friday.

After being asked by the league on Monday to offer a comprehensive proposal, the union presented its most detailed blueprint yet: A five-year deal that comes with a percentage share of revenues rather than real dollars, with a 50-50 revenue split and "make-whole" or transition payments over the first four years of \$393 million. The league had proposed \$211 million. The \$393 million, plus the 50-50, averages about 52 percent per year over all five years for the players. The union rejected the league's proposal on extending free- agent eligibility and contract limits that included some givebacks.

After the afternoon session, which lasted less than two hours, the union's executive director, Donald Fehr, said there was "no reciprocity" from the league on major points. "We made an enormous move in the owners' direction to try to end it. At least as of today, that hasn't been successful." The response, he said, was essentially, "Thanks, but no thanks."

The league has offered a seven-year deal, Bettman said, under which the players would earn between \$12 billion and \$14 billion. Some owners want him to take that off the table. "We went through their proposal point by point, we talked about things we were agreeable with . . . ," he said. "There was movement on some issues by the players association and that was appreciated, but we're still far apart."

Bettman also said that he would have to look at the prospect of cancelling games "on a daily basis." At risk now are several weeks of games starting Dec. 1 and the Jan. 27 All-Star Game in Columbus. He said the league was losing \$18 million to \$20 million a day and the players were losing \$8 million to \$10 million a day.

"It's frustrating and disappointing for everybody,' he said. "We made what was our best offer [in October] in order to save an 82-game season, and any expectation that it will get better is not realistic." The players, he said, also had some culpability in dragging out the stalemate.

Newsday LOADED: LOADED: 11.22.2012

644668 New York Rangers

NHLPA makes 'comprehensive' proposal to NHL, Don Fehr says parties now only \$182 million apart, league to respond

By Pat Leonard

The NHL players' association made a "comprehensive" proposal to the league Wednesday morning in New York that brings the parties within \$182 million of a middle ground, NHLPA executive director Don Fehr said on chilly 6th Ave. in Manhattan.

The NHL is reviewing the proposal for a couple hours and then will respond to the union in a second meeting that is expected to begin at 1:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY MEETINGS PIVOTAL IN NHL NEGOTIATIONS

Fehr said the players had backed off their request for a guaranteed revenue amount each season in the new collective bargaining agreement, returning to the percentage-based system preferred by the NHL that guarantees owners and players respective percentages of the overall revenue pie that changes each season.

The players reportedly also asked the owners for more money than the \$211 million the owners previously had offered to 'make-whole' the contracts affected by a reset of the revenue percentages to an anticipated 50-50 split (from the 57-43 players-owners ratio in the previous deal).

Fehr also effectively said the union had not budged on the pivotal player contracting issues.

"We've moved in their direction previously on a couple of the player contracting issues; the rest are very, very, very important to the players," Fehr said.

The NHL is expected to challenge many points of the union's proposal, but at least it's taking time to review the offer. On Oct. 18, commissioner Gary Bettman and the owners dismissed three NHLPA offers in 10-15 minutes and walked out after an hour.

Wednesday morning's meeting lasted about 50 minutes. Below is the full transcript from Fehr's two-and-a-half minute interview afterwards:

#### DON FEHR

"As you probably know from some stuff that apparently leaked out last night or this morning, the players made a new proposal today. It was comprehensive. It's an effort about as good as we can do to try and see if there's an agreement that can be reached. Gary had said that he thought after our last proposals that we were \$900 million or \$1 billion apart. We never thought that was true. But in any event, we have taken the lockout specifically into (account) and the proposal essentially has a difference of \$182 million in the players' share over five years between our proposal and theirs. We've moved far more than halfway, and our expectation is the NHL's going to be willing to meet us if they want to reach an agreement. We've moved in their direction previously on a couple of the player contracting issues; the rest are very, very, very important to the players. What we did was give them the proposal. They indicated they're gonna have a response to us a little later on. I think the target time for getting back together is around 1 o'clock, whether it'll be then or a little before or a little after, I don't know yet. So we're gonna go back to our office and see you all in a little bit."

Were you pushed to make this proposal by some of the players?: "First of all, we never talk about our internal discussions, so I can't comment about that. But you can rest assured that the views of all players are taken into account. Having said that, this proposal — we said when we made the last proposal that we would be prepared to take the effects of the lockout into account if we got an agreement on the structure. They didn't want to do that. They wanted to take it into account first. So in a way, we did it ourselves, rather than doing it cooperatively with them, which would have been the preference."

Is this a percentage-based proposal?: "Yes."

Please reiterate financial differences?: "Gary said we were \$900 million or \$1 billion apart. At the moment we are exactly \$182 million apart. Over five years."

New York Daily News LOADED: 11.22.2012

644669 New York Rangers

Gary Bettman chats with Flyers fan Jaymes Hall, 41, of Lancaster, Pa., after saying NHL & NHLPA are 'still far apart'

By Pat Leonard

NHL commissioner Gary Bettman conducted two interviews Wednesday afternoon, when hockey's labor negotiations continued to go nowhere fast: One with the media, and another unexpected conversation with a Flyers fan named Jaymes Hall, 41, of Lancaster, Pa.

Hall, in town visiting family for Thanksgiving, had his sons with him on 6th Ave. in Manhattan waiting for the day's labor negotiations between the NHL and NHL players' association to wrap.

He got a question in to NHLPA executive director Don Fehr, then tried to sneak one in on Bettman but when it was dismissed, Hall began to yell: "That's how you talk to fans."

Bettman turned and responded: "Excuse me, in one second. I'm in the middle of a media scrum. I'd be happy to talk to you when I'm done, but if you're not credentialed media, I think it's unfortunate and unfair to these people. I know you're a fan, I'm happy to talk to you, but these people are trying to do their job and I'm trying to help them."

Still, there was no way the commissioner was actually going to talk to Hall afterwards, right? Wrong.

Bettman slid over to Hall immediately following his 10-minute media scrum and listened to the concerns of one Flyers fan. Here is the exchange:

HALL: "Put the money (in dispute) aside so nobody touches it and let the people get back to playing hockey. Eventually that pot's going to build. But the guy who makes money selling parking spots – let him get back to making a living."

BETTMAN: "The impact that this is having on everybody associated with the league is not lost on us. Believe me. But the fact of the matter is, when you're dealing with a union and they're really not trying to negotiate any deal that you can live with for the long-term health of this game, there isn't much else you can do. And we're hoping that with the passage of time, the players' association will come to realize that what we have proposed is more than fair. And the fact that we're keeping this proposal on the table, when it was contingent upon an 82-game schedule, should be evidence of our desire to get this done the right way."

HALL: "The \$18 million a day you're losing. There's got to be a smarter way."

BETTMAN: "It makes no sense (meaning it makes no sense continuing to lose that money each day). But thank you for being a fan."

HALL: "I appreciate it, and I apologize for raising my voice."

BETTMAN: "No, no, no. Happy Thanksgiving."

HALL: "Thanks for your time."

New York Daily News LOADED: 11.22.2012

644670 New York Rangers

NHL rejects new giveback

By MARK EVERSON

Who says the NHL isn't playing games?

Nothing on ice — no, but plenty in the board room. Commissioner Gary Bettman is dealing up Gimme, Gimme, and the players are hitting on 19.

Bettman looked Wednesday as if, rightly or not, he smelled blood. As the two sides in the NHL labor dispute met again in Manhattan, the players offered up another huge concession, which the commissioner promptly turned down, with thanks, to put in his pocket along with a Dec. 5 Board of Governors meeting schedule.

While there is outrage in the union ranks at being rejected again, without compromise, in a week or two this union offer toward a 50-50 revenue split will no longer seem a great concession.

Despite a union official's suggestion that it should take its offer off the table, it won't go away now, just as Bettman's October offer of 50-50 remains alive, despite supposedly expiring more than a month ago.

No, Wednesday's sweeping union giveback will shortly become the New Normal, the next starting place from where the appeasers in the union who forced Donald Fehr to produce this play will make their next concession to get themselves on ice and cashing checks. By accepting the owners' demand of percentage share rather than specified amounts, the players moved to the place where only numbers are an issue, the place where a deal can be made.

Despite the union's anger, there is now hope for Christmas hockey. But it didn't feel that way to the union.

"A lot of people that were there today, given the response they got, thought they had a lot better things to do on the day before Thanksgiving," Fehr said. Of his offer, he said the league's response was 'thanks, but no thanks'

"They appreciated it, but reiterated that they can't move. 'Thanks, but you have to agree to what we said,' "Fehr said.

Bettman concurred.

"That was appreciated, but we're still far apart," the commissioner said. "Hopefully, there will be some momentum from today's session to bring this process to a successful conclusion. It's frustrating and disappointing to everybody that it's taken this long, but we're going to stay at it.

"We made what was our best offer [in September], particularly to save an 82-game season. That offer was summarily rejected. To expect our best economic proposal to get better, as the damage continues to increase isn't particularly realistic.

"The business is probably losing between \$18-20 million a day and the players are losing \$8-10 million a day. I don't think it's realistic for anyone to expect the economic deal to get any better," Bettman said.

New York Post LOADED: 11.22.2012

644671 New York Rangers

NHL union offers five-year proposal, but sides still far apart

By STEVE ZIPAY

It's not a Happy Thanksgiving for the NHL, its players, or its fans as the lengthy lockout continues, and with little progress in negotiations Wednesday, a slate of games in December could be canceled soon.

A day that began with a six-page CBA proposal from the union ended with commissioner Gary Bettman declaring that while there was some movement, the sides remain far apart. No further talks were scheduled for Friday.

After being asked by the league on Monday to offer a comprehensive proposal, the union presented its most detailed blueprint yet: A five-year deal that comes with a percentage share of revenues rather than real dollars, with a 50-50 revenue split and "make-whole" or transition payments over the first four years of \$393 million. The league had proposed \$211 million. The \$393 million, plus the 50-50, averages about 52 percent per year over all five years for the players. The union rejected the league's proposal on extending free- agent eligibility and contract limits that included some givebacks.

After the afternoon session, which lasted less than two hours, the union's executive director, Donald Fehr, said there was "no reciprocity" from the league on major points. "We made an enormous move in the owners' direction to try to end it. At least as of today, that hasn't been successful." The response, he said, was essentially, "Thanks, but no thanks."

The league has offered a seven-year deal, Bettman said, under which the players would earn between \$12 billion and \$14 billion. Some owners want him to take that off the table. "We went through their proposal point by point, we talked about things we were agreeable with . . . ," he said. "There was movement on some issues by the players association and that was appreciated, but we're still far apart."

Bettman also said that he would have to look at the prospect of cancelling games "on a daily basis." At risk now are several weeks of games starting Dec. 1 and the Jan. 27 All-Star Game in Columbus. He said the league was losing \$18 million to \$20 million a day and the players were losing \$8 million to \$10 million a day.

"It's frustrating and disappointing for everybody,' he said. "We made what was our best offer [in October] in order to save an 82-game season, and any expectation that it will get better is not realistic." The players, he said, also had some culpability in dragging out the stalemate.

Newsday LOADED: LOADED: 11.22.2012

644672 Ottawa Senators

Players' association tables proposal as negotiations resume with NHL

By Chris Johnston

NEW YORK -- The NHL and NHL Players' Association finally seem to be speaking the same language, but they still have a gap to bridge in negotiations on a collective bargaining agreement.

The union tabled a comprehensive proposal Wednesday that generated a tepid response from the league. However, commissioner Gary Bettman acknowledged the six-page offer was a step in the right direction and the document appeared to offer a path forward in talks, with the sides now envisioning the same type of economic system.

"There was movement on some issues by the players' association and that was appreciated," said Bettman. "But we're still far apart. Hopefully there will have been some momentum from today's session that we can build off of to hopefully bring this process to a successful conclusion."

The union proposed a 50-50 split of revenues during the five-year deal along with \$393 million in deferred make whole payments throughout the agreement. Two weeks ago, the league offered \$211 million and a 50-50 split.

NHLPA executive director Donald Fehr acknowledged that his constituents are anxious to end the lockout and indicated that the new offer is "about as good" as the players are willing to make.

"(The players) are suffering right along with the fans," said Fehr. "We made an enormous move in the owners direction to try and end it -- at least as of today that hasn't been successful."

