

SPORT-SCAN DAILY BRIEF

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645619 Detroit Red Wings

Flashback: Pete Mahovlich was Red Wings' first draft pick

By Helene St. James

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

Looking back at Pete Mahovlich

The cold facts: Born Oct. 10, 1946, in Timmins, Ontario. Played 884 games in the NHL for Detroit, Montreal and Pittsburgh, collecting 288 goals, 485 assists and 916 penalty minutes. Began and finished his career with the Wings. Younger brother of Hall of Famer Frank Mahovlich, with whom he played in Detroit and Montreal.

The warm memories: The Wings used the second selection in the NHL's inaugural amateur draft in 1963 on Pete Mahovlich, then a 16-year-old forward. He was the only one of the year's six first-round picks to win a Stanley Cup, doing so four times with Montreal between 1971 and '77.

Debuting with the Wings in '65-66, Mahovlich spent four seasons between the NHL and minor leagues, unable to find a consistent offensive touch during his stints in Detroit. His '69-70 move to Montreal began a stretch that saw Mahovlich regularly top 30 goals a season, and he twice reached 100 points, in '74-75 and '75-76. Known for his deceptively quick stride and deft puckhandling, "Little M," as he was called, had 82 assists in '74-75, centering Guy Lafleur and Steve Shutt. Mahovlich also made an impact at the '72 Summit Series, scoring a shorthanded goal in the second game for Team Canada.

Departing Montreal after the '77-78 season, Mahovlich spent two years with Pittsburgh before returning to Detroit, where the team was muddling through its "Dead Wings" era. Mahovlich split '80-81 between Detroit and Adirondack, and ended his playing career the following season after 80 games in the minors.

Mahovlich holds the distinction of being the first Wings' draft pick.

Detroit Free Press LOADED: 12.02.2012

645620 New Jersey Devils

MSG owner James Dolan willing to enter talks with players in hopes of ending NHL lockout

By LARRY BROOKS

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We are told Dolan, who was a primary figure on the NBA owners' negotiating committee last year, signaled his desire to become involved in the NHL stalemate upon Gary Bettman's suggestion it might prove beneficial for owners to converse directly with the players without the presence of league or union staff.

It is unknown whether the Garden CEO has officially volunteered his services to Bettman, with whom he has had essentially no personal relationship dating back to at least 2007 when the Garden urged the commissioner be ousted in conjunction with filing suit against the NHL in a dispute concerning website, digital rights, licensing and team merchandise control.

The source familiar with Dolan's thinking told The Post Dolan believes his relationship with the commissioner is immaterial given his substantial role in brokering an agreement between NBA owners and NBA players that ended that league's 2011-12 lockout last Dec. 8 and allowed for a 66-game season to commence on Christmas Day.

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The Rangers produce the second-greatest amount of revenue in the league and are the NHL's second-most profitable franchise, with the Maple Leafs first in both categories. But those familiar with Dolan's work on the NBA lockout report while he does represent a big-market viewpoint, it does not come at the expense of the well-being of small-markets.

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The latest, though, Slap Shots has learned, is this rumor circulating through the Board that Fehr has a clause in his contract under which he would receive an \$8 million payment should the PA vote to accept a CBA against his recommendation.

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New York Post LOADED: 12.02.2012

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New York Post LOADED: 12.02.2012

645623 New York Rangers

NHLPA still deciding on NHL's suggested meeting; Rangers' Marc Staal hopeful; Garden chairman James Dolan reportedly wants in

By Pat Leonard

The NHL players' association spent more than 48 hours into Saturday night deciding on whether to accept the league's recent offer of a players-owners-only meeting void of NHL or union leadership.

Players' feelings seemed mixed, though Rangers defenseman Marc Staal sounded hopeful in an email to the Daily News. Staal was asked Saturday morning whether players were offended by commissioner Gary Bettman's offer to remove leadership from the next meeting — since it reinforced the NHL's lack of trust in union boss Don Fehr — and which individuals he preferred to see in the meeting.

"I don't think anyone is offended by it," Staal wrote. "It's hard to tell what the (owners') game plan is with this suggestion. I think that it's not going to have any negative impact on the negotiations if we decide to do it. I think any new blood in the room will help, get some high-profile players and big-market owners in there and see where it goes."

Meanwhile, Buffalo Sabres defenseman and union rep Jordan Leopold told the Olean (N.Y.) Times Herald of such a meeting: "I'm not going to be there. I don't want any part of it." And Sabres captain Jason Pominville, who said he'd try the meeting, added: "(Don Fehr) knows what he's doing, and we've worked hard to get him to where we're at now. I mean, why would we want to meet without him there?"

Hours after Staal's comments, another report said Garden chairman James Dolan wanted in on the players-owners-only meeting if and when it happens, hoping to lend a hand just as he did last winter in resolving the NBA's lockout. The report came only 22 hours after Dolan's top star on the Rangers, Henrik Lundqvist, lobbied on Twitter for the NHL "to allow teams that actually are carrying the league financially to get involved."

While the players' association deliberated and likely discussed parameters of a potential meeting with the league, the NHLPA's executive board authorized a \$10,000 stipend to all players, according to TSN's Aaron Ward, offering a Band-Aid for money lost to the lockout.

An attempt at federal mediation between the league and players' union this week was a disaster, beginning with a social-media snafu that led to one mediator's removal from the case before it even began. The mediation process lasted only two days, concluding Thursday with the parties no closer to a deal, confirming the lack of optimism entering the meetings from Rangers center Brad Richards, among many others.

New York Daily News LOADED: 12.02.2012

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New York Post LOADED: 12.02.2012

645626 NHL

NHLPA authorizes \$10,000 stipend for players as lockout drags on: Report

The Globe and Mail

The executive board of the National Hockey Players' Association has authorized a \$10,000 stipend to all of its players, sports broadcaster TSN is reporting.

With the NHL lockout in its 77th day on Saturday, the players have now missed four paycheques as a result of the labour stoppage.

The league and players' union met with U.S. federal mediators in New Jersey this week but little progress was made in the collective bargaining process.

NHL commissioner Gary Bettman held a conference call with the NHLPA on Friday to discuss the league's offer of an owner-player meeting.

Hockey insiders say the players are expected to respond to the league's proposal of a meeting no later than Saturday.

