



Countdown to Vancouver

Yzerman making list, checking it twice

□ Steven Stamkos, Ryan Smyth work way into Olympic mix

COMMENTARY

OTTAWA — The classic bar stool hockey debates usually look back in time.

Who was the better goaltender, Terry Sawchuk or Glenn Hall?

Which player would you build your team around, Wayne Gretzky or Bobby Orr?

At least one topic for today's bar stool arguments has hardcore Canadian fans casting a look ahead, to Dec. 31, when executive director Steve Yzerman will reveal the roster for the Canadian men's hockey team at the 2010 Olympic Winter Games in Vancouver.

It could be the most anticipated New Year's Eve hockey event since the Montreal Canadiens played host to the Russians in 1975, back when international hockey was still something of a novelty.

In this era, many of the top Canadians, Russians and Swedes, among others, meet regularly in world championships, World Cups and the Olympics. Through time, inter-



WAYNE SCANLAN
Ottawa Citizen

national confrontations have lost their lustre. The coming Olympic spectacle is an exception. The combination of Canada position as host country, along with the 24/7 media coverage of all things hockey in this country, have created an industry out of the Olympic tournament buildup.

Main group appears set

Check your favourite Internet site and you'll find hockey experts and armchair GMs alike weighing in on the makeup of Canada's roster for that first Olympic game against the mighty Norwegians on Feb. 16.

Yzerman's induction into the Hockey Hall of Fame last Monday gave reporters another opportunity to pester him with Olympic questions, which he gracefully fielded without revealing household names.

Still, there were hints, cryptic and otherwise.

"It's not so much evaluating now, it's just watching (players) to see where they are," Yzerman said. "We know what they can do."

While Yzerman said there could be a lot of changes in player status in the next five or six weeks, he admitted a strong core has been identified.

"There are a group of players, assuming they are healthy, that are the nucleus of the team," Yzerman said. "With some players being injured, some players playing very well and other players waiting to get going, we're not ready to make some final decisions, but we kind of have an idea."

Yzerman promises a "difficult debate" among his management staff, which includes NHL staffers Ken Holland, Doug Armstrong and Kevin Lowe, and Hockey Canada's Johnny Misley. All were in Toronto for the induction ceremony.

At such a gathering, impromptu hot stove lounges are bound to break out. One of the hot topics among hockey types and media at the HHOF centred around the Canadian goaltending situation. Do Martin Brodeur and Roberto Luongo hold down the first two spots regardless of what Marc-Andre Fleury does this fall?

So goes one popular theory.

The other two goaltenders invited to the summer orientation camp, Cam Ward (sidelined three to four weeks with a leg injury) and Steve Mason, have conveniently played themselves out of the mix.

Fleury was a hot commodity last month, but when the Pittsburgh Penguins suffered a rash of injuries to several key players, Fleury's numbers took a big hit.

Trust in Brodeur, Luongo

Canadian coach Mike Babcock will have a vote on which goalie enters the tournament as No. 1, but there is every indication Canada's management team is most comfortable with Brodeur and Luongo. In 2002, Brodeur proved it is possible to start the tournament at No. 2, as he did behind Curtis Joseph, and still emerge as the starter before it's over.

It figures that Canada's "core" players

include forwards such as Sidney Crosby, Jarome Iginla, Rick Nash, Mike Richards, Dany Heatley and Patrick Marleau, plus defencemen Scott Niedermayer, Chris Pronger and Shea Weber.

What could make the end result interesting is the inclusion of a few players who weren't talked about as the season started, but are playing their way onto the radar screens of Yzerman and company.

They include one kid and a couple of grizzled vets: NHL sophomore Steven Stamkos and old boys Brad Richards and Ryan Smyth.

It's hard to ignore Stamkos, with his 13 goals — six on power plays — and seven assists in 17 games for the Tampa Bay Lightning. Stamkos also had a strong audition playing for Canada at the 2009 world championships, where he earned a place on the tournament all-star team.

Richards and Smyth seem to have a last hurrah in mind. Smyth, Captain Canada himself, is making good use of his proximity to sizzling centre Anze Kopitar in Los Angeles, producing 23 points in 21 games. Richards has 20 points in 17 games for the Dallas Stars.

If they're added, they would have to take the place of players assumed to be in the picture all along, veterans such as Brenden Morrow, Joe Thornton and Shane Doan.

Corey Perry of the Anaheim Ducks is another young "bubble" candidate making noise.

No wonder Yzerman talks about a "difficult debate."

Sawyer second at Skate America

Canwest News Service

Shawn Sawyer of Edmunston, N.B., won the silver medal Saturday in men's singles at Skate America in Lake Placid — the fifth stop on the ISU Grand Prix figure skating circuit.

Evan Lysacek of the U.S., the last skater of the competition, took the gold. Sawyer moved up from fifth after the short program.

"I'm very pleased," said Sawyer, 24, a 2006 Olympian. "I made some small errors, but this is not the time of the year yet to be perfect. This skate showed me I am headed in the right direction. I was very pleased with my jumps. I landed them all."

In pairs, Meagan Duhamel of Lively, Ont., and Craig Buntin of Kelowna, B.C., withdrew from the competition after Duhamel fell heavily on a throw triple loop attempt, banging her shoulder and then her head on the ice during the long program.

There were no Canadians entered in either women's singles or dance.

The next stop on the circuit is the 2009 Home Sense Skate Canada International this weekend in Kitchener, Ont.

Christine Nesbitt of London, Ont., won the 1,000 metres and was second in the 1,500 at a World Cup long track speed skating meet in Heerenveen, Netherlands.

Two-time Olympic 1,000-metre champion Marianne Timmer, 35, of the Netherlands broke her left heel after falling in a race Friday and is out for the season.

Q.B. No. 1461 of 2009

**IN THE COURT OF QUEEN'S BENCH
JUDICIAL CENTRE OF SASKATOON**

**IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES'
CREDITORS ARRANGEMENT ACT, R.S.C.
1985, c. C-36, AS AMENDED (the "CCAA")**

**AND IN THE MATTER OF A PROPOSED PLAN
OF ARRANGEMENT FOR THE CREDITORS OF
BIG SKY FARMS INC., DRY CAST SYSTEMS
INC. and BIG SKY MANAGEMENT CONSULTING
CORP. (collectively "Big Sky")**

Take notice that Big Sky commenced proceedings under the CCAA on November 10, 2009 and was granted an *ex parte* order of the Court of Queen's Bench for Saskatchewan (the "Initial Order").

The Initial Order granted Big Sky various relief, including, *inter alia*, imposing a stay of proceedings against the creditors in respect to Big Sky and its assets, appointing Ernst & Young Inc. as Monitor, and providing Big Sky an opportunity to prepare and file a plan of arrangement or compromise for the consideration of its creditors and other stakeholders.

Pursuant to the Initial Order, Big Sky is to carry on business in a manner consistent with the commercially reasonable preservation of its respective business and assets.

The Initial Order has been posted on the Monitor's website: www.ey.com/ca/bigskyfarms

Creditors requiring further information, not made available on the website, should contact:

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