Until now, the union had been pushing for a system that would see players paid a fixed amount of revenue each season rather than receiving a percentage of it. However, the new offer included some safeguards to ensure they'd be protected in the event league revenues stalled, including a clause that states the players' share can't drop from year to year.

"The players are making enormous concessions to the owners and we want some protection on the downside," said Fehr.

There is still ground to cover on contract issues as well.

The new NHLPA offer included a rule that would punish teams who sign players to long-term, back-diving contracts -- something the league has identified as an important issue. It also called for players making more than \$1 million in the minors to have their salary count against the salary cap.

However, the union chose not adopt the NHL's proposed changes to unrestricted free agency, entry-level deals and salary arbitration, among other things. And the league still hasn't shown any willingness to budge on those issues.

"On the big things, there was ... no reciprocity in any meaningful sense," said Fehr. "No movement on the players share. No movement on salary arbitration eligibility. No movement on free agency eligibility. No movement on a pension plan, although they say they'd like to do it."

The league and union did have a candid discussion about the NHLPA's new offer. After giving the NHL a chance to read it through, the sides reconvened Wednesday afternoon and spent two more hours at the bargaining table.

"We went through their proposal point by point," said Bettman. "We talked about the things that were agreeable, we talked about the things that we could modify, we talked about the things that we had no more room to move on and explained our proposal on each of those elements."

With the lockout into its 10th week, the sides are attempting to reach a deal that would see a shortened schedule played this season. The labour dispute has damaged the sport's business, with Bettman saying the league is losing between \$18 and \$20 million every day of the labour dispute.

The commissioner indicated that he was surprised they hadn't already been able to reach an agreement.

"We made a proposal (in October) to save an 82-game season and frankly we're all mystified as to why we're not playing in light of that offer and in light of the fact that the players are losing as a group between \$8 and \$10 million a day," said Bettman. "We could have been playing, we could have

been continuing the momentum this game had on an offer and an agreement that was long term and fair.

"So there's a lot about this process that one could scratch their head about."

The sides plan to break for the Thanksgiving holiday in the U.S. on Thursday and touch base again Friday, but no further meetings have been scheduled.

In the meantime, the league is expected to cancel another batch of games before the end of the week. The entire schedule has already been wiped out through Nov. 30 and Bettman acknowledged that it's "inevitable" more games will be removed soon.

Ottawa Citizen LOADED: 11.22.2012

644673 Philadelphia Flyers

NHL and players union 'far apart' after talks

Sam Carchidi, Inquirer Staff Writer

There were early indications of positive developments as the NHL and NHL Players' Association met Wednesday morning in New York. But when an afternoon session ended, it was clear the sides weren't close to a labor agreement.

The NHL rejected the union proposal, and no new talks were scheduled.

"I'm disappointed," Donald Fehr, executive director of the NHLPA, said of the league's reaction. He added that the NHL had offered no reciprocity on major issues.

Gary Bettman, the NHL commissioner, told reporters that he was happy the NHLPA made a proposal but that the sides were "far apart."

Bettman, ridiculed on Twitter by some NHL players after the meeting, said that the league already has made its best offer and that some owners want him to take it off the table.

The NHLPA moved off its position on guaranteed players' share dollars and shifted more to the owners' demand of a percentage base in the revenue split, according to Fehr.

Fehr said his side's offer was "about as good as we can do."

If so, the entire season may be wiped out for the second time since 2004-05.

The NHLPA claimed it was prepared to go to a 50-50 split of hockey-related revenue (HRR) immediately, but the NHL balked at the union's math.

The players want \$393 million over four years as part of a "make whole" proposal to pay for salaries. That increases the league's \$211 million proposal by \$182 million.

But when the "make whole" provision is included - in the first year, the NHLPA wants the league to contribute \$182 million - the HRR is drastically changed.

TSN's Bob McKenzie estimated that the players' HRR share in the first year would be 55 percent, and that it would be about 54 percent in the second year, 52 percent in the third year, and 50.3 percent in the fourth year.

The NHLPA proposed that the salary cap not fall below \$67.25 million at any time during the five-year deal. Surprisingly, the players' union proposed that clubs take a cap hit on contracts in the minors of more than \$1 million, such as the New York Rangers' Wade Redden (\$6.5M cap hit).

In a letter to the union, Fehr said, "We have protected player rights by refusing to accept their proposals restricting free agency and salary arbitration."

Wednesday was the 67th day of the lockout; games have been canceled through Nov. 30.

Bettman said that the business is losing \$18 million to \$20 million per day, and that players are losing \$8 million to \$10 million per day.

During the news conference, an angry fan - identified as Jaymes Hall, 41, of Lancaster, according to the New York Daily News - had a verbal exchange with Bettman.

Bettman would not give a deadline for a deal to be done to save this season. The league is expected to cancel the All-Star Game in Columbus, Ohio, perhaps as early as Friday.

Philadelphia Inquirer / Daily News LOADED: 11.22.2012

644674 Philadelphia Flyers

Optimism vanishes in NHL labor talks

Sam Carchidi

There were early indications of positive developments as the NHL and NHLPA met in New York on Wednesday morning, but after an afternoon meeting, it was clear the sides aren't close to a labor agreement.

The NHL rejected the players' union proposal, and there were no new talks scheduled.

"I'm disappointed," Donald Fehr, executive director of the NHLPA, said of the league's reaction.

He said the NHL offered no reciprocity on major issues.

Gary Bettman, the NHL commissioner, said he was happy the NHLPA made a proposal but that the sides were "far apart."

Bettman said the league has already made its best offer, and that some owners want him to take it off the table.

The NHLPA moved off its position on guaranteed players' share dollars and shifted more to the owners' demand of a percentage base in the revenue split, according to Fehr.

Fehr said his side's offer today was "about as good as we can do."

If so, it seems like the entire season will be wiped for the second time since 2004-05.

The NHLPA says it is prepared to go to 50-50 split of hockey-related revenue immediately, but the NHL balked at the union's math.

The players want \$393 million over four years as part of "make whole" proposal. That's about \$182 million more than the league's \$211 million proposal.

But when the "make whole" provision is included  $\_$  in the first year, the NHLPA wants the league to contribute \$182 million  $\_$  the HRR is drastically changed.

TSN's Bob McKenzie estimated the players' HRR share in the first year would be 55 percent, and that it would be at about 54 percent in the second year, 52 percent in the third year, and 50.3 percent in the fourth year.

Said Penguins superstar Sidney Crosby to the Pittsburgh Post Gazette: "We wanted progress, but it takes both sides. They're going to have to move a little bit, too. It just shows we want to play."

And get paid.

The NHLPA proposed that the salary cap may not fall below 67.25 million at any time during the five-year deal. Surprisingly, the players' union proposed that clubs will take a cap hit on contracts in the minors over \$1 million, such as the Rangers' Wade Redden (\$6.5M cap hit).

In a letter to the union, Fehr said "we have protected player rights by refusing to accept their proposals restricting free agency and salary arbitration."

The initial meeting started at 10:30 a.m. and ended about an hour later. The sides met in the afternoon for more than two hours.

Wednesday was the 67th day of the lockout, and games have been canceled through Nov. 30.

Bettman said the business is losing between \$18-20 million per day during the lockout, and that that players are losing between \$8-10 million per day.

During the news conference, an angry fan \_ identified as Jaymes Hall, 41, of Lancaster, according to the New York Daily News \_ had a verbal exchange with Bettman.

Bettman would not give a deadline for a deal to be done to save this season. The league is expected to cancel the All-Star Game in Columbus, perhaps as early as Friday.

Philadelphia Inquirer / Daily News LOADED: 11.22.2012

644675 Philadelphia Flyers

NHL rejects new offer; sides still 'far apart'

Staff Writer

NEW YORK -- Don Fehr admitted disappointment.

Despite a major concession on the union's part by presenting a new percentage-based proposal framework for a CBA (see story), the NHL rejected virtually every economic aspect of it.

Listening to Fehr, the executive director of the NHLPA, you held little hope that this 67-day lockout is going to end in time to save what's left of the season.

"On the big things there was, as of today, no reciprocity in any meaningful sense," Fehr said. "No movement on the player's share.

"No movement on salary arbitration eligibility, no movement on free agency eligibility. No agreement on a pension plan. Although they say they'd like to do it, etc."

And then The Commish, Gary Bettman, walked out the back door of league headquarters in Manhattan and said he appreciated that the union moved toward the league, and even though it wasn't enough, he felt there might actually be traction moving forward.

A glimmer of hope?

Perhaps, until Bettman proceeded to say that despite what the union was willing to concede, the league's most recent offers on economics aren't going to change one dollar.

"We're having a tough time understanding why what we have proposed and what we have proposed previously hasn't been accepted," Bettman said more than once.

In other words, nothing has changed.

"We're still far apart," Bettman added. "But hopefully, there's some momentum from this session to bring this process to a conclusion. ... There was movement on both sides."

Both sides will speak by phone on Friday to see where they go next. Although Bettman admitted additional cancellation of games was "inevitable."

It is expected the NHL will cancel the 2013 All-Star Game in Columbus on Black Friday.

The union presented a five-year, percentage-based proposal that leaves the two sides \$182 million apart. Bettman didn't dispute that.

Five years won't fly. The league wants at least six, but Fehr said after five years, most existing deals would be gone, and there would be too many players in the league who had no say on what was negotiated.

"It was comprehensive," Fehr said of his proposal. "It's an effort about as good as we can do to see if there is an agreement that can be reached."

After the NHL rejected it, Fehr said, "The players made a dramatic move by anybody's standards to say this is what we want and we can move a long way in your direction to get this game back on the ice ... but we gotta hear something from you."

NHL players were to be briefed on a 5 p.m. conference call.

Fehr acknowledged that Bettman "appreciated" the movement the union made, but "reiterated, they can't move [economically]."

"Thanks, but you have to agree to what we [had before]," Fehr said.

"We removed the guarantee in terms of it relating to specific dollar value of the share with one, small exception that once we start over again, it doesn't go backwards from what it is."

They liked nothing in your proposal, CSNPhilly.com asked?

"Not in the significant economic issues," Fehr replied, adding there is still no reciprocity from the league even after moving 80 percent toward what the owners wanted.

The union took the NHL's best offer of "making whole" existing contracts with an allotment of \$211 million made on Nov. 7, and upped it to \$393 million, leaving them \$182 million apart, but agreeing to a 50/50 immediate split in HRR (hockey related revenues).

Bettman said that \$211 million can't get bigger.

Under the union's proposal, presented in memo-form to players -- and later leaked to media which angered Bettman -- the player's share to "make whole" existing contracts was broken down in the first four years as such:

- 2012-13 \$182 million
- 2013-14 \$128 million
- 2014-15 \$72 million
- 2015-16 \$11 million

Fehr said they presented the percentage-based concept "to see if an agreement could be reached. And we got the reaction we got."

Bettman didn't sound as dire as Fehr and insisted the league "will stay at it" to a get a deal done. He's not ready to cancel the season, either.

"We made our best offer ... on the economics to save an 82-game season and that offer was summarily rejected," he said.

"We haven't taken it off the table yet, although I have a number of owners who have suggested that I should.

"But to expect our best economic proposal to get better as the damage continues to increase isn't particularly realistic."

Bettman estimated the league is losing \$18 million/\$20 million a day while the players are losing \$8 million/\$10 million a day.

Even though the league imposed the lockout, both sides, he added, have to take responsibility for that occurring and for the economic fallout of such.

Fehr noted that Bettman said after the league's last proposal [Oct. 16] that the two sides were between \$900 million and \$1 billion apart.

"We never thought that was true, but in any event, we have taken the lockout [damages] specifically into effect and the proposal essentially has a difference of \$182 million dollars in the player's share over five years between our proposal and theirs," Fehr said.

"We've moved far more than halfway. Our expectation is, the NHL is going to be willing to meet us if they want to reach an agreement.

"We've moved in their direction previously on a couple of the player contracting issues and the rest is very, very important to the players," he said.

There were nine players at today's talks. Various internet tweets suggested Fehr has gotten some pressure from prominent players to strike a deal.

"We never talk about our internal discussions so I can't comment on that," Fehr said. "You can rest assure that the views of all players are taken into account.

"Having said that, this proposal, and we said in the last proposal, that we would be prepared to take the effects of the lockout into account if we got an agreement on structure.

"They didn't want to do that. They wanted to take it [damages] into account first. So, in a way, we did it ourselves, rather than do it cooperatively with them which would have been the preference."