Globe And Mail LOADED: 12.02.2012

645627 Ottawa Senators

Ottawa sporting landscape about to change

By Tim Baines

Let's assume the NHL has a moment of sanity and strikes a deal for its players to return to the ice sometime in the next two years — the Ottawa sports landscape will take another big leap forward in 2014.

With the Senators as the flagship, we will also have pro sports teams in football, soccer and basketball. Add that to a mix which includes the top college basketball team in the country (Carleton), a top-notch junior hockey club (the 67's) and two CIS football teams (Carleton and Ottawa) and you've got a vibrant sports scene.

On top of that, there is still hope that we will have the return of professional baseball. Negotiations are ongoing to bring a Double-A franchise to Ottawa for 2014, but any decision on that may not happen until early next year.

Even without baseball, here's how it stacks up:

NASL

Owner: Ottawa Sports and Entertainment Group

League founded: 2011

Joining league: 2014

Home base: Lansdowne Park

Defending champion: Tampa Bay Rowdies

Closest geographic rival: New York Cosmos

Top players in league: Pablo Campos, Walter Restrepo, Nick Zimmerman

Number of other teams: 10 (more expansion teams could be announced)

Recent news: Bill Peterson was named the new league commissioner ... The New York Cosmos will return next season and future expansion teams have been announced for Virginia and Ottawa.

Ottawa history: The National Capital Pioneers (later the Ottawa Intrepid) played in the Canadian Soccer League from 1987-89 ... It was announced on June 20, 2011 that Ottawa would join the NASL for the 2014 season, playing out of the refurbished Lansdowne Park. Ottawa Fury owner John Pugh is the team's president.

Big Ottawa question: Interest in soccer is big in Ottawa, but can the new pro franchise draw enough fans to make it viable?

CFL

Owner: Ottawa Sports and Entertainment Group

League founded: 1958, first Grey Cup was played in 1912.

Joining league: 2014

Home base: Lansdowne Park

Defending champion: Toronto Argonauts

Closest geographic rival: Montreal Alouettes

Top players in league: Chad Owens, Jon Cornish, Anthony Calvillo, Travis Lulay

Number of other teams: 8

Recent news: Hamilton will play home games in Guelph in 2013 while waiting for its new stadium to be completed ... Ottawa will be the fourth new/renovated stadium in the next five years, joining Hamilton, Regina and Winnipeg.

Ottawa history: The Rough Riders had a tremendous history from their inception in 1876 until they knuckled under in 1996, winning nine Grey Cups. Names such as Russ Jackson, Tony Gabriel and Ron Stewart wore Rider colours. The CFL returned to Ottawa in 2002. Unable to secure the Rough Riders name, the team was called the Renegades. Ottawa was once again left without a CFL franchise when the Renegades were suspended by the league before the 2006 season.

Big Ottawa questions: Who will be the first GM? What will the franchise be called? Will the team establish itself in Gatineau and the Ottawa Valley? Can the team become competitive quickly?

NBL

Owner: Bytown Sports and Entertainment Inc.

League founded: 2011

Joining league: 2013

Home base: Scotiabank Place (for first season)

Defending champion: London Lightning

Closest geographic rival: Montreal Jazz

Top players in league: Anthony Anderson, Devin Sweetney

Number of other teams: 8 (possibly more in near future)

Recent news: Suggestions for a team name are being taken at basketballottawa.com ... Ticket prices are expected to range from \$10-\$12 for upper bowl, \$20-\$25 for lower bowl and \$75-\$95 for courtside seats.

Ottawa history: Strong tradition established by Carleton Ravens men's team, which has won eight national championships in the past 10 years. The team would be wise to get the likes of Tony House and Leo Rautins involved somehow.

Big Ottawa questions: Do we care enough about basketball? ... Will the team be overshadowed by the Ravens?

NHL

Owner: Eugene Melnyk, since 2003

League founded: 1917

Joined league: 1992

Home base: Scotiabank Place

Defending champion: Los Angeles Kings

Closest geographic rival: Montreal Canadiens

Top players in league: Sidney Crosby, Alex Ovechkin, Evgeni Malkin, Steven Stamkos, Erik Karlsson

Number of other teams: 29

Recent news: The league has been inactive since Sept. 15 when the owners locked out the players, seeking a long-term agreement with the NHLPA. There has been plenty of brow-furrowing and head-scratching since ... but no deal. The NHL and NHLPA agreed to meet with mediators this past week.

Ottawa history: The team has averaged more than 18,000 fans since 2005-06 ... Thirteen playoff appearances in the last 15 years, including an

appearance in the 2006-07 Stanley Cup final vs. Anaheim, losing in five games.

Big Ottawa questions: The rebuilding Senators were surprisingly good last season before being bounced from the playoffs by the New York Rangers. Can they take it up a notch? ... If the NHL season is lost, will captain Daniel Alfredsson play another game in a Senators uniform? ... Can Erik Karlsson get even better?

Ottawa Sun LOADED: 12.02.2012

645628 Philadelphia Flyers

Inside the Flyers: Catching up with the Flyers during the lockout

Sam Carchidi

While the NHL season has gone dark, most of the Flyers (remember them?) are spread around the world, earning paychecks and fine-tuning their games in case the lockout - which is in its 78th day - ever ends.

Here is an update on how some of the Flyers, listed alphabetically, have been spending their spare time:

Marc-Andre Bourdon. A candidate for a spot on the Flyers' third defensive pairing, he has steadied his game with the AHL Adirondack Phantoms (minus-2 rating going into the weekend).

Danny Briere. The veteran center has looked in playoff form in Germany (23 points in 13 games).

Ilya Bryzgalov. The 32-year-old goalie has struggled in the KHL as a backup, compiling a 2.83 goals-against average and .894 save percentage for CSKA Moscow.

Braydon Coburn. He spent several weeks training with other NHL players in Western Canada but returned to the area to play in the recent benefit game in Atlantic City.

Sean Couturier. After a quality rookie season, Couturier seemed ready for a breakout year. With Adirondack, he had six goals and 15 points in 16 games.

Bruno Gervais. The first-year Flyer, who has lots of competition for the sixth 'D' spot, recently joined a team in Germany.

Claude Giroux. A neck injury that is not reported to be serious sent Giroux to Georgia for treatment after he had 19 points, including 15 assists, in nine games in Germany.

Nick Grossmann. He began playing recently in Sweden as Matt Read's teammate, trying to show he is 100 percent recovered from a concussion in last season's playoffs.

