

Editorial **Good Canadian Kids**

The year there was ~~no~~ hockey

By Marko Peric

No, you didn't pick up a copy of *The Hockey News* by mistake. This really is the *X-Press*, and I'm the new interim copy editor. But rather than comment about what's happened at the paper over the last few months, or make predictions for the New Year, this writer would like to comment on the state of affairs in Canada's national game.

One person who was remarkably silent during the hockey strike was Don Cherry. Sure, he did some Ford commercials, but the man who always has something to say really didn't say very much about the strike. Of course, it's much harder to spread the message of Good Canadian Hockey without Ron MacLean and *The Don Cherry Show*. Sorry, I mean *Hockey Night in Canada*.

Don't get me wrong, I like Don Cherry. Although he's an opinionated buffoon, he deserves some respect. For that matter, any wealthy man who appears on television wearing a shirt with a custom-made collar is worthy of respect. Of course, Cherry isn't the first celebrity to use oversized neckwear. Elvis tried it as well, in the early seventies.

Nevertheless, clothing doesn't make a man. Cherry always had something to say, whether extolling the virtues of Good Canadian Hockey or complaining about Swedes and their tendency to pass rather than shoot the puck. But once the strike

started, he clammed up like a military press secretary during a crisis. No one is really sure why. Perhaps he was afraid of alienating one side in the dispute. It wouldn't be difficult, as Cherry has a way of annoying someone every time he opens his mouth.

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shell out the money, prices will continue to rise. As owners pay more for quality players, they are forced to raise ticket prices. If the owners don't 'buy' enough good players, their teams won't win, and the fan base will erode. If they raise prices, fans won't be able to afford to go to the games. Either way, the owners lose.

I don't pretend to have the solutions to the NHL's problems. I'm just glad that the differences have been ironed out for the time being. The agreement may break down yet again, but we'll all have to wait and see. In the meantime, be a good Canadian kid. Don't be afraid to go into corners. Know when to throw a couple punches. And shoot, don't pass the puck!

Despite Grapes' silence, this writer feels the need to comment on the hockey strike. It's sad that a group of wealthy athletes want to extract more money from a cartel of even wealthier businessmen. It's even sadder that it costs more than \$100 to take a family of four to a big-league game. Such is the state of professional sports today. But as long as people continue to

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Hope you have one heck of a year!

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