Union reaction wasn't expected to be very good. What could Fehr tell them?

"If you tell the players what happened, and you let them draw their own conclusions, they understand it pretty quickly," Fehr replied. "They're bright people."

Delaware County Times LOADED: 11.22.2012

644676 Philadelphia Flyers

Players' union presents NHL new five-year deal

Tim Panaccio

NEW YORK -- The National Hockey League this week asked for a new, percentage-based proposal from the players' union that moved toward them

That appears to have transpired, as the NHLPA responded with just such a proposal Wednesday morning in hopes of ending the 67-day lockout.

Union executive director Donald Fehr said during a recess in the talks that his group presented a five-year, percentage-based proposal that leaves the two sides \$182 million apart.

The league initially offered \$211 million to make whole existing player contracts. The union's proposal today asked for \$393 million to achieve this in four years, according to the Canadian Press. Thus, the \$182 million difference. The players agreed that they would go to 50/50 on HRR immediately.

It should be cautioned that throughout these CBA negotiations, the two sides have rarely agreed on the math.

The NHL is reviewing the proposal. Talks will resume some time around 1:30 p.m.

"The players made a new proposal today," Fehr said outside league headquarters in Manhattan.

"It was comprehensive. It's an effort about as good as we can do to see if there is an agreement that can be reached."

Fehr noted that NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman said after the league's last proposal (Oct. 16) that the two sides were between \$900 million and \$1 billion apart.

"We never thought that was true, but in any event, we have taken the lockout [damages] specifically into effect and the proposal essentially has a difference of \$182 million in the players' share over five years between our proposal and theirs," Fehr said.

"We've moved far more than halfway. Our expectation is, the NHL is going to be willing to meet us if they want to reach an agreement."

Fehr spoke for less than three minutes before walking back to the union's temporary Manhattan digs they have rented since the lockout began.

"We've moved in their direction previously on a couple of the player contracting issues and the rest is very, very important to the players," he said.

Fehr said the league would have a response later this afternoon.

There were nine players at today's talks. Various internet tweets suggested Fehr has gotten some pressure from prominent players to strike a deal.

"We never talk about our internal discussions so I can't comment on that," Fehr said. "You can rest assured that the views of all players are taken into account.

"Having said that, this proposal, and we said in the last proposal, that we would be prepared to take the effects of the lockout into account if we got an agreement on structure.

"They didn't want to do that. They wanted to take [damages] into account first. So, in a way, we did it ourselves, rather than do it cooperatively with them which would have been the preference."

Delaware County Times LOADED: 11.22.2012

644677 Philadelphia Flyers

NHL awaits new proposal from union as talks resume

Tim Panaccio

NEW YORK -- Urban legend has it that the day before Thanksgiving is the biggest drinking day in the U.S.

That is good news for beer companies like Molson and Coors, who have been hammered on sales during the NHL lockout without games to hawk their products.

Wednesday, however, might also be the biggest day in this 67-day lockout "if" the NHLPA presents a new proposal to the league that asks for a straight percentage of hockey-related revenue as opposed to real dollars in a new CBA agreement.

The union worked all day Tuesday in preparing such, sources said. Talks resume this morning in Manhattan.

To this point, the union feels it's been the side doing all the giving and to concede dollars for percentage will most assuredly mean the union expects significant concessions back from the league on player contractual rights issues

NHL deputy commissioner Bill Daly said late Monday night that until union executive director Donald Fehr offers the league a new proposal that addresses all of the owners' core economic concerns in package form, including post-lockout solutions for lost income, it won't even talk about player contractual rights.

The players have said they will move from 57 percent of HRR to 50 percent but they want to do so gradually, while the league wants immediacy with 2012-13.

Both sides seem in agreement on revenue sharing for financially distressed clubs -- somewhere between \$200-\$220 million, though the union would still like to see that increased.

The union remains committed that the league guarantee \$1.883 billion in existing player contracts, yet neither side agrees on the method of how they will accomplish that.

Daly, who expressed "frustration" this week, is hoping for a proposal that allows both sides to gain traction and move the process forward. The season is fast approaching a point in which it could be canceled.

Sources familiar with NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman's lockout calendar said recently that the next two possible start-up dates if a new CBA were reached are Dec. 1 and Jan. 1.

Barring an absolute agreement come tonight, Dec. 1 appears unlikely as a start-up with mid- to late-December being a more likely target. Given what has happened so far, it appears we're headed for more talks.

Finally, an NHLPA official clarified that it was Bettman -- not the union, as reported here on Monday -- that requested Monday's talks be held in the evening rather than earlier in the day.

Delaware County Times LOADED: 11.22.2012

644678 Phoenix Coyotes

Checking in with former Coyote Vernon Fiddler

By SARAH MCLELLAN

Since the lockout started, more and more NHL players have descended on the Valley to stay in shape at the Ice Den while enjoying the mild "winter" weather.

The set-up has even attracted some former Coyotes players, including Vernon Fiddler. The center played for the Coyotes for two seasons from 2009-2011 before signing as a free agent with the Dallas Stars two summers ago.

I recently caught up with Fiddler to ask him about his time in Dallas, what it was like watching the Coyotes playoff run and why he left.

Question: How was your transition to Dallas?

Answer: There was obviously some ups and downs. They're in a transition there, making a lot of changes. They have a new owner. At the same time, we had a pretty good year. We were right in the race with Phoenix right to the bitter end. Our Pacific Division was pretty tight. A couple games cost us at the end of the year but at the same time, we have to build on that and hopefully we get something going here and we can have another good year.

Q: What did you think of the moves the Stars made over the summer in adding Jaromir Jagr and former Coyote Ray Whitney?

A: We needed some older guys to lead the way. I played with Ray and I haven't played with Jagr, but it seems those guys are guys that can lead the way. They've been around, lots of experience. I think that's what we lacked last year a little bit. I think they tried to fix that problem a little bit by bringing in some older experienced guys."

Q: What did you make of the Coyotes' run to the Western Conference finals?

A: It was great to see. They had a really good year, and they went above and beyond probably what they were expected to. Give credit to the guys in the dressing room, the management, coaches. They stuck together and did what they could with what they had. They got great leaders in that dressing room, starting with Shane Doan and going down. It just goes to show when you have good people in your dressing room, you find ways to win and I think that's what Phoenix has going on.

Q: But moving on to a more stable situation was important for you, right?

A: That was the biggest thing for me. I loved the coaches. I loved the way that things were ran. Everybody was great to me, but it was something I had to make a decision for my family to be a little more secure. I wish them nothing but the best, for sure, because I have a lot of friends on the team and they gave me a great opportunity to prove I could play a bigger role. But at the same time, they did a great job and I watched them right to the bitter end. I was happy for them, jealous of course, but very happy.

Arizona Republic LOADED: 11.22.2012

644679 Pittsburgh Penguins

Disgruntled NHL fan confronts Bettman at news conference

By Josh Yohe

NEW YORK — The wayward negotiations between the NHL and its Players' Association took a surreal turn late Wednesday afternoon.

While NHL commissioner Gary Bettman was addressing the media in New York — a surprise, as it was believed NHL deputy commissioner Bill Daly would be the man to speak on behalf of the league — he was confronted by an angry fan who bombarded him with combative questions.

Jaymes Hall, 41, a disgruntled Flyers fan from Lancaster, camouflaged himself with members of the media before unleashing on Bettman.

"Why not freeze the revenue generated from those sources that are still in dispute?" he screamed. "What about an escrow account or something so we can get back to playing? Let's get back to playing! The fans are angry!"

At this point, a reporter asked a question only to be interrupted again by Hall

Bettman, who has overseen three labor stoppages in less than 20 years on the job, then addressed the fan.

"Excuse me one second," Bettman said. "I'm in the middle of a media scrum. I'd be happy to talk to you when we're done. You're not credentialed media. I think it's unfortunate and unfair to these people."

Hall responded: "I'm a fan!"

Snapped Bettman: "I know you're a fan. I'd be happy to talk with you."

Bettman was good on his word. When he finished his 10-minute news conference, he walked directly toward Hall, and the two had a conversation that lasted a few minutes.

Hall then apologized to the commissioner.

"We want to do this the right way," Bettman said. "Happy Thanksgiving."

Tribune Review LOADED: 11.22.2012

644680 Pittsburgh Penguins

NHL rejects union's offer, Bettman rips Fehr

Josh Yohe and Rob Rossi

NEW YORK — NHL Players' Association executive director Don Fehr said it was the best offer he could make.

NHL commissioner Gary Bettman not only declined the offer but also called out Fehr in a news conference Wednesday.

Bettman accused Fehr of manipulating the media to paint an offer that was more genuine than the commissioner believes is accurate.

"I know there has been a lot of discussion about the terms," Bettman said. "While we were upstairs reviewing it, (Fehr) came down to talk about the proposal itself. I'm not sure that any discussion that goes on in the public forum while negotiations go on is either constructive or accurate. There seems to be a lot of spinning and gamesmanship going on for (the media's) benefit."

Bettman also said of Fehr: "Don can say what he wants. I will not negotiate through the media."

Fehr made an offer Wednesday morning that the NHL rejected in two hours. He seemed miffed by how quickly the NHL dismissed his offer.

"On the big things," Fehr said, "there was no reciprocity in any meaningful sense. No movement on the players' share. No movement on salary arbitration eligibility. No movement on free-agency eligibility. No movement on a pension plan, although they said they'd like to do it."

Players received a memo from the union that described the proposal as including "substantial moves in order to address all of the owners' concerns."

Penguins players touted the move as a concession to begin an even revenue split. Players received 57 percent during the last labor contract, and past proposals called for an eventual move toward an even split.

Owners would get their immediate 50-50 revenue split under the NHLPA's proposal. Players would receive \$393 million — up from the NHL's \$211 million offer — to honor current contracts over the five-year labor proposal.

The salary cap would never dip below \$67.25 million in the NHLPA offer. The cap hit a high of \$64.3 million last season and was slated to hit \$70.2 million this season before the last labor deal expired. Also, there would be a salary cap provision to deter long-term, front-loaded contracts that are new and are a minimum of nine years.

Several Penguins players said the proposal was designed to gauge the NHL's interest in quickly starting the season. Penguins defenseman Brooks Orpik, who attended the Monday meeting in New York, described the deal as "fair."

Players said they feared the NHL would cancel games through at least mid-December — and possibly the entire month — if the union didn't provide an offer that started with a 50-50 revenue split.

Games already are canceled through Nov. 30.

"Canceling games is something we're going to look at daily," Bettman said. "It's something that's going to become inevitable."

Bettman, though, didn't sound like he was done negotiating.

"It was good to finally have a comprehensive proposal to work off," Bettman said. "There was movement on some issues by the Players' Association, and that was appreciated. There was movement by us on some issues. But we're still far apart."

No other meetings are scheduled.

Tribune Review LOADED: 11.22.2012

644681 Pittsburgh Penguins

NHL lockout: Bettman says 'no' to union's proposal

By Shelly Anderson

Penguins captain Sidney Crosby, considered the face of hockey, liked the proposal the NHL Players' Association presented to the league Wednesday. He called it "making a move in their direction."

The NHL had a different take on the offer, summed up in one word: No.

NHL commissioner Gary Bettman acknowledged the union's movement, a departure from past sniping between the sides. The league rejected the NHLPA's proposal, item by item, and there is no indication that the league and players are on the brink of a breakthrough.

Bettman said the sides are still "far apart," although he hopes the exchange Wednesday will lead to some momentum in negotiations as the owners-imposed lockout is about to reach 10 weeks. No Penguins attended the meetings in New York -- one in the morning to present the proposal, one in the afternoon for the league to respond.

NHLPA executive director Donald Fehr described his disposition after the talks as "disappointed."

It's not clear when the sides might meet again. The players held a conference call in the evening.

Bettman acknowledged the step the players took in submitting a full proposal but lamented that the league is losing \$18 million to \$20 million per day during the lockout. He said the players, collectively, are losing \$8 million to \$10 million a day.

The schedule has been canceled through the end of this month, and more cancellations are expected soon if there is no deal.

This is the first full proposal the union has made since the lockout began in mid-September. There were some key components, particularly in the area of core economics.