Erik Gustafsson. He is making a case to be one of the Flyers' top six defensemen when/if play resumes (two goals and 10 points in 18 games with the Phantoms).

Ruslan Fedotenko. Back for another stint with the Flyers (he hopes), Fedotenko had 12 points in his first 22 games in Ukraine.

Scott Hartnell. The all-star winger has been working out in Voorhees and Arizona. He played in the Atlantic City benefit game and is expected to play for a Finland team, one in which he is a minority owner.

Michael Leighton. The backup goalie went back to Ontario to train and try to regain his 2009-10 regular-season form.

Andrej Meszaros. Like teammates Chris Pronger and Andreas Lilja, Meszaros gets paid during the lockout because he was injured before it began. He is rehabbing from a torn right Achilles tendon. Meszaros has made great strides, has resumed skating, and could be ready to play if the NHL resumes.

Chris Pronger. Pronger has moved to St. Louis with his family, and his brilliant career appears over because of a concussion. He has been helping promote a book, *Journeyman*, by his brother, Sean.

Matt Read. Coming off a terrific rookie season, Read has done well in Sweden, collecting 10 points in his first eight games.

Zac Rinaldo. Rinaldo's goal was to play with more discipline with Adirondack, but he had just two goals and 60 penalty minutes after 18 games.

Brayden Schenn. Ticketed for a spot on the Flyers' second line with Briere and Wayne Simmonds, Schenn topped the Phantoms in goals (nine) and points (22) after 18 games.

Luke Schenn. Brayden's big brother has been working out with other NHL players in British Columbia, preparing for his first season with the Flyers after being acquired from Toronto for James van Riemsdyk.

Tom Sestito. Across the pond, in England, Sestito had eight goals and 18 points in 15 games for Sheffield.

Jody Shelley. Shelley has been a loyal member of a small Flyers group that has been skating (and paying for the ice time) at the club's practice facility in Voorhees.

Wayne Simmonds. After stints in Germany and the Czech Republic, Simmonds returned home to Toronto and then played in the Atlantic City benefit. He said his return from the Czech Republic had "nothing to do" with the racial taunts he received there.

Max Talbot. After joining a Finland team a few weeks ago, Talbot had four points in his first five games.

Kimmo Timonen. He has been working out at the Skate Zone in Voorhees and spending time with his family in Haddonfield. At 37, Timonen wonders if the work stoppage could spell the end of his career.

Jake Voracek. Ready to move to the Flyers' top line with Giroux and Hartnell, Voracek had 11 points in his first 14 games in the KHL.

Eric Wellwood. A healthy scratch for four games because he was unproductive, Wellwood had a goal and five points in his first 14 games with Adirondack.

Harry Zolnierczyk. The speedy winger, who hoped to win a fourth-line spot with the Flyers, had five goals in his first 18 games with the Phantoms.

Philadelphia Inquirer / Daily News LOADED: 12.02.2012

645629 Pittsburgh Penguins

NHL players to receive \$10K stipend

By Rob Rossi

Locked-out NHL players will receive a payment of \$10,000 this month.

The Players' Association executive committee on Saturday voted in favor of the stipend payment. Players, who are paid twice monthly, missed a fourth paycheck Friday.

Players received an escrow check that covered most of their first two missed payments in late October.

Stipend payments were made during the last lockout, which wiped out the 2004-05 season. Future payments during this lockout require approval from the executive committee. Money for the payments is taken from a general union fund.

The lockout hits Day 78 Sunday. Games are canceled through Dec. 14, and no negotiations are scheduled. Federally mediated bargaining broke Thursday after two days.

The NHL has extended an offer for owners and players to meet without top officials in the room, including commissioner Gary Bettman and union executive director Donald Fehr. The NHL has declined to identify which owners would be available for that meeting.

The NHLPA has discussed that offer, but the union had not made a decision on it as of late Saturday.

The Penguins, a moderate in this labor dispute, have not been represented at bargaining sessions during the lockout. NHL bylaws require that a minority of eight clubs can grant Bettman authority on league matters such as lockout strategy.

The NHL and union are divided on definitions and split of revenue, money available to guarantee current players' contracts, and contractual issues such as free agency and max term limits.

Tribune Review LOADED: 12.02.2012

645630 San Jose Sharks

Couture leaves Swiss team, likely won't return

Kevin Kurz

San Jose Sharks forward Logan Couture has left his team in Switzerland due to personal reasons, his agent, John Thornton, confirmed Saturday.

"Just family reasons, nothing serious," Couture told CSNCalifornia.com. "I enjoyed the experience overall here, though."

Couture will return to his hometown of London, Ontario, early next week, and has no plans to rejoin Geneve-Servette.

In 22 games abroad, Couture had seven goals and 16 assists for 23 points. According to Thornton, the decision to return home has nothing to do with hockey and Couture is in "really good shape."

Couture confirmed as much to CSNCalifornia.com. "I'm in game shape now," he said. "So if the season starts, I'm ready. If it's cancelled, I don't think I will play anywhere."

Couture is the third Sharks player to recently leave his team in Europe. TJ Galiardi returned to Calgary following a minor knee injury in Germany, while Antti Niemi is also back in the area after leaving his team in Finland.

Comcast SportsNet.com LOADED: 12.02.2012

645631 Tampa Bay Lightning

Tampa Bay Lightning veterans don't fault owner Jeff Vinik for lockout

By Damian Cristodero,

Gary Bettman has been called an idiot by one player, and many others have heaped scorn on the NHL commissioner, whom players see as the bad guy of a lockout threatening to wipe out the season.

But Bettman is employed by the 30 owners, including Tampa Bay's Jeff Vinik. As such, he is carrying a message of which they apparently approve. And that brings up an interesting question. How do Lightning players feel about Vinik? How, if at all, do they separate him from the hard-line the league has taken in negotiations for a new collective bargaining agreement?

A check of some veterans after a recent skate at the Ice Sports Forum in Brandon indicated — for now, at least — they have Vinik's back.

"Mr. Vinik has done so much for this community, it's two different things," captain Vinny Lecavalier said. "I know for a fact not all the owners are involved in the process, so it never came to my mind to associate him with what's going on."

Said wing Marty St. Louis: "Because of everything he's done in the past few years, I have a hard time believing Mr. Vinik doesn't want to play."

It would be easy to say players are being careful because Vinik pays their salaries. But Vinik has built up some goodwill.