The NHLPA switched from suggesting a dollar-based collective bargaining agreement to one based on percentages of revenue, which is what the NHL has offered. In return, the players asked the league to increase its pay-in for the make-whole provision by \$182 million, to \$393 million. That money would be used to help ensure that existing player contracts are paid in full while the players' share of revenues drops from 57 percent under the previous CBA to around 50 percent.

The proposal includes a phase-in down to the 50-50 split.

Fehr said the offer, which is for five years, put the sides \$182 million apart -the difference in the make-whole model -- and that the proposal was "about
as good as we can do to try and see if there's an agreement that can be
reached "

Crosby was leaving the ice at Southpointe after a practice with six teammates about the time the morning meeting in New York was starting. He has followed the negotiations closely and believes the union's proposal, which he called a "hybrid" of what both sides have been pushing for, is strong enough to spark movement toward a settlement.

"It's a little closer to their proposal," Crosby said. "It's definitely something they'll have to consider, or they should at least.

"What we want back on the make-whole is not even close to what we're putting on the table, everything combined. We wanted progress, but it takes both sides. They're going to have to move a little bit, too. It just shows we all want to play."

Bettman indicated that the league will not make any more economic concessions.

The NHLPA proposal called for the salary cap to be at least \$67.5 million each year and for players to be guaranteed that their share, in dollars, would never decrease from one year to the next. Those elements would seem to guard against a dip in league revenues, although those have been steadily rising and reached a record \$3 billion last season.

The union also put in measures to stop the long-term contracts that are heavily front-loaded, but only for deals struck after a new CBA goes into effect, not for existing deals.

It's not just the core economic issues that are holding things up. The sides have yet to agree on several elements of players' contract rights. The NHL has proposed stricter, more owner-friendly rules, such as a cap on the length of contracts and longer wait times before a player reaches unrestricted free agency.

NOTES -- Penguins center Evgeni Malkin had no points in Metallurg Magnitorgorsk's 2-1 loss against Avangard in the Kontinental Hockey League. ... Former Penguins winger Ryan Malone, an Upper St. Clair native now with Tampa Bay, skated with the Penguins at Southpointe for a second day in a row. ... The players skating locally will not have their regular Thursday and Friday practices because of the holiday.

Post Gazette LOADED: 11.22.2012

644682 San Jose Sharks

Couture frustrated with NHL lockout

Staff Writer

Logan Couture is frustrated.

The NHL lockout reached its 67th day on Wednesday, and despite several meetings this week, the two sides remain at an impasse in labor negotiations. The players' association made a proposal earlier in the day on Wednesday, which included an immediate 50-50 split of hockey-related revenue, but it was rejected by the league.

The NHL's owners, represented by commissioner Gary Bettman, are still insisting on new rules restricting future contracts, and have not shown a willingness to move off of their offer of \$211 million to "make whole" existing deals.

There are no immediate plans for the two sides to reconvene.

Couture, currently playing in Switzerland, took to his Twitter account to voice his displeasure as talks broke down once again.

I, like all of you, first and foremost am a HUGE hockey fan. I live and breathe the game. Have since I was 3. It hurts to see this happen to

- Logan Couture (@Logancouture) November 21, 2012

The best game on earth. The best athletes and the best fans in the world. The players are doing the best we can to return this game to the

- Logan Couture (@Logancouture) November 21, 2012

Ice. But, it takes two to make a deal. It just seems the other side isn't willing to make it work. It hurts.

Comcast SportsNet.com LOADED: 11.22.2012

644683 St Louis Blues

NHL turns down union's latest proposal

Jeremy Rutherford

Despite a new proposal from the NHL Players' Association Wednesday, no progress was made in negotiations between the union and the NHL toward a collective bargaining agreement.

The second meeting of the day between the sides ended about 2:15 p.m. (St. Louis time), and afterwards, union director Donald Fehr told reporters there was "no reciprocity" from the league regarding its morning proposal.

"The players have done an awful lot here," Fehr told reporters outside the NHL offices in New York. "We got the reaction we got. We'll see where it goes."

There are reports that the NHL and the union could resume talks on Friday, two days after the latest efforts to end a three-month old lockout. But Friday could also be the day that the league cancels games through the middle or end of December.

"We're still far apart," NHL commissioner Gary Bettman told reporters. "But hopefully there's some momentum so we can bring this to a conclusion."

Late Monday night, the NHL requested that the NHLPA put a proposal in writing. The union did so and it was presented to the league Wednesday morning. Nine players were in attendance at the meeting, including the Blues' Andy McDonald and Kevin Shattenkirk.

The NHLPA offered the league a new five-year CBA.

According to reports, the union backed off its demands for guaranteed dollars and focused its new offer on a percentage-based revenue split. However, following the NHL's last offer to allocate \$211 million to pay players' current contracts, or a concept often referred to as "make whole," the union asked Wednesday for another \$180 million to fulfill that requirement.

Fehr estimated that the union and the league would be \$182 million apart over the five-year deal. At one point earlier in negotiations, the two sides were \$1 billion apart.

"We submitted a proposal that addressed the League's concerns and believe it's the basis for an imminent deal," McDonald told the Post-Dispatch via text message Wednesday morning.

The two sides adjourned after the NHLPA made its proposal and returned to the bargaining table just hours later. But after reconvening, the league made known its dislike for the proposal, specifically the union's suggestion for the "make whole" concept, according to reports.

"There was some movement in our direction and it was appreciated," said Bettman, who added though that it wasn't enough to make the league reconsider its position.

Bettman, meanwhile, indicated to reporters that he was angry about the NHLPA's proposal being leaked to the media while the league was reviewing it.

"Don can say what he wants," Bettman said. "I will not negotiate publicly."

(Earlier in the lockout, the NHL did release the details of its proposal to the players. The league stressed that it was done only because the details of its offer were being misrepresented in the media).

Bettman did acknowledge publicly Wednesday, however, that the NHL is losing \$18-20 million per day during the lockout and players are losing \$8-10 million.

The union has scheduled an internal conference call for 4 p.m. (St. Louis time).

Shattenkirk used his Twitter account (@shattdeuces) to voice his frustration with the NHL and disappointment for fans following another day of false alarms.

"A lot of great time and effort was put in our proposal today," Shattenkirk tweeted. "We felt it was the best way to get closer to an agreement and made significant movement in the direction of the NHL. It is hard and frustrating to get shutdown so quickly once again. We are willing; they are

"I apologize to the fans most importantly for being put through this day after day. We recognize your importance to this game. We are fighting to get this done ASAP so you can watch the game you love and we can play it once more."

St Louis Post Dispatch LOADED: 11.22.2012

644684 Tampa Bay Lightning

NHL lockout talks stall again; Bettman: 'We're still far apart'

By Damian Cristodero

The NHL and its locked-out players had two negotiating sessions Wednesday in New York.

The result? The Jan. 27 All-Star Game in Columbus is expected to be canceled today and half of December's games are on the block as well.

There also were plenty of raw feelings from players after the league rejected what they believed was a major concession on the core economic issues

"It's disappointing," Lightning wing Marty St. Louis said. "I feel they're trying to bully us and trying to draw a line in the sand.

"I don't know where you go from here. It's very frustrating."

Games already have been canceled through Nov. 30 as has the Jan. 1 Winter Classic. But there was anticipation a breakthrough was imminent when players agreed to the 50-50 split of revenues owners have demanded.

But players, who last season received 57 percent of revenue, also proposed the league increase the money allotted to guarantee current contracts — the so-called "make-whole" provision — to \$393 million from \$211 million.

The \$182 million difference works out to about \$6.1 million for each of the 30 teams or \$1.22 million for each year of a five-year collective bargaining agreement.

But the league did not budge.

"Nothing on the significant economic issues," union head Donald Fehr told reporters. "On the big things, there was no reciprocity in any meaningful sense."

"We're still far apart," NHL commissioner Gary Bettman said, adding the league is losing \$18 million to \$20 million a day in revenue while players are losing \$8 million to \$10 million.

No formal negotiations are scheduled, though deputy commissioner Bill Daly and union lead counsel Steve Fehr are expected to speak Friday.

"We're dealing with a union that really isn't trying to negotiate, make any deal that we can live with for the long-term health of this game," Bettman said

"We want to negotiate," St. Louis said. "We came their way again, and nothing. They keep telling us to keep coming. But they're staying where they are, so you end up negotiating against yourself. And that's definitely something we don't want to do.

"I mean, \$180 million apart. You divide that by 30 teams over five years, I can't believe that 30 owners don't want to do that."

To read the union's complete proposal, go to tampabay.com/blogs/lightning.

Tampa Bay Times LOADED: 11.22.2012

644685 Toronto Maple Leafs

NHL lockout: Players make concessions, NHL says it's not enough

Kevin McGran

The good news is that the NHL took longer than 10 minutes to reject the NHLPA's latest offer, one the union says leaves the two sides \$182 million over the course of five years.

But what was hailed by some as a major concessionary offer that met the NHL halfway between their differences was dismissed by others — specifically NHL commissioner Gary Bettman — leaving the two sides "far apart."

"There was movement on some issues by the players association and that was appreciated," said Bettman. "But we're still far apart. Hopefully there will have been some momentum from today's session that we can build off of to bring this process to a successful conclusion."

Bettman said the league is losing \$18 million to \$20 million a day, the players \$8 million to \$10 million a day.

The players held a conference call — as they typically have done when the NHL rejects their offers — to discuss their next move.

"We're making a move in their direction," Penguins superstar Sidney Crosby told the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette. "We wanted progress, but it takes both sides. They're going to have to move a little bit, too. It just shows we all want to play."

The players have been locked out since Sept. 16 and games up to Nov. 30 — as well as the Jan. 1 Winter Classic—have been cancelled.

A major sponsor, Kraft, has put its dollars elsewhere. And more games may be cancelled, perhaps on a daily basis. A business worth \$3.3 billion last year has seen the momentum it felt in recent years come crashing to a halt due to the third lockout under Bettman's regime.

"To expect our best economic proposal to get better as the damage continues to increase isn't particularly realistic," said Bettman.

The players believed they had made an offer in the morning significant enough to keep bargaining going, but talks broke off after a two-hour meeting in the afternoon in which the NHL detailed what it didn't like.

"We have moved far more than halfway," Fehr said, adding, "It is about as good as we can do."

Here's what was tabled:

50-50

The players are asking for a 50 per cent share of hockey-related revenue plus a guarantee that the "players' share, expressed in dollars, may not fall below its value for the prior season" starting in Year 2. The upper limit of the salary cap can't fall below \$67.5 million in any year of the deal. It would have been \$70.2 million this season.

Concession: The players are no longer asking for their share to be a guaranteed dollar figure. They had been using \$1.88 billion as a starting point, with guaranteed increases that would, based on NHL projected revenue growth, equal 50 per cent of hockey-related revenue.

NHL's take: The league is happy the players are talking in percentages. As for the rest of it, one person on the league side called it "insane." The NHL's happy about guarantees regarding the players' share not dropping below the previous year's value. It there's one-year spike in revenue, if the economy tanks or if the Canadian dollar decreases in value, the players would benefit greatly.

## HONOURING CONTRACTS

In addition to 50-50, the players want contracts already signed to be honoured outside the salary cap. They proposed that the owners make them whole with payments equalling \$393 million over four years, including \$182 million in the first year.

Concession: The players wanted the guarantees over the life of all contracts, some of which go on for 10 years. Players also say the payments can be deferred one year with interest.

NHL's take: The league wants to stick to its last offer of \$211 million over two years.

# REVENUE SHARING

Start with a pool of \$200 million that would grow as revenues grow, with money distributed by an oversight committee of seven, four of whom would represent the league (including one owner) and three the players (including one player).

Concession: The players had asked for \$240 million.

NHL's take: The league would rather distribute money based on its current formula but it's not really a bone of contention.

# CONTRACT RESTRICTIONS

The players don't want any restrictions on contract length (the NHL wants five-year limits) or on the variance of salary year-to-year (the NHL wants a maximum 5 per cent variance).

Concession: To counter back-diving deals, the NHLPA is proposing that teams that sign such deals be penalized if the player retires.

NHL's take: The players' back-diving proposal is incredibly complicated, only applies to deals of nine years or longer and is not retroactive. The bet here is that the NHL will take one or the other of contract limits or 5 per cent variances.

OTHER TIDBITS IN NHLPA OFFER

WHAT'S NEXT

There's some speculation that the NHLPA might consider decertifying. That would allow the players — who would not have someone to collectively bargain on their behalf — to pursue an antitrust suit against the league. That's been the strategy of other player unions, particularly in basketball and football. If any league wer to be found in violation of U.S. antitrust laws, it would shake it to its core.

Toronto Globe And Mail LOADED: 11.22.2012

644686 Toronto Maple Leafs

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Toronto Globe And Mail LOADED: 11.22.2012

644687 Toronto Maple Leafs

NHL lockout: Both sides are 'still far apart'

Chris Johnston

NEW YORK — The NHL and NHL Players' Association finally seem to be speaking the same language, but they still have a gap to bridge in negotiations on a collective bargaining agreement.

The union tabled a comprehensive proposal Wednesday that generated a tepid response from the league. However, commissioner Gary Bettman acknowledged the six-page offer was a step in the right direction and the document appeared to offer a path forward in talks, with the sides now envisioning the same type of economic system.

"There was movement on some issues by the players' association and that was appreciated," said Bettman. "But we're still far apart. Hopefully there will have been some momentum from today's session that we can build off of to hopefully bring this process to a successful conclusion."

The union proposed a 50-50 split of revenues during the five-year deal along with \$393 million in deferred make whole payments throughout the agreement. Two weeks ago, the league offered \$211 million and a 50-50 split.

NHLPA executive director Donald Fehr acknowledged that his constituents are anxious to end the lockout and indicated that the new offer is "about as good" as the players are willing to make.

"(The players) are suffering right along with the fans," said Fehr. "We made an enormous move in the owners direction to try and end it — at least as of today that hasn't been successful."

Until now, the union had been pushing for a system that would see players paid a fixed amount of revenue each season rather than receiving a percentage of it. However, the new offer included some safeguards to ensure they'd be protected in the event league revenues stalled, including a clause that states the players' share can't drop from year to year.

"The players are making enormous concessions to the owners and we want some protection on the downside," said Fehr.

There is still ground to cover on contract issues as well.

The new NHLPA offer included a rule that would punish teams who sign players to long-term, back-diving contracts — something the league has identified as an important issue. It also called for players making more than \$1 million in the minors to have their salary count against the salary cap.

(The players) are suffering right along with the fans

However, the union chose not adopt the NHL's proposed changes to unrestricted free agency, entry-level deals and salary arbitration, among other things. And the league still hasn't shown any willingness to budge on those issues.

"On the big things, there was ... no reciprocity in any meaningful sense," said Fehr. "No movement on the players share. No movement on salary arbitration eligibility. No movement on free agency eligibility. No movement on a pension plan, although they say they'd like to do it."

The league and union did have a candid discussion about the NHLPA's new offer. After giving the NHL a chance to read it through, the sides reconvened Wednesday afternoon and spent two more hours at the bargaining table.

National Post LOADED: 11.22.2012 644688 Vancouver Canucks

Canucks face serious pressure under new salary cap, whatever it is

By Jason Botchford

Canucks face serious pressure under new salary cap, whatever it is

The numbers are daunting.

The committed dollar bills come at you like an asteroid field. The Canucks have 13 players signed next season for \$55 million. This, in a NHL landscape where the salary cap is about to be squeezed, and in a big way.

How low the cap goes remains to be seen, probably not for another couple of weeks yet. But, if you take the NHL owners' latest proposal, and they'd love you to, it will be at about \$59 million in Year 2 of a new CBA.

That would, theoretically, leave the Canucks just \$4 million to sign 10 players. Oh, and one of those unsigned players just happens to be the 50-point man, Alex Edler, who is looking to become the Canucks' highest-paid defenceman.

Does this mean certain doom as the Canucks spiral toward salary cap hell? Is signing Edler a pipe dream? Will this turn the Canucks into a Miami Marlins cover band as they unload talent to reap savings? Is this year their last shot at winning it all?

Well, no. Though they may never be deeper than they are this year.

What it does do is create a serious pressure point, helping to make Zack Kassian and Chris Tanev the two most important prospects the Canucks have had in five years.

One may be a forward, the other a defenceman, but they represent the best chance the Canucks have to incorporate impactful players on entry-level

contracts that would go a long way toward relieving the inevitable cap stress.

There hasn't been a whole lot of that going on during the past eight years. The Canucks haven't had a lot of hits since the sensational 2004 draft when they acquired Edler, Cory Schneider and Jannik Hansen. Only one draft pick since has become a regular, and that's Mason Raymond.

It would be wonderful for the team if two young players the Canucks didn't draft, Tanev and Kassian, were ready to be pushed into the regular lineup as soon as there is a training camp. It's partly why Canucks head coach Alain Vigneault has been dispatched to Chicago to evaluate Kassian and Tanev on their tour with the Wolves during the lockout.

But Vigneault can be reluctant to give young players big roles on a veteran team. This has got to be re-examined.

Tanev has the easier path to a regular turn in the the starting lineup. The criticism against him is obvious. It's hard to see offensive upside here. But on a blueline that has Jason Garrison, Edler, Kevin Bieksa and Dan Hamhuis, there shouldn't need to be.

The less you notice Tanev, the better. If he's Sami Salo without the shot or power -play points, that should be just grand. He doesn't have to dominate. He does have to be steady.

Kassian doesn't have that luxury. He needs to hit, and he needs to score. The second part is not going to happen while he mucks it up on a fourth line, banging around the boards with Dale Weise and Manny Malhtora, trying to claw his way up the depth chart.

Kassian needs offensive opportunities and, if he's on the Canucks, finding them could be one of Vigneault's bigger challenges over the course of a shortened season.

It should be taken as encouraging news that, when he was asked about this situation, the first thing Vigneault pointed out is how much he's liked the way Kassian is protecting the puck in the AHL. Vigneault said he enjoyed Kassian in three of the four games he saw. But you just know all those warm and fuzzy feelings will be dissipate as soon as Kassian commits his first turnover.

If Tanev and Kassian become major contributors by next season, it changes the dynamic of the team, and makes some of the pricier players expendable.

Still, there are other options the Canucks will need to explore to get their cap room. Trading Roberto Luongo is going to help, though they will have to take salary back (say, Tyler Bozak at \$1.5 million) and they'll still have to pay a backup.

The Canucks will also need to take a long look in the mirror over Keith Ballard. There's nothing wrong with admitting you made a mistake. He may be a good player in the right situation, but that situation isn't in Vancouver with Vigneault.

On his best day, he's a No. 5 defenceman on this team. He's just not going to be more than a depth defenceman here, and you can't keep paying a depth defenceman \$4.2 million a year. Not when you still have to sign Edler.

The Canucks have long held that Ballard's contract is not untradeable. It's getting close to the time where they are going to need to prove it.

Vancouver Province: LOADED: 11.22.2012

644689 Washington Capitals

NHL lockout: Owners shouldn't underestimate the Fehr factor

By Thomas Boswell

In his 32 years as general counsel, then head of the baseball union, I didn't really interview Don Fehr 1,000 times. But it sure felt like it. My head still hurts.

Now, hockey has the migraine. Two years ago, Fehr became the head of the NHL union that got drubbed nearly eight years ago when a season was canceled but owners won a 24 percent rollback in player salaries. This time,

owners want more concessions. Result: a lockout with 327 canceled games. So far.

If hockey wants to avoid losing a second season under Commissioner Gary Bettman's watch, it should widen its analysis from issues like "core economics" and "player contracting." The NHL had better figure out Fehr, how he runs a union, what his strategies are and, especially, why baseball got crushed time after time. The subtext of these negotiations is the Fehr factor.

Long negotiations have key junctures — like Wednesday. One Fehr method is to identify moments of discovery when his union can determine the other side's true intentions. The union pushes an aggressive proposal, one that usually addresses the concerns of moderate members in the union. That way, it either reaches an agreement soon or the membership toughens once it "discovers" that the actual strategy of the other side is a long fight.

"We have moved far more than halfway," said Fehr of a new union proposal on Wednesday. "It's about as good as we can do," he added, saying the two sides are \$182 million apart over the five-year deal. That amount, divided by five, is nothing to risk a season for. But you can be sure that "\$182 million" is precisely defined — by Fehr. Owners may do their numbers a very different way. Talks ended for the day with what Fehr called "no movement."

"We're still far apart," said Bettman.

After covering six work stoppages, a canceled World Series and three collusion cases during Fehr's time in baseball, I have a clear sense of how he acts at inflection points. First, Fehr means exactly what he says; previous posturing is set aside when phrases appear like "about as good" as it'll get.

Also, his membership isn't just backing him; it really is their deal. It took baseball owners 20 years to grasp that Fehr isn't a puppeteer. He educates, he shapes, but he doesn't decide. The players do. That's what empowered the MLBPA and made it so tough. Fehr will reduce demands rather than negotiate without full support. That's core. It's not changing.

So it's likely that Wednesday's proposal is a hand extended to owners but also an opportunity for Fehr to insure that nobody inside his tent can say, "We never really tried as hard as we could."

If the NHL doesn't want a deal now, or not a deal with a structure like the current union proposal, if that's not the NHL's master plan, then the players may "discover" that reality if the owners give a hard, "No."

Maybe things are different in hockey. Maybe, in two years, Fehr hasn't solidified his members to anything like the degree he did in baseball. But if he has replicated his MLBPA work, then rejecting Wednesday's union proposal as a framework for a final compromise is a huge risk for hockey.

The biggest mismatch I've ever covered was not on a field. It was organized baseball against the MLBPA. And, mostly, it was unnecessary. Baseball owners refused to see the union or Fehr for what they clearly were.

MLB demonized Fehr personally. Despite seeing dozens of players constantly involved in every bargaining session, they refused to accept that mere "ballplayers" actually understood the issues — sometimes better than they did. Owners, often fighting among themselves, didn't grasp that players formed a negotiation information tree, reporting back to all players.

For decades, many owners hoped that Fehr, like Marvin Miller before him, somehow had the players mesmerized, hypnotized. If they could just snap their fingers the right way, players would awake to their benevolence. NHL owners need to understand Fehr's first two rules. First, the players are saturated with info and totally trust its source — other players, not Fehr. Second, a Fehr union will always bring a weaker deal for stronger backing.

Finally, after going 0 for 8 in work stoppages, canceling the 1994 World Series and losing three collusion cases in the 1980s at a cost of \$280 million, baseball figured it out. The '94 strike left both sides, and the game, bloody. MLB finally quit framing the union as an ideological foe and began to work with it in grudging, respectful, adversarial semi-harmony. Things got better

That labor peace has lasted 17 years with no end in sight. The idea that Fehr, 64, was a radical or didn't want owners to get filthy rich (unless players did, too) or wouldn't take a fair deal if one were offered — that all died in the last century. Ironically, the stain on Fehr's baseball reputation is that he was so focused on business prosperity, which would flow to players and agents, that the union was cynically resistant to a vast workplace health

issue, opposing the testing of union members for performance enhancing drugs.

Financially, baseball has never been healthier. It's gushing cash. The best thing that's happened to baseball in modern times, aside from wangling free parks at mostly public expense, was MLB's realization that a strong union, fair labor policy, fiercely negotiated, and booming business were compatible. The price baseball paid to learn that lesson was astronomical.

Now, it's hockey's turn. The most troubling development to me is that hockey's leaders now sound like MLB owners a generation ago. It's like a time warp. Two weeks ago, stories appeared intimating that players weren't getting a straight story from Fehr, that he had his own agenda and owners' concepts were not getting to the membership in a pure form. That is the one tactic that always backfired when baseball owners used it. It did again.

Fehr pointed out that "19 players" were at the negotiating table when the proposal, that he supposedly misrepresented, was discussed. Within days an NHL player had called Bettman a "cancer," another called him "an idiot."

Hiring Don Fehr, the Sun Tzu of jock labor, to face NHL owners in a lockout is like getting the Godfather to help you fix a parking ticket.

NHL leaders need to realize, in a fraction the time it took baseball, that if you go to the mat with a Fehr union, everybody suffers, but you might get it worse. If you work with them, then one day you wake up and Albert Pujols has a \$275 million contract and the Dodgers sell for \$2 billion.

Your choice.

Washington Post LOADED: 11.22.2012

644690 Washington Capitals

Bettman: NHL, NHLPA 'still far apart'

Katie Carrera

NHL labor negotiations hit yet another roadblock Wednesday as the league rejected the NHLPA's latest proposal for a new collective bargaining agreement.