Unlike teams that reacted to the lockout by laying off employees and cutting salaries, Vinik did neither. That might change if the season is lost, but right now there are no such plans.

He has kept his commitment to donate \$2.05 million through his Community Hero program, which distributes \$50,000 to specific charities on days the Lightning was to play at home. And his \$42 million renovation of the Tampa Bay Times Forum includes North America's largest center-hung scoreboard.

It also is believed Vinik is a moderate who won't mind the payroll reductions and expanded revenue sharing that will come with a new labor deal but also wants some sort of season to celebrate the organization's 20th anniversary and continue the effort to overcome the damage left by the previous owners.

Still, Vinik has been silent through the lockout, not that he has much choice given Bettman's threat of hefty fines for owners who speak to the media.

Even hard-liners — reporter Elliotte Friedman of the Canadian Broadcasting Corp. speculates they include owners from Boston, Anaheim, Columbus, Florida, Long Island, Washington, Dallas and St. Louis — have zipped their lips.

It is that gag order — and that Bettman changed the rules so he needs votes from only eight owners to continue the lockout — that keeps the onus on the commissioner.

"I'm not sure. Does he work for all the owners or just a couple?" wing Ryan Malone said. "Can all the owners come to meetings and talk to the media? Players can go to any (Players Association) meeting and talk to the media whether they're on our side or not."

Ultimately, though, Vinik is part of a group the league said voted unanimously for a lockout.

Even so, "I'm sure there are a lot of owners who want to play," St. Louis said. "I feel bad for Mr. Vinik. He's done a great job in this community, and right now it's all going backwards."

Tampa Tribune LOADED: 12.02.2012

645632 Toronto Maple Leafs

Sports-vision training helps athletes keep eyes on prize: Feschuk

By Dave Feschuk

Alex Horawski takes stopping pucks seriously. The 15-year-old goaltender, in addition to playing on two teams, regularly works with a goalie coach, a strength-and-conditioning coach and a performance coach with whom he discusses the mental side of his game.

Once a week he also takes direction from a \$15,000 machine, specifically the Dynavision D2. It's a wall-mounted, computer-driven light board, about the size of a credibly huge flat-screen television, that is fitted with an array of about 70 LED buttons. When a button flashes, the goal is for the user to shut it off as quickly as possible with a tap of the fingers. When that light is extinguished, another comes on. It's akin to a midway game of whack-a-mole, except the goal isn't to win the biggest stuffed animal at the carnival. The goal is to improve an athlete's reaction time — essentially greasing the pathways that govern hand-eye coordination.

If vision training is relatively rare in youth sports, it has, over the past couple of decades, become a growing staple of elite regimens. The Dynavision D2 counts among its owners the New York Rangers, the Pittsburgh Steelers and a long list of high-end outfits from college football to NASCAR. The U.S. military and various Chinese sports federations are also customers.

"It's kind of like going to the gym," said Alex, a student at St. Michael's College. "Instead of building the muscles in your arms and your legs, you're building the muscles in your eyes."

The machine is the life's work of Phil Jones, a former CFL defensive back from Scarborough who was introduced to the concept of visual training during his final year in the league, in 1986 with the Edmonton Eskimos.

"I got to the dressing room and everyone was talking about this device, this big board with all these lights on it," Jones said. "The guys were competing on it and talking about who had the highest score of the day. I started using it and I was amazed how I felt. It was like I was walking on my toes all the time on the field. I was so alert."

Jones, knowing retirement was nigh, approached the manufacturer of the device, a precursor to the Dynavision D2 known as the Eyespan. Jones worked out a deal to buy the rights, and set about perfecting and building a redesign in his Markham garage. The concept at first wasn't readily embraced by the sports community, but over a handful of years Jones

found a lucrative market selling to hospitals, who used the Dynavision to aid in the rehabilitation of patients with visual impairments.

That eventually led Jones to market his product as a multi-purpose device. Jones said it was Dr. Joseph Clark, a professor of neurology at the University of Cincinnati who has co-authored studies that have extolled the benefits of vision training, who was among the first to see the Dynavision's potential for managing concussions, both as a baseline test and a recovery aid. Kevin Honsberger, the Markham physiotherapist who oversees Alex Horawski's training on the Dynavision, counts himself among the clinicians who use the machine to both bolster athletic performance and to treat the effects of head injuries.

"Is there a better way to have a kid recover from a concussion than just leaving them in a dark room? . . . We don't have all the answers, but we think there might be," said Honsberger. "Thirty years ago we put sprained ankles in casts, and then we had more trouble getting the ankle moving when we took it out of the cast after six weeks. Now we don't put sprained ankles in plaster. . . . It's the same with the old-school treatment of concussions — put (the patient) in a dark room, no bright lights, and let the brain heal. Well, when you're letting it heal without using it — to me, that's not the brightest way to heal a brain."

Honsberger said the use of the Dynavision for symptoms of concussion has met with some resistance in the medical community.

"Because it's relatively new, the doctors don't know about it. So they say, 'I don't know anything about it, so don't do it,'" said Honsberger. "I don't know that this machine is going to be the be-all and end-all. It's a good machine, but what you're really trying to do is foster a dialogue about concussions. Not only around recognizing, but around how we treat them. . . . We need to keep talking about this. . . . Let's not stop."

Perhaps there is no bigger advertisement for the merits of the Dynavision than the human performance laboratory at the U.S. Air Force Academy. The air force owns four of the machines. Al Wile, the air force's director of sports vision, calls the Dynavision's impact "incredible."

"I like to call us the pioneers of sports-vision training. And the Dynavision is the basis of it. It's the most expensive element, but once we got it, we built the program around it," said Wile.

Wile, along with training the air force's complement of collegiate athletes, has trained Olympic hurdlers on the Dynavision, as well as a list of athletes that includes divers, boxers, basketball and volleyball players. He's trained pilots and soldiers, too.

"The Navy Seals have been in here — they're crazy about it," Wile said. "When you're in situations where it's fire or don't fire — you walk into a room, and it's shoot or don't shoot — the key is the interaction of the eyes and the brain."

Wile said vision training is one of the least explored frontiers in sports.

"There are thousands of neural sensors along the optic nerve that are never even utilized," he said. "We stimulate those with this."

Jones, who last year partnered with a U.S. firm that provides a sales force and other infrastructure, said his company sold about 125 of the machines this year and expects to double the amount in 2013.