"We're still far apart," NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman told reporters in New York. "But hopefully there will have been some momentum from today's session that we can build off of to hopefully, again hopefully, bring this process to a successful conclusion."

The union's offer included a shift from its previous proposals as it based the players' share of hockey-related revenues on a percentage rather than a fixed amount. Hockey-related revenues would be split 50-50 in the first year of the players' five-year proposal but asks that owners contribute \$393 million for the "make whole" provision that ensures the value of existing contracts. The league's original "make whole" offer was for \$211 million.

"On the big things there was, as of today, no reciprocity in any meaningful sense," NHLPA Executive Director Donald Fehr told reporters in New York. "No movement on the players share, no movement on salary arbitration eligibility, no movement on free agency eligibility, no agreement on a pension plan."

Check out the players' full proposal here and some notable links below.

• Capitals defenseman Roman Hamrlik criticized Donald Fehr in an interview in his native Czech Republic. TV Nova's Roman Jedlicka offered a translation on Twitter:

"I am disgusted. We have to push Fehr to the wall to get the deal. Time is against us. We lost 1/4 season, it is \$425 million. Who will give it back to us? Mr. Fehr? There should be voting between player. Four questions – YES or NO – then count it. If half of players say lets play, then they should sign new CBA. If there is no season he should leave and we will find someone new. Time is our enemy."

 Post columnist Thomas Boswell cautions the owners not to underestimate Donald Fehr.

If hockey wants to avoid losing a second season under Commissioner Gary Bettman's watch, it should widen its analysis from issues like "core economics" and "player contracting." The NHL had better figure out Fehr, how he runs a union, what his strategies are and, especially, why baseball

got crushed time after time. The subtext of these negotiations is the Fehr factor.

Long negotiations have key junctures — like Wednesday. One Fehr method is to identify moments of discovery when his union can determine the other side's true intentions. The union pushes an aggressive proposal, one that usually addresses the concerns of moderate members in the union. That way, it either reaches an agreement soon or the membership toughens once it "discovers" that the actual strategy of the other side is a long fight.

Washington Post LOADED: 11.22.2012

644691 Websites

ESPN / Now and then: Comparing lockouts

By Scott Burnside

With each passing day, the feeling of deja vu grows.

As mind-boggling as it is to consider, every day that the NHL and its lockedout players continue their stare-off puts us closer to another lost season.

That the circumstances are completely different this time around doesn't seem to matter at this stage and, of course, the longer this goes, the more closely linked the two work stoppages become.

Here's a look at some similarities and differences between the 2004-05 season-long lockout and the current work stoppage:

Differences: The two sides have actually spoken on a fairly regular basis since the start of the lockout, on Sept. 15. The fact deputy commissioner Bill Daly and his NHLPA counterpart Steve Fehr didn't speak for a few days last week was a marked departure from the relatively open lines of communication that have marked this negotiation. Now, sometimes the talks have been short, such as when the league walked out after examining a trio of player proposals for 10 minutes. Other meetings have been more substantial. In the previous lockout, there were long periods of icy silence, most notably from mid-September to early December 2004 that set the tone for the historic lost season. Most observers believe that constant contact, however minimal it might be, is imperative to a deal getting done in a timely fashion and saving at least some of the 2012-13 season.

Similarities: The frustration level on both sides of this battle is significant. The owners don't like Donald Fehr and his passive-aggressive style of negotiation. He's not a screamer, he doesn't storm out of meetings and he is, for the most part, extremely measured with the media. In short, he's driving the owners crazy. The players, of course, have it in for commissioner Gary Bettman, and the league has done a nice job of stepping on land mines every few weeks (See: walking out of meetings after 10 minutes, trying to discredit Fehr through the media and authorizing managers to talk to players without informing the union), which has served to reinforce the players' will in standing united in the face of another lost season. Last lockout, the palpable disdain between then-NHLPA executive director Bob Goodenow and Bettman was a key impediment to saving the season. What began as a more cordial interplay has dissolved recently, and the constant shots being taken at Bettman -- funny how the players always seem to forget their own owners when these diatribes are unleashed -- has ramped up the antagonism between the two sides. But, hey, it's a labor negotiation, not circle time at kindergarten, so this is to be expected, right?

Trevor Linden

NHLPA player president Trevor Linden and a small executive committee attended all the meetings in negotiations eight years ago.

Differences: The core issues, of course, are markedly different, as the league was trying to enforce a salary cap last time and also got a 24 percent rollback on salaries. This time the league is coming off five straight years of record revenue growth, so talks are about redefining the sharing of the revenue pie. The players and owners still can't get straight how the league will honor all or most of all the existing contracts, while sorting through the contractual restrictions the league wants. In short, these are important issues, but ones most observers believe are eminently solvable, especially given that both sides seem to accept that revenues will get to a 50-50 split at some point in a new deal and revenue sharing must be enhanced to ensure league stability from top to bottom.

Differences: One big difference that enhances the players' desire to stand firm on having existing contracts honored (funny how the NHL appears to be the only pro sports league where honoring deals made by owners is a subject for negotiation) is the number of players under contract now compared to eight years ago. According to the NHLPA, 592 players were under contract at the start of the 2004 lockout. This fall, 658 players were under contract. If the owners are waiting for the players to crack as they did last time, the fact that so many are fighting for money they're already owed is a significantly different dynamic.

Differences: The structure of the NHLPA is much different this time with Fehr introducing a more horizontal style of organization. There is a 30player executive board made up of the 30 team player reps and a negotiating committee of 31 players. Eight years ago, the NHLPA had a player president, Trevor Linden, and a smaller executive committee that took in all of the meetings. Now dozens of players have taken in at least some of the bargaining sessions. Recently, players such as Johan Hedberg, Ron Hainsey, Kevin Westgarth and Martin Biron have been regulars, although players not on the negotiating committee have also taken in some meetings (such as Brad Richards last week and Sidney Crosby before that). Does it matter? Certainly players publicly insist they feel there has been complete transparency in what has been discussed during negotiations and the information they're getting. But the question remains: If players are afraid to ask questions or raise issues on conference calls or with Fehr himself, how do their concerns get voiced? There is little doubt Fehr is in absolute control of the information dispersed to the players in a way that is markedly different than eight years ago.

## NHL Players' Association

Dozens of players, like Steven Stamkos, Sidney Crosby and Alex Ovechkin, have attended at least some of the bargaining sessions this year.

Similarities: Throughout the 2004-05 lockout, there was much discussion about the damage being done to the game. As it turns out, the damage was minuscule and the NHL returned in 2005-06 with a new set of rules, new faces in Crosby and Alex Ovechkin, and fans returned in record numbers. This time around the debate continues to rage about how this stoppage will effect the league. There are again dire predictions, but the problem for the league and its players is that there appears at this stage to be no new face to put on the game to try to erase the shame of another lockout. Fans see the labor dispute as a clash of egos over money as opposed to a systemic fight about redefining the game. Fans will come back in Canada because that's what they do. But what happens in St. Louis, Florida, Los Angeles and Phoenix (yes, a whole different issue there with ownership) -- all markets that had strong seasons a year ago but where they must fight to carve out a niche in their sporting communities? No one knows how much damage has been done and what the recovery time will be this time, but the prevailing feeling, even among top executives, is that fans will stay away in more places and for longer periods.

Differences: The public relations fight is markedly different this time. Thanks to the explosion of social media, fans are able to voice their opinions more often and more candidly than eight years ago. The owners and Gary Bettman have, for the most part, taken a beating via Facebook and Twitter from players, agents and fans (although, as mentioned earlier, players have been very circumspect about calling out the men who actually pay their salaries). What will be interesting is how sponsors respond to that. Do they shy away from returning or extending existing contracts based on the anger and resentment that seems to be much more prevalent this time? Why wouldn't they? Eight years ago, fans in general, and especially in Canada, believed getting a salary cap and controlling costs was imperative for stabilizing the game in Canada and for small-market teams. It didn't exactly work out that way, but this time the perception at least is that fans are a lot angrier, and that anger is much more easily shared.

Similarities: At some point, time is going to run out on both sides. It ran out in early 2005 as the season was cancelled in mid-February, although there was a last-ditch effort to resurrect the campaign a week later. The prevailing thinking is that owners will not wait as long this time around to close down the season for good. And with the number of concessions owners at least perceive they have made, the digging in has already begun. Many observers believe that if a deal isn't done by late December or early January, owners will simply turn out the lights for good. The good news is that many of those same observers also believe a deal could be hammered out in a matter of days if the two sides got down to serious give and take in the near future. Go figure.

Similarities: At the end of this, when a new deal is finally cobbled together, the players will still get paid millions of dollars (the salary cap went from \$39 million to just over \$70 million since the last lockout thanks to five straight

years of record revenues), and the owners will still be stinking rich. Players and agents will almost immediately begin to exploit holes or flaws in the new CBA, and the fans will be completely ignored in the process, as will those who rely on the sport for income, such as bar and restaurant owners, ushers, parking lot attendants and souvenir sales folks.

Similarities: Stupid. Careless. Arrogant. All the adjectives used to describe both sides and the failure to get a deal done without the embarrassment of a lockout.

ESPN LOADED: 11.22.2012

644692 Websites

ESPN / NHL's offer on player contracting

Staff Writer

ESPN.com's Pierre LeBrun has learned from a source what the NHL has offered to do on matters of player contracts. Unedited, from source:

On main areas:

- (1) offered to give back the year in ELS (NHL has moved from 2+3 to 2 and now back to 3).
- (2) dropped/withdrew request for mutuality of Salary Arb rights but maintained request for extra year to Salary Arb, also offered to synchronize timing of Club-elected Salary Arbs as per NHLPA request.
- (3) suggested willingness to be flexible of 5% contract variability proposal but maintained request for 5 year term limits on contracts.
- (4) maintained request for extra year to free agency, but gave on UFA interview period and pointed out that 3 year EL deal plus 5 year max contract puts Player right into UFA for their third contract
- (5) embraced Union's request to allow retained salary in trades subject to upwardly revised parameters
- (6) embraced Union's request for Payroll Range determined as a percentage of Midpoint as opposed to flat \$16 million
- (7) embraced Union's Cap Advantage Recapture concept subject to several minor modifications and application to existing long-term contracts
- (8) agreed to eliminate Re-Entry Waivers
- (9) Performance Bonus Cushion in every year of new agreement
- (10) extension of No Move/No Trade clauses to last year of "extended" SPC

other "system-related things" league has agreed (1) no Union guarantee of Escrow shortfall and more discretion to Union in setting Escrow rate

- (2) increase in Playoff Pool
- (3) mechanism to allow for Cap exception for recalled players for roster emergencies  $\,$
- (4) changes to waiver rules for Emergency recalls and mid-season European signings
- (5) agreement to continue increasing Minimum Salaries over life of new CBA
- (6) Lower Limit to be satisfied without regard to performance bonuses
- (7) agreed to limitations on "second/salary arb" buyout provisions
- (8) agreed to re-work Critical Date Calendar
- (9) \$60 million Cap in Year 1 (with transition rules allowing Clubs to go to \$70.2 million for full year) and guaranteed cap of \$60 million in Year 2 even though HRR formula would have provided for lower Cap

ESPN LOADED: 11.22.2012

644693 Websites

ESPN /The NHLPA's offer: What it means

## By Pierre LeBrun

The players made a significant proposal to the NHL on Wednesday and despite the league's issues with it, it's a solid step in my opinion, one that hopefully leads to more talks and negotiation. Let's take a look the NHLPA offer:

# BASED ON PERCENTAGE OF HRR

For the first time, the NHLPA offered a framework based on the league's preferred system of a percentage linked to hockey-related revenue, instead of a system based on guaranteed dollars. In this case, the NHLPA agrees to go to 50 percent of HRR right from Year 1. However, a key line in the proposal bears underlying: "There are no guarantees or fixed targets, other than a requirement that, beginning with the second year of the Agreement, players' share, expressed in dollars, may not fall below its value for the prior season."

My take: The league will never accept that caveat. No guarantees, period. But the fact the union finally went to percentage-based offer is very important.