"We're knocking off these things like crazy now, selling them all over the world, and I've got partners and board meetings and new products," Jones said. "Considering I started building these things in my garage, it's pretty cool."

If the Dynavision's reach is expanding, perhaps so is Alex Howarski's. He recently made a glove-hand save, commemorated on his YouTube channel, that got his father, Ed, to thinking that his time on the light board had been well worth the \$50-a-session price tag. (Honsberger said he recently helped set up a fund to pay for athletes who can't afford the \$50 fee for using a session on the Dynavision as a baseline concussion test).

"Alex made that save and it was like, 'Wow, maybe it's working,'" said Ed Howarski. "He's had similar saves in the past. But on this one he seemed to have that confidence. And it one where he needed to use his peripheral vision, because it was a two-on-one and he had to come across the crease."

Alex, for his part, said some of his teammates haven't been particularly receptive to the concept of visual training.

"Some of them think it sounds weird," he said. But he added that more open-minded cohorts have been asking questions about the merits of the training.

Wile, for his part, calls it "essential."

"It should be in every high school," Wile said. "But every high school can't afford a Dynavision."

Toronto Star LOADED: 12.02.2012

645633 Toronto Maple Leafs

Pressure will be on Leafs GM Burke

By Rob Longley

Brian Burke is on the clock.

Forget the four years of playoff failure, a period in which his Maple Leafs team has lacked direction and cried out for consistency.

Forget the lack of big-time goaltending or a legitimate first-line centre.

And forget the bluster from the boss and the ripping rhetoric of his detractors.

Whenever NHL hockey returns, whether it be this winter or somewhere in the great beyond, the pressure to deliver results will be as intense as it ever has been for the at times beleaguered GM and his reign in the sport's highest-profile market.

Burke's fourth-year anniversary in Toronto passed this week with his hands helplessly bound by the lockout with regards to anything affecting the current on-ice product. Instead, Burke and his management staff spend time and attention on prospects and minor-league players, no doubt hoping that when the big game finally returns, some of those prospects are that much closer to helping him climb out of a hole that keeps on filling in.

For even if Burke is laying an effective foundation for the future -- and there are plenty of indications that is the case -- patience may no longer be a currency in his possession.

With a new ownership group in place and a restless fan base that hasn't seen a playoff team since before the previous lockout, the heat will be dialed up even higher, if that is possible.

Amazing, really, what the past 12 months have brought to Burke, easily the most volatile GM professionally in his 48 months here.

On his third anniversary as boss of Big Blue (his term), things were far from miserable. The team closed November with a 14-8-2 mark and was contending not just for a playoff spot, but for first place in the Eastern Conference. Phil Kessel had a share of the league lead in goals (16) and Joffrey Lupul had finished a 19-point month.

Things were looking up, so high even, that Burke was just weeks away from signing coach Ron Wilson to a contract extension, a gesture of good faith that would last less than four months.

While others have ridden Burke hard for not being able to hit his trademark home run -- and it's true, he hasn't -- there are reasons to cut him some slack. Both during free agency and trade deadlines in his time here, the market has been lean at best. That said, he has clearly been a winner in his trades, helping to balance off the shortcomings in free agency.

As for draft picks, there is reason for optimism, but we're still waiting to see a Burke selection have an impact at the big-league level.

Will the lockout change things for the better? The task of convincing big-ticket free agents to join Burke in the storm here has long been a challenge, but the post-lockout world may offer more options.

The biggest criticism of Burke -- and his personality precludes him from being anything but a lightning rod -- it's that he has been unable to live up to the big promises made on his hiring four years ago.

The basic infrastructure of Burke's plan has been a failing grade from the start. The goaltending-defence-truculence trifecta he likes to tout has been a miss in all three spots, but is there hope in any of those areas the next

time he takes his perch in his Air Canada Centre suite for a regular-season game?

Let's go through three of Burke's key areas individually and peer into the post-lockout world for hints of changes for the good.

FROM THE NET OUT

Burke's stated philosophy on building a team is to start from the net out, but for various reasons (and in various seasons) it has been a disaster in Toronto.

To be fair, the Burke era started with Vesa Toskala, who wasn't going to last long as the No. 1 netminder. In his first off-season, the Leafs' general manager aggressively pursued and landed hot shot Swedish free agent Jonas Gustavsson, hoping that might be his initial answer.

With Toskala as an unwilling mentor and health issues with his heart, the Monster never truly got settled, especially without much support in front of him. By Burke's third season (and second full one) James Reimer had emerged as the star of the future, perhaps duping some into believing he already had reached that certified No. 1 status.

But when he was run over by Brian Gionta 13 months ago, Reimer never truly recovered and, by the time the epic collapse to the season was in full force, the Reimer-Gustavsson tandem wasn't getting it done. To add to the theatrics of the situation, an off-season blowup with enigmatic goalie coach Francois Allaire exacerbated the team's net pains.

Going Forward: If the speculation holds true and Burke is able to pursue and ultimately land Roberto Luongo, the Leafs will have instant credibility and a place from which to build. It wouldn't be a stretch to expect a credible rebound from Reimer either and the club is still bullish on AHLers Ben Scrivens and Jussi Rynnäs. In short, a reliable presence in net would go a long way in Burke and coach Randy Carlyle's quest for stability.

DEFENCE

In his first off-season, Burke wasted little time addressing this area with two of his bigger acquisitions and, as it turned out, two of his bigger busts.

At the time, Mike Komisarek sounded like the answer to a lot of woes -- a big, bruising D-man who would bring the physical gusto favoured by the new boss.

There were some big hits, but not much else from the former Hab, who suffered injuries, lack of confidence and ultimately lost the trust of Wilson, who benched him for 11 of his final 14 games as coach.

Burke also landed Francois Beauchemin, whom he was familiar with from his days in Anaheim. Beauchemin was never an impact player, though he logged significant minutes. And at least in trading him back to Anaheim in Feb. 2011, Burke was able to pull off one of his best trades yet, getting forward Joffrey Lupul and defenceman Jake Gardiner in return.

Of course, another notable deal Burke made here was to acquire his eventual captain, Dion Phaneuf, from Calgary for what amounted to be a song. Phaneuf has his detractors, but there's little doubt that, like many players, his stock will rise notably when surrounded by better players.

Going Forward: The blue line, post-lockout, may well be the team's biggest area of strength depending on how quickly some of the prospects develop. In Phaneuf and Gardiner, Carlyle has a pair that can eat up big minutes. Add in John-Michael Liles, the possibility of Komisarek responding to the new coach and the youngsters, most notably first-round picks Morgan Rielly and Stuart Percy, the future certainly has the potential to be bright.

TEAM TRUCULENCE

While Burke could have brought in the players and made it clear what type of style he preferred to see on the ice, he didn't fill out the lineup every night and he certainly didn't decide how the minutes would be distributed.

So, while he paid good money to bring in an established tough guy in Colton Orr, had Jay Rosehill on the roster and acquired Komisarek for a thumping blue-line presence, Wilson wasn't shy about putting any combination of the three in the press box on any given night.

We're confident in predicting that there's no room on a Carlyle-coached team for soft play and the emphasis will be more on bruising defence than the push-the-play tempo favoured by Wilson.

Forward James van Riemsdyk, acquired from Philly in the Luke Schenn swap last June, at least adds some needed size to the forward group, though don't expect him to be the rough and tumble type. Matt Frattin,

however, could be the type of player Burke covets if he continues to develop with the Marlies, one player who could benefit handsomely from the work stoppage as his game continues to develop.

Going Forward: The lockout may open some other interesting benefits/options for Burke. If the season is wiped out, Tim Connolly and Matthew Lombardi, with their soft style and somewhat sizable salaries, may not play another game in blue and white. In theory, anyway, that would give Burke the roster and cap space to pursue players with a style more preferred by both GM and coach.

BURKE'S TOP 5 HITS AS LEAFS GM

1. Gardiner and Lupul

Not only did Burke cut his losses on the original signing of defenceman Francois Beauchemin, but he got a huge bonus boost to the offence in winger Joffrey Lupul and a burgeoning blue-line star in Jake Gardiner.

2. Dion Phaneuf

We're guessing we haven't yet seen the best of the captain and all Burke had to ship to Calgary was players he was basically looking to unload anyway.

3. J-S Giguere

Not that Giguere was a star for the Leafs, but getting rid of those two stiffies in Vesa Toskala and Jason Blake was pure genius.

4. Kaberle to Boston

Long past his best-before date, Burke was able to unload Tomas Kaberle to the Bruins. In return, he got Joe Colborne, a former first-round pick who remains a work in progress and a first-round pick to use on his own, which the Leafs did to select big forward Tyler Biggs, a legit prospect.

5. Morgan Rielly

Moose Jaw defenceman is still in junior but may emerge as Burke's best draft selection yet as Toronto GM.

BURKE'S TOP 5 MISSES AS LEAFS GM

1. Net pains

Injuries, heart procedures, coaching controversy -- through it all, Burke has yet to have a bona fide No. 1 netminder for a full season of play.

2. Centre of attention

In part out of necessity, Burke overpaid for a "No. 1 centre" in Tim Connolly, who couldn't distance himself from unproven Tyler Bozak, for that status.

3. Mike Komisarek

Pricy free agent signing may not be done yet, especially if he can prove himself to coach Randy Carlyle, but hasn't come close to living up to the big bucks and billing.

4. Colby Armstrong

Feisty winger was good for a quip and a popular teammate, but he couldn't stay healthy, leading the team to cut ties.

5. Phil the Thrill

Qualifies as a miss only because his scoring threat has, so far, been a waste on a non-playoff team and soon defenceman Dougie Hamilton will join Tyler Seguin as Bruins reminders to the deal.

BURKE'S TOP 5 PASSES AS LEAFS GM

1. Play of his players

It can drive Burke crazy that management and coaches take so much heat and the players walk. He has a point, as too many underachievers have appeared under his watch.

2. Free agency

Come shopping time -- free agency and the trade deadline -- Burke hasn't exactly had stocked shelves from which to choose.

3. Fighting form

Burke always wants toughness to define his team. Trouble is, the philosophy wasn't exactly embraced by his pal, and now former coach, Ron Wilson.

4. Free trade

As per his advance billing, Burke has won far more trades than he has lost since arriving in Toronto.

5. Phil Kessel

Debate the price to acquire him, but Phil the Thrill is a scoring threat that any team in the league could use.

Toronto Sun LOADED: 12.02.2012

645634 Toronto Maple Leafs

'Fresh view' might be just what NHL, NHLPA negotiations need

Michael Traikos |

Two days of mediation was unable to push the NHL and NHL Players' Association closer to a new collective bargaining agreement.

No progress was reported after a series of meetings with U.S. federal mediators Scot L. Beckenbaugh and John Sweeney in Woodbridge, N.J.

"After spending several hours with both sides over two days, the presiding mediators concluded that the parties remained far apart, and that no progress toward a resolution could be made through further mediation at this point in time."

And so the stalemate continues.

Rick Curran has never had a situation where his client sat down with an owner and signed a new contract. If he did, the joke goes, the agent might find himself out of a job. But there have been times during a tense negotiation when Curran found it beneficial to step aside and allow the two principal parties to talk and get a feel for what each wanted.

"It's strictly to get a fresh view," Curran said Friday. "Anytime there's an opportunity out there to take a fresh approach, to have further communication, how can it hurt?"

That seems to be the NHL's belief for suggesting that the players and owners meet without their negotiating representatives following this week's unsuccessful meetings with a federal mediation. They have tried almost every other combination so far: large groups and small groups, meetings where only NHL commissioner Gary Bettman and NHLPA executive director Donald Fehr were present, and others where just the deputy commissioner Bill Daly and NHLPA special counsel Steve Fehr participated. Nothing has worked.

So on Thursday, Bettman proposed that he and Daly and the Fehr brothers step aside and let the owners and players meet privately and speak directly to each other.

Such a meeting would not end in new collective bargaining agreement. It is a just a chance to talk without lawyers clouding the message.

"I think it's a good idea," player agent Mark Gandler said. "If nothing else has happened, why not try this?"

"I think we're at a point where you have to exhaust any and all possibility that would potentially allow for some traction," Curran said.

A similar approach was taken in January 2005, when former player Trevor Linden met privately with Harley Hotchkiss, the late Calgary Flames co-owner. Of course, that did not prevent the cancellation of the season a month later.

"No one is suggesting they're going in to negotiate a contract. That's not what's going on here," Curran said. "And perhaps the end result will be the disappointment of nothing coming out of the mediation. But how can it hurt?"