# 'MAKE-WHOLE' PROVISION

The NHLPA asks that the league fork over an additional \$182 million in "make-whole" money (honoring existing players' contracts) on top of the \$211 million already offered by the league two weeks ago. Whereas the \$211 million offered by the league would cover the two first seasons of the new CBA (\$149 million/\$62 million), the NHLPA proposes the \$393 million be spread over four years:

2012-13 - \$182M

2013-14 - \$128M

2014-15 - \$72M

2015-16 - \$11M

My take: Too rich for the league's blood, no question about it. One source told ESPN.com that commissioner Gary Bettman is already under pressure from owners to either scale down the \$211 million that was previously offered or wipe it off the table altogether because of the damage cause by the lockout. So going north of \$211 million is a tough sell for owners. Still, in order to get a deal done, couldn't league at least push it up a bit?

# PLAYER CONTRACTING RIGHTS

Basically, the NHLPA has agreed to two of the league's long lists of demands in this area: back-diving contracts and stashing players in the minors

On the back-diving contracts (Roberto Luongo/Marian Hossa-type deals that have lower amounts in later years to avoid a cap hit), the union has offered a formula that would still charge teams with cap hits, even after the player retires, but only for deals that are nine years in length or longer. The NHL's back-diving rule called for deals that were five years or longer. The other big difference is that the NHLPA's proposal on back-diving is for contracts moving forward, NOT existing deals. So that would exclude the Luongo and Hossa deals, for example, whereas the NHL's offer wants to go after those deals. This likely is still an issue to be ironed out.

As far as stashing players in the minors, the NHLPA's offer suggests charging the NHL with cap hits for players stashed in the minors who make \$1 million or more. The NHL's offer called for a \$105,000 threshold. I don't see this being a big sticking point, either way.

Otherwise, the NHLPA proposal is saying "no, thanks" to all the other league contracting demands, such as changing the rules on UFA age, entry-level system arbitration, five-year term limits and the 5 percent salary variation rule. All of them were rejected by the NHLPA.

My take: The league is going to have to relent on trying to get all of their contract changes demands to get a deal done. But the union will have to make back-diving language reflect existing deals.

# TERM OF THE DEAL

The union wants five years; the league wants at least six or seven years in length.

ESPN LOADED: 11.22.2012

644694 Websites

FOXSporComplete NHLPA offer to the NHL

Staff Writer

ESPN.com's Pierre LeBrun has obtained the complete offer made by the NHLPA to the NHL on Wednesday in New York, as laid out in a letter from Donald Fehr. The unedited letter:

TO: All Agents

FROM: Don Fehr

DATE: 21 November 2012

RE: NHLPA Proposal

The NHLPA's Negotiating Committee today provided the NHL Owners with a comprehensive 6 page proposal on the key issues (see below). As you will read in the proposal, the players have made substantial moves in order to address all of the owners' concerns, end the owners' lockout and get the game back on the ice. Our proposal works off the league's proposed language/structures and moves off our position that there be a guaranteed players' share. These are major moves in the owners' direction. Regarding player contractual issues, we have also addressed the owners concerns regarding back-diving contacts and NHL contacts being "buried" in the minors.

Now that we have made this proposal, there is no longer any doubt as to how far apart the parties are in dollars. As you will recall, we had previously said we thought the gap was less than \$200M, while the owners had said that the gap was much larger and close to \$1B. Under our proposal, it is now undisputed that the gap is only \$182 M over 5 years. Now it is up to the owners to finally make a move towards the players.

At the same time, we have protected player rights by refusing to accept their proposals restricting free agency and salary arbitration.

Here are a few significant details from our proposal:

Players' Share: A major move in the owners' direction by removing guarantees or fixed targets for Players' share.

Honouring Players' Contracts/Transition payments: Players' Share will equal 50 percent of HRR plus fixed payments in the first four years to partially honour player contracts and ease the transition to 50/50:

2012-13 - \$182M

2013-14 - \$128M

2014-15 - \$72M

2015-16 - \$11M

Total \$393M

\*The owners had previously proposed \$211M

Long-term back-diving contracts – Cap benefit recapture rule so clubs no longer benefit from front-loading contracts (move in the owners' direction)

Contracts in the minors – Clubs take a cap hit on contracts in the minors over \$1M (move in the owners' direction)

Four Recall Rule – Unlimited recalls after regular season (move in the owners' direction)

Salary Arbitration – Elimination of walk-away from arbitrator's decision, but clubs can still "walk-away" by not qualifying a player

Please read through the proposal below and contact the NHLPA if you have any questions. The league indicated that they plan to respond to our proposal later today. We will provide a further update following this meeting.

Regards,

Don

NHLPA Proposal -- 21 November 2012

This proposal addresses significant open issues concerning revenue sharing, player contracting, the players' share, and certain other open areas, as reflected below. This proposal does not address other items upon which we have agreed or are pending, such as health and safety, hockey issues, the "jock tax", and international.

- 1) Revenue Sharing
- Pool of \$200 Million at \$3.303 B of HRR. Varies year to year with HRR.
- Contributions to be raised per NHL formula. No discretion to increase individual team contributions beyond what formula provides
- Existing level of distributions to be protected for 2 years. If additional funds needed, raised pro-rata from all teams
- Revenue Sharing Oversight Committee (RSOC) has discretion to adjust amounts for Phase One distributions by up to +/- 15% per team, provided that all such adjustments are considered and decided upon at one time
- o RSOC by unanimous vote may move beyond +/- 15% limitation towards but not exceeding the straight pool value for regular season HRR. (Must therefore compute straight pool every year.)
- · Industry Growth Fund to be managed by the RSOC.
- o IGF will have callable dollars of up to \$20M in first year, \$40M in second year, and \$60M in each subsequent year of the agreement.
- o Need to establish criteria for which teams may apply for IGF funding and/or will submit plans.
- o IGF funding is available to any team by unanimous consent of RSOC
- o IGF funding also available for industry-wide programs or projects
- RSOC has seven (7) members selected by the parties in their sole discretion, as follows
- o Four employer representatives, at least one of which must by an owner
- o Three (3) player representatives, at least one of which must be a player
- o Parties may name up to 2 Alternate RSOC representatives who will serve in the event of absence of a member
- o Need to spell out in drafting the process of the RSOC, and limited arbitral review of decisions
- 2) Defined Benefit Pension Plan
- The parties will establish a defined benefit pension plan under US law per the NHLPA proposal.
- 3) Discipline
- For on-ice discipline, there will be an appeal to a neutral arbitrator or to a panel of three arbitrators (one appointed by each side and one neutral). The standard of review will be whether the League's finding of a violation of the League Playing Rules was supported by substantial evidence, and, if so, whether the penalty imposed was within the League's reasonable discretion and consistent with past practice
- For off-ice discipline, there will be an appeal to the impartial arbitrator. The issue will be whether the discipline was for just cause.
- 4) Player Contracting and System Issues
- NHLPA liability for escrow is eliminated from the side letter.
- NHLPA may set a higher percentage for escrow in a given year than the formula would provide. The NHL may also set a higher percentage than the formula would provide in the last year of the agreement, provided that any number so set is not unreasonable.
- The Playoff Pool is increased per the NHLPA proposal
- Liquidated damages provisions in SPCs are prohibited. This applies only to new contracts, i.e., contracts entered into after a new CBA is in effect.
- Prompt mutual disclosure of European loan agreements, ATOs and PTOs.
- NHLPA proposal on no trade / no move clauses
- NHL proposal to prevent a team playing with less than the minimum of 18/2 is accepted provided limitation is the NHL minimum + \$100,000; counts against the share but not the cap.

- Waivers
- o Re-entry waivers are eliminated
- o Waivers will be required to loan a player who is on emergency recall if that player has played 10 games
- o NHLPA proposal on 13.23 waivers
- Four Recall Rule
- o After the conclusion of the Regular Season, a Club may exercise an unlimited number of additional Regular Recalls provided that it may have no more than three (3) Players on its Active Roster who were recalled by way of Regular Recall after the Trade Deadline
- Minimum salary continues to increase on the same schedule as previous CBA, \$25,000 every second year
- · Goepfert Rule as proposed by NHLPA
- · Performance bonus cushion in each year of the agreement
- The Lower limit must be satisfied without consideration of performance bonuses.
- Players and cash/cap trading. A team may have an unlimited number of Retained Salary Transactions up to 15% of the Upper Limit in any League year
- The amount in excess of \$1M paid to a player while in the minor leagues or in Europe on an NHL contract counts against the cap (none counts against the share). This applies only to new contracts, i.e., contracts entered into after a new CBA is in effect.
- · NHLPA cap benefit recapture proposal.
- o Applies only to new contracts, i.e., contracts entered into after a new CBA is in effect.
- o Applies to contracts of 9 years or longer
- o 35 year old rule changed to provide that the cap charge taken will be as per cap benefit recapture
- Salary Arbitration
- o Walk away eliminated
- · Second buyout period will continue in its current form except that
- o A Club may not buy out a player who was not on its Reserve List as of the most recent Trade Deadline
- o A Club may not buy out a player who has a cap hit of less than \$3 M
- · Critical dates calendar
- o Sec. 12.3(a) election moved per NHLPA proposal
- o Free agency interview period per NHLPA proposal
- · Salary Cap and Payroll Range
- o Growth Factor, Performance Bonus Cushion, Long-Term, injury continue except for any changes already agreed to or contained in this proposal
- o +8M/-8M payroll range becomes +/- 20% of midpoint beginning in 2013/14  $\,$
- o The Upper Limit may not fall below  $67.25\,\mathrm{M}$  in any year of the agreement. This is half way between the 11/12 Upper Limit (64.3 M) and the 12/13 UL (70.2 M).
- 5) Players' Our players' share proposal is identical to yours in all material respects except for the amount of the transition payments added to the 50% share. There are no guarantees or fixed targets, other than a requirement that, beginning with the second year of the Agreement, players' share, expressed in dollars, may not fall below its value for the prior season. This proposal allows us to determine players' share regardless of the effects of the lockout and its aftermath
- Player share will equal 50% of HRR, plus these fixed dollar payments attributable to the first four years of the agreement:
- 2012/13 \$ 182 M
- 2013/14 \$ 128 M

- 2014/15 \$ 72 M
- 2015/16 \$ 11 M
- Payment of these amounts may be deferred for one year (specific payment date to be agreed upon), with the deferral accumulating interest rate equal to the sum of the prime interest rate in effect at The J.P. Morgan Chase Bank on the next June 15, plus 1%. Payment of these fixed dollar amounts is guaranteed by the League.
- In years two through five of this Agreement, the players' share in dollars may not be less than it was in the previous year.
- Attached are charts which show this proposal against your last in the format you provided after our last proposal.
- 6) Term of CBA
- $\bullet$  The term of the CBA will be for 5 years/seasons, and will end on September 15, 2017.
- 7) Transition Rules to be negotiated
- May cover, among other things, compliance buyouts, pro-ration of status/service and statistical criteria/thresholds based on the length of the season, movement of deadlines, and any other relevant matters. ts.com /

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FOXSports.com / NHLPA writes letter to Parliament

By Pierre LeBrun

The NHL Players' Association sent a letter to members of Canadian Parliament earlier this week updating them on the status of the NHL lockout.

The letter, dated Nov. 19, was sent, according to a union source, because the NHLPA is aware that constituents in those Canadian ridings represented by those members of Parliament are getting questions about the lockout.

Written by NHLPA director of hockey operations Alexandra Dagg, the letter states about the NHL that "they continue to insist that they will not move off their 'take-it-or-leave it' approach to bargaining. The players have proposed that their share of hockey-related revenue move towards the NHL's stated desire for a 50-50 split, with the only condition being that they honour contracts they have already signed. Honouring contracts signed between owners and players is a reasonable request.

"We have repeatedly advised the owners that the players are prepared to sit down and negotiate on any day, with no pre-conditions.

"To be clear, the lockout was a unilateral decision taken by the owners. It is the third lockout in eighteen years. Hockey has lost more games to work stoppages than the three other professional sports leagues combined, virtually all as the result of owners' lockouts."

It is expected, another source told ESPN.com on Wednesday, that the NHL will respond with a letter of its own to Canadian Parliament.

The NHLPA letter goes on to say that the players' union understands the damage caused by the lockout.

"The players understand the selfishness of the owners' lockout position all too well. Countless people -- from league and team employees, to hockey fans, to small business owners and their workers -- are suffering unnecessarily as a result."

The letter ends with examples of how the NHLPA has reached out to people affected by the lockout to help them out.

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NBCSports.com / Will NHL agree to NHLPA's request for guaranteed players' share growth?