The question that the players' association was mulling over on Friday was how to properly proceed. Fehr was hired because of his expertise in labour negotiations, so not having him inside the room would seem to be a tactical

disadvantage for the union. Then again, depending on which owners and which players are present, there could be advantages in having employers and employees meet face-to-face.

"Really what it comes down to is that while Bettman and Fehr are working on behalf of both sides, it's the owners and the players that the dispute is between," player agent Kevin Epp said. "If you get in a room with an owner and listen to what his perspective is, and you get to tell an owner what your issues are, then I think that makes sense."

This isn't a one-on-one negotiation. This is a group of players and a group of owners. So I don't think the players will be shy

The key, added Epp, is making sure the right people are present.

"You can't have players who are on the periphery, who just get all the hearsay and don't know all the issues or dynamics and haven't been in on any of the meetings," Epp said. "I think you'd want players to speak to the owners they are employed by. You want a guy like [Vancouver Canucks owner Francesco] Aquilini talking to Cory Schneider or [Montreal Canadiens owner] Geoff Molson talking to Josh Gorges."

Those inclined toward conspiracies might believe this is a tactic by the league aimed at driving a wedge between the players and Fehr. The NHL has tried this in the past by publishing its proposal on NHL.com and allowing general managers to talk to players. So maybe Bettman believes this is a setting where the players will cave.

"I don't think it's a trap," Gandler said. "It's true that any given owner has much more experience than any given player in negotiating deals and discussing important matters. However, this isn't a one-on-one negotiation. This is a group of players and a group of owners. So I don't think the players will be shy. I don't see a lopsided discussion here. I think it will be pretty even."

In other words, this could be yet another stalemate. If it is, the next meeting that the players hold could be with the labour board announcing their plans to decertify the union. Or it could be when Bettman meets with fans to announce that the season is finally cancelled.

Either way, time is running out.

National Post LOADED: 12.02.2012

645635 Vancouver Canucks

Inconsistent Lack out with sore hip, slumping Wolves scratch top guns

Ben Kuzma

VANCOUVER — Eddie Lack has a sore hip. Zack Kassian and Jordan Schroeder have bruised egos.

Lack is nursing a minor hip-flexor injury and didn't play Saturday for the Chicago Wolves, who recalled Vancouver Canucks prospect goaltender Joe Cannata from Kalamazoo of the ECHL to back up Matt Climie against the Peoria Rivermen. Kassian and Schroeder have fallen out of favour with coach Scott Arniel because his best way to motivate the slumping Wolves was to scratch the pair. The AHL affiliate had lost four-straight games and seven of its last eight outings heading into the weekend.

A leaner and quicker Kassian has looked like a different player this season. He has intimidated the opposition and his six goals and dozen points plus 51 minutes in penalties prove he's willing to play it any way. But consistency has to also be Kassian's calling card, especially if he's going to eventually develop into an NHL power forward and not just be considered in the bottom six mix of Canuck forwards.

Schroeder led the Wolves with seven goals heading into weekend play and had a dozen points, but also sported a minus-2 rating. The continuous knock on the diminutive centre is that he needs to get to scoring areas, stay there and finish. Especially if he expects to contend for a third-line centre position vacancy on the Canucks.

As for Lack, the minor injury is expected to keep him sidelined this weekend. A major concern is his inconsistent play, but that's just another sign that an ongoing maturity process will probably keep the towering Swede in the AHL this season. His 7-4-1 record is respectable, but a 3.00 goals-against average and .899 saves percentage had him ranked 31st

overall. The first year of Lack's two-year extension is a two-way deal with a split of \$650,000/85,000 US between the NHL and AHL and the second year calls for a one-way deal at \$850,000. That's when he's expected to back up Cory Schneider, who's playing in Switzerland during the NHL lockout.

Vancouver Province: LOADED: 12.02.2012

645636 Vancouver Canucks

Booth's excellent lockout adventure stops in Ohio for training, more hunting excursions

Ben Kuzma

VANCOUVER — Tracking David Booth is like hunting deer. It requires planning, patience and proficiency to bag both.

After all, the last time we saw the Vancouver Canucks winger, he was on the first line for the first time as the Presidents' Trophy winners made a shocking five-game postseason exit. And just as promptly, Booth disappeared into the hunting hinterland with a sense of adventure and his high-tech bow and arrow.

"I'm somewhere in the state of Ohio," Booth chuckled Friday evening during a telephone interview while preparing a vegetable a stir fry and venison sausage. "There are a couple of good hunting spots out here and I try to mix in a hunt almost every day, whether it's in the morning or evening. I like to get up really early in the morning and it's kind of a nice little routine. It's almost 8 p.m. here and I'm usually sleeping by this time."

That's great.

What about working out, skating and being prepared should the NHL lockout end to allow a shortened season to commence in January? No problem. The fitness fanatic had to actually tone down his regimen last season because he was training too hard and has tailored it to suit his current needs. So, while the nomadic outdoor enthusiast has travelled to six states and one province in pursuit of mountain goats, elk and bears, he hasn't lost his hockey bearings. Or his love of the outdoors.

Booth's hunting exploits have been well documented — he even posted a YouTube video of his legal bear-baiting expedition last May in Alberta that caused an uproar — and offseason adventures have taken the Detroit native to Nebraska, Utah, Montana, Colorado, North Dakota and Minnesota. Yet all hockey-crazed Vancouver cares about is whether the 28-year-old Booth will carry any baggage into next season after scoring just once in his final 16 games, including being blanked in his first postseason. If the three goals he had in a five-game span before a knee sprain Dec. 6 against Colorado sidelined the second-line winger for 18 games is reason for optimism, then the 16 goals he managed in 56 games after being acquired from the Florida Panthers should be surpassed.

"I was playing the best hockey of my career and really enjoying being in Vancouver and that injury couldn't have come at a worse time," stressed Booth. "It's so tough when you don't use your leg muscles for six weeks while you're trying to recover."

If Booth trains as hard as he hunts to earn that \$4.25 million US salary then 25 goals aren't out of the question.

Booth starts his day at 4 a.m. He works out and then skates before heading to the woods for a few hours of hunting. Then comes lunch, more hunting, dinner and lights out. So much for the lavish lifestyle of a well-paid pro. But that's Booth. He's wired in a much different way. He doesn't own a home so the chameleon simply adapts to his surroundings — wherever they may be.

"I was preparing like we were going to start Sept. 15 and with the lockout, it's been different," said Booth. "I can't keep the pace I had in July and August in getting ready and tried to figure the best way to do it. I'm enjoying my time because it's been frustrating with the [collective bargaining agreement] negotiations and trying to take my mind off it a bit."

That hasn't been hard. In Ohio, a former Michigan State teammate has been more than just a host to give Booth a bunk and keep him busy. Tommy Goebel suffered a back injury while playing for Tingsryd in Sweden and required surgery, so Booth has somewhere to crash and hunt as he criss-crosses North America.

"He re-kindled my love for hunting," said Booth. "He was the guy I went bear hunting with in May when that whole thing happened."

Ah yes, that thing. Needless to say, it's been quite the adventure for Booth because of the lockout.

"I started making my way back to Vancouver on Aug. 15 and I stopped in Nebraska because I have a cousin out there," he said. "I was in Utah and Dale Weise skated with me for a couple of days and then I was just in a bunch of spots. I don't have a house of my own yet, so I'm going to travel around. There are so many places I want to go and this is such a beautiful country, it's what I wanted to to."

Booth also has a strong connection to the Christian faith. His belief that God has a plan and that the winger has a higher calling than just playing hockey may rub some the wrong way. But it hasn't masked Booth's competitiveness and resolve to raise his game to another level after the Los Angeles Kings stunned the Canucks in the Western Conference quarterfinal series.

"It was a frustrating time, but I loved the intensity," recalled Booth. "It was important to have that taste and find out how you have to play all the time. It was definitely a learning thing and a failure, but we can do it with the group we have. We can play with any team in the league and beat any team in the league."

Vancouver Province: LOADED: 12.02.2012

645637 Winnipeg Jets

Fan boycott a hard sell

By Kirk Penton

Barry Fitzsimmons would love to send a message to the Winnipeg Jets and the rest of the NHL, but he knows it won't work.

The Winnipegger would love it if people didn't go to the first game at MTS Centre following the lockout, letting both sides know that they can't keep getting away with labour stoppages. He knows that's impossible, though.

"We can't get people united together to say OK, let's boycott. Especially in Winnipeg," Fitzsimmons said. "It's such a hot item right now. People won't boycott the first game."

"I would if it rallied and really got big. I could boycott it, just to show both sides that we can be serious and it's hurting us."

Declan Valley figures some people will take their entertainment dollars elsewhere on a permanent basis, but he won't be one of them. If anything, he wants to see hockey back as soon as possible to help the little people who are being hurt by the work stoppage.

"There will be a lot of happy small businesses," Valley said. "Their economies have been affected. There will be a lot more happiness then."

"It's affected a lot of people. Talking to people that I know who own businesses in and around Winnipeg, especially down around that area, there are restaurants that are actually talking about closing. That's the aftermath of what we're talking about."

Winnipeg Sun LOADED 12.02.2012

645638 Winnipeg Jets

Jets gear still flying off the shelves

By Kirk Penton

Jets fans are not punishing their favourite team with their wallets during the lockout.

The racks and racks of Jets stuff still on the walls of the River City Sports store near Polo Park are proof of that.

"Winnipeg fans are OK with it for some strange reason, because they were without hockey for so long that this is just a shorter sabbatical, so to speak," River City manager Joe Wendt said Saturday.

Jets merchandise makes up about 70% of Wendt's stock, even though sales these days are nothing compared to what happened last year when the NHL returned to the Manitoba capital for the first time in 15 years. He even had to advertise this winter.

However, Wendt noted his store experienced a "huge spike" in Jets-related sales over the last week as people start buying their Christmas presents.

He hears plenty of grumbling from fans about the lockout, but those same people are at his counter buying Jets T-shirts and hats when they do it. That's why he knows everything will be hunky dory when the labour stoppage comes to an end.

"These Jets fans will come back even hungrier again next year," Wendt said. "That's the sense I'm getting."

Jets fan Declan Valley said his kids still want Jets gear.

"They do," he said. "They know there's no hockey on. They're not watching the Jets. But when they walk by Jets stuff they still know that it's there. They still want me to spend my money for it."

"You wish it was discounted, seeing as there's no hockey being played right now, but I don't think you're going to see that very quickly," Valley added with a laugh.

Winnipeg Sun LOADED 12.02.2012

645639 Winnipeg Jets

Jets fans not going anywhere despite lockout

By Kirk Penton

The NHL lockout has claimed two months of action, the Winter Classic and the all-star game, and hockey fans in Winnipeg don't seem to care.

Not that the Jets really have to worry about it, but the league's labour stoppage, which will hit 77 days on Sunday, is making people yawn in River City.

"I wouldn't say people are mad," Terry Patrick said Saturday at MTS Iceplex. "I would just say it's becoming a non-issue, which is scary for the organizations and the players."

The unscientific poll taken on Saturday indicated there is plenty of indifference about the lockout, but the passion for the game remains and any ill feelings will be forgotten as soon as a new deal is struck. Patrick is right that fan apathy should be a concern in some markets, but that won't be the case in Winnipeg.

"You get around the water cooler at the office and once in a while there are some conversations, but I think it's died off a little bit," Declan Valley said. "There is a little bit of a lack of interest. It's been talked about for so long. People are just sick of it. Figure it out and start playing hockey."

Valley, who attended three or four Jets games last season, knows the Jets will survive the labour stoppage, even if it lasts the entire season.

"Winnipeg's been so hungry for a team for so long, I think they're just going to jump back into the seats," he said. "True North did a great job of locking us in for three years, right? So I don't think you have an option. Nobody's giving up tickets."

The Winnipeggers polled on Saturday were basically split down the middle when it came to deciding which side was to blame for the stoppage. Patrick, who is the goalie coach for the River East Royals 10A1 Black minor hockey team, went to bat for Jets owner Mark Chipman.

"I would side in the short term from a Jets standpoint," he said. "I'd be siding with Chipman, who's taking all the risk. These guys make enough money."

Barry Fitzsimmons, meanwhile, feels for the players who have been locked out by Chipman and the rest of the owners.

"I'm actually in favour of the players," said Fitzsimmons, who shares a Jets season ticket with friends. "They want to take away their contracts, which is something that if you sign a contract you should stick to it. They're trying to take a little more from the players than they should."

"I believe what they're standing up for. I hope they get what they want."

So go ahead and take your time, players and owners. Jets fans will be here when you get back. Just don't bore them with the details until you kiss and make up.

Winnipeg Sun LOADED 12.02.2012