Jason Brough

While it's clear the NHLPA has made moves towards the NHL, expect the following part of the union's latest CBA proposal (as per the memo sent to the players) to grab the league's attention:

"There are no guarantees or fixed targets, other than a requirement that, beginning with the second year of the Agreement, players' share, expressed in dollars, may not fall below its value for the prior season. This proposal allows us to determine players' share regardless of the effects of the lockout and its aftermath."

So basically the union is saying there are no guarantees...unless you count the guarantee that the players' share will never decrease year to year.

For the NHL, this of course means that hockey-related revenues can't decrease year to year, otherwise the players will receive more than the agreed upon 50 percent of HRR.

Will the owners take that risk? Because there's no telling how this lockout will be greeted by fans and sponsors. And the economy is anything but guaranteed to improve. There's even concern in Canada that the dollar could fall considerably if there's a slowdown in China.

Business is unpredictable. If it wasn't, we'd all know if we should buy RIM stock.

Yahoo! Sports' Nick Cotsonika makes another point:

PA proposal doesn't just hurt owners for a bad year. It hurts them for a GOOD year. If revenues spike one year, it costs them the next.

Nick Cotsonika (@cotsonika) November 21, 2012

Do players want a team in Quebec City? Say NHL goes there and revs spike temporarily. Now owners have to keep it up.

Nick Cotsonika (@cotsonika) November 21, 2012

If this proposal became CBA, owners might work to smooth out revenues year to year, hurting growth and both sides.

Nick Cotsonika (@cotsonika) November 21, 2012

Maybe the league will be willing to roll the dice that revenue will continue to grow each year as it did under the last CBA, but if we've learned anything about NHL owners it's that they love their "cost certainty."

Possibly related update (4:44 p.m. ET):

Asked how long it would take the sport to recover if and when a new deal is agreed upon, Bettman said, "There is no way to predict."

Dan Rosen (@drosennhl) November 21, 2012

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NHLPA memo calls offer a "major move in the owners' direction"

Jason Brough

Donald Fehr: Sidney Crosby AP

In a memo to the players, NHLPA executive director Donald Fehr shared details of today's union proposal to the NHL.

Fehr calls the offer a "major move in the owners' direction" that leaves the two sides \$182 million apart over five years, and that gap is "undisputed."

The memo also outlines the players' offer with regards to issues like revenue sharing, back-diving contracts, burying contracts in the minors and discipline.

You can read the full memo here.

Clearly the NHLPA wanted the details of its proposal to go public. Now it's the NHL's turn to feel the pressure.

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Sportsnet.ca / Spec on CBA: Players are losing, and they know it

Mark Spector

The owners are winning the way they always win, by out waiting the players, and simply saying "No."

And the players, whose frustration becomes more evident tweet by tweet, are making their way down that inevitable road to defeat.

Finally, outright dissention arrived right on schedule Wednesday, as veteran defenceman Roman Hamrlik called out union head Donald Fehr on the Czech web site iSport.cz.

"I am disgusted," Hamrlik told the web site. "We have to push Fehr to the wall to get the deal. Time is against us.

"We lost 1/4 season, it is \$425 million. Who will give it back to us? Mr. Fehr? There should be voting between players. Four questions -- YES or NO -- then count it. If half of players say let's play, then they should sign new CBA.

"If there is no season he should leave and we will find someone new. Time is our enemy."

Yes, as if on cue, the war drums officially sounded in the jungle beyond Fehr's office on Nov. 21. And if former players like Bill Guerin and Mike Modano were talking to the media these days, they would echo exactly what former NHLer Chris Therien tweeted the other day, when the old defenceman said that he would have some serious questions for Fehr if Therien were still playing today.

"Because quite frankly I'm not in the mood to fight the good fight for some kid 10 years from now," Therien, now a Flyers radio analyst, tweeted. "I'm all about union solidarity and staying with it. But what happens when its 4th and a mile and your punter just broke his leg?

"I'm not saying Don Fehr doesn't have a plan B, but if I'm a player again now, I'm calling on that 'always available' line to find it out (what it is)."

"Don't try and fight the players," that tired old jingle used to go, "because they're used to having each other's backs in a battle."

Really? Ask Bob Goodenow how that one worked out for him. Or Ted Saskin.

Or Brendan Shanahan. Or Trevor Linden. Or Paul Kelly...

The reality is, when the money begins to run out, so does the solidarity. That's why the top earners in the prime of their careers -- guys like Jonathan Toews and Sidney Crosby -- aren't likely to crack.

But the "replaceables" like Brandon Prust, or players nearing the finish line like Hamrlik -- one of just 14 players to have experienced three lockouts in their career -- don't have the patience to out-wait the owners.

"Gary Bettman's autobiography is in stores now," tweeted Prust on Wednesday (and we've cleaned up the typos). "It's titled 'How I destroyed a sport and a nation."

I don't know about your nation, Brandon, but my nation has somehow found a way to soldier through the fall without your 12 heart-stopping minutes per night.

Seriously, we learned a few things from the last lockout, and those lessons are all beginning to play out once again:

• This is all about money, and each individual owner has a lot more money - and several more revenue streams -- than each player does. So the players grow frustrated as now three, and soon four of their 13 pay periods pass them by in a short career, after which most of them are unclear about their earnings.

"I don't know where you go from here," Martin St. Louis told the Tampa Times. "It's very frustrating."

• The owners will come out of this with a better economy -- likely at a 50-50 split starting immediately -- thereby, tangible profits from the lockout exist for them. Theoretically, each owner can do the math on exactly when he will recover every dollar from this lockout (damage to the game, excluded) under a more profitable system.

Conversely, every dollar lost by a player is a dollar lost forever. The players know this, and as the checks pass them by they're beginning to see what they saw last time: an adversary that knows it will win, and is fine with sacrificing a season in the process.

""M-I-C-K-E-Y M-O-U-S-E" - The 3 other Major Sports," tweeted Mike Rupp.

Oh boy. I'll bet that hurts Gary Bettman, who had more trouble with a fan who took him on in New York after Wednesday's meeting. By all accounts, Bettman handled the confrontation with aplomb.

Fehr has these players convinced that they are making serious concessions, even though the NHLPA's proposal would likely see them making better than 52 per cent of league revenues for the life of the CBA.

Players accustomed to hearing "Yes!" from NHL general managers are now hearing "No," from the owners. The economy suggests that they give back for the second straight CBA, and Fehr is doing his damnedest to make sure the loss is so incremental in each year of the deal, that players barely even feel the pain.

"We'll get to 50-50," he says, "but only after five years."

The league counters with: "You'll get to 50-50 right now, and we'll 'make whole' those contracts the best we can."

That is why the last two NHLPA proposals were dismissed by the owners at warp speed; because they ignore the basic premise that we've all known to be true since this thing started:

The owners are going to get their way, and the players are not.

"We are willing. They are not," tweeted St. Louis defenceman Kevin Shattenkirk.

If by "willing" he means, willing to give even more before this lockout is over, then we wholeheartedly agree.

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YAHOO SPORTS / NHL, NHLPA inch closer toward CBA resolution, but big gap remains and time's ticking

Nicholas J. Cotsonika

Round and round we go. The NHL Players' Association made more concessions Wednesday, and there was optimism. But then came the fine print, and pessimism. Finally, NHLPA executive director Donald Fehr complained there was "no reciprocity," NHL commissioner Gary Bettman insisted the sides were "still far apart," and there was even more frustration.

NHLPA boss Don Fehr said there was They're closer. That should be the real takeaway. They're close enough to make a deal. That should be the focus going forward – the only focus. There is no reason to go to the brink of losing an entire season.

Yet the lockout drags on, and more games will be canceled soon, including the All-Star Game. Feelings continue to harden. If you're the players, it's because the owners are going for the kill. If you're owners, it's because the players don't know they're already dead.

From the beginning, the players have acknowledged that they are going to give back, that the only question is how much. They knew they were not going to keep receiving 57 percent of hockey-related revenue. But they have tried to protect what they have as much as possible, in terms of money and rights.

They took more steps toward the owners here. Most notably, they agreed to accept a percentage of HRR, instead of asking for fixed dollar amounts with

raises. They agreed to go right to 50 percent, while adopting the NHL's "make-whole" structure to cushion the blow to existing contracts. They also proposed ways to penalize teams for circumventing the salary cap by burying players in the minors and signing long-term, back-diving contracts.

The NHL could no longer say the sides weren't speaking the same language. The NHL could no longer say the sides were \$1 billion apart. While the NHL was at \$211 million on the make-whole money, the NHLPA was at \$393 million — a difference of \$182 million, which works out to \$1.2 million per team over five years. Was that really going to hold up a deal? Wouldn't the owners at least counter with another number? Wouldn't they relent on some of the contracting issues?

[Related: Union's offer to league leaks out]

"Now it is up to the owners to finally make a move towards the players," according to an internal NHLPA memo leaked to the media.

But it wasn't as good as it looked. The proposal included this line: "In years two through five of this Agreement, the players' share in dollars may not be less than it was in the previous year." In other words, the 2012-13 season would set the bar. Then the players would never go backward again.

Fehr called it a "small exception" and told reporters: "Players are making enormous concessions to the owners. We want some protection on the downside."

That seems reasonable and relatively low-risk for the owners, especially since the NHL just recorded seven straight years of record revenues. But that would mean if HRR fell for any reason – the Canadian dollar falling, an earthquake, whatever – the players' percentage would rise.

The league wants to minimize the risk it takes on in the new CBA. (Reuters)And that defeats the whole purpose of the owners' beloved system. Risk is the crux of the whole thing. The owners want to know they will pay the players a certain percentage of what they take in; they feel they have just been giving the players too high of a percentage.

The players have said they want to give the owners incentive to grow the business, and in theory, if the players' share can never go backward, that is a hell of an incentive. But it not only would penalize the owners for a bad year, it could penalize them for a good year. Say revenue spikes one season for any reason – like, say, the debut of a team in Quebec City or suburban Toronto. If it falls the next season, even if the overall trend is still upward, the players' percentage would be above 50.

The NHL did ask the PA to remove that clause, according to a source. But it is disappointing that the NHL did not at least counter on the make-whole money. It is especially disappointing the NHL did not relent more on the contracting issues, especially on the additional years for arbitration and free agency eligibility – especially when there have been hints that the owners would bend on that if the players would bend on economics.

That confirms the players' fear – that if they make another concession, the owners will just pocket it and ask for more. Bettman said: "There was some movement on some issues by the players' association, and that was appreciated." Yet it wasn't enough, of course. Fehr characterized the league's response like this: "Thanks, but you have to agree with what we said."

The problem is that the owners already consider the \$211 million "a gift," in the words of one NHL source, and they feel they have given enough on contracting already. They were asking for two-year entry-level deals; they went to three years. They were asking for "total mutuality of election rights" for arbitration; they dropped that.

[Also: NHL and NHLPA 'still far apart,' but there was progress, too]

The other problem might be simply that the owners saw this as a sign of weakness and are willing to keep using the lockout as leverage. The perception within the league is that Fehr was pushed by the players to make this proposal. Even if he was a lone dissenting voice, Roman Hamrlik didn't help the players' cause when he told a Czech reporter'time is against us," the union should hold a vote and Fehr should be replaced if the season is lost. Bettman said some owners want him to take their current offer off the table, presumably so they can offer something worse and squeeze the players even more.

After the meetings, after a media scrum, Bettman stood on a Sixth Avenue sidewalk in New York and spoke to a frustrated Philadelphia Flyers fan.

"The fact of the matter is," Bettman told Jaymes Hall, 41, of Lancaster, Pa., "when you're dealing with a union and they're not really trying to negotiate any deal that you can live with for the long-term health of this game, there isn't much else you can do. And we're hoping that with the passage of time, the players' association will come to realize that what we have proposed is more than fair."

So if you're the players, what do you do now? Do you believe this is really the NHL's best offer, when the owners have bluffed before? Do you dig in? Decertify? Negotiate? Capitulate?

And if you're the owners, what do you do now? Do you believe this is really the best strategy, that in time the players will just see the light? Do you dig in? Keep canceling? Wait for them to blink again? Wait for them to break?

Does either side really want to go to the brink, let alone beyond? It seems there are varying opinions within both camps, some feeling Bettman and Fehr have gone too far, others feeling they haven't gone far enough to get this done

Round and round we go – hopefully spinning toward the center, a resolution, some kind of season, and not spiraling down the drain.

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