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Seven Year Itch why the **Montreal Canadiens** are destined for the cup and one man's **sad expression of** **devotion**

by Craig Patterson

The beginning of hockey season is definitely the third most exciting time of the year. It is a time of hope and anticipation, a time of increased beer drinking and sheer giddiness. More importantly it is a time to start afresh, to forget about disappointments and injustices of seasons past. Most importantly, for all those pure of heart like myself, it is a time to believe that our beloved Montreal Canadiens may once again overcome the Byzantine system of conspiracies that exist against them in order to collect what is truly ours.

I must state that I was born one of the lucky ones, given a special gift at birth. Someone, somewhere saw fit to make me Montreal Canadiens fan, for which I will always be eternally grateful. Especially because I

could have been cursed a Bruins fan. This has, of course, given me countless hours unequivocal joy as I have followed the world's finest hockey organization and winner of 24 Stanley Cups. It has also made me in effect somewhat of a soothsayer. Unfortunately for all hockey fans, over the course of the last two decades, the NHL has descended to the level of heavyweight boxing. In short, it is a league marred by corruption, payoffs, and game rigging. What is more unfortunate is that this has only been seen by a small percentage of hockey watchers, Montreal Canadiens' fans. Unbeknownst to most, a cabal was formed in the late seventies with the expressed purpose of breaking the Montreal Canadiens dominance of hockey. It was started by a core group of owners and run by shadowy figures who make their living operating behind the scenes. Once organized and with funding in place, the first move of the conspiracy was put in motion shortly after the Canadiens captured their 22nd Stanley Cup in 1979. Prior to the draft,

Canadiens' management was given falsified medical reports which grossly overstated the extent of Denis Savard's knee injury. Unable to confirm these reports because of the "wall of silence" that soon went up, the Canadiens were forced



to draft Doug Wickenheiser with the 1st overall selection instead of Savard. Of course the conspirators knew that this would not be enough to impair the Bleu, Blanc et Rouge. Given the sharp minds in charge of scouting, witness the drafting of Mats Naslund (finest Swede ever), Chris Chelios and Patrick Roy in the mid rounds in the subsequent years, success would not be far off again. The conspirators knew the plot had to be

extended to the farthest corners of the NHL. I am now of course talking about player's contracts that extend bonuses for scoring against the Canadiens or injuring any Montreal player. I am talking about NHL referees who face termination unless making a certain number of bogus calls against the Canadiens

every year. And I am talking about cooks at restaurants who are paid to make sure a Montreal player leaves their restaurant with food poisoning. The cabal has also been successful in brainwashing the mass of hockey fans in this country. As a Canadiens fan, I am of course immune to the propaganda published in newspapers and the subliminal messages being sent out through Don Cherry's suits; messages intended to create a culture of

hatred against my team. That is why the only unbiased hockey fan is a Canadiens' fan, everyone else is blinded by their bigotry. The rest of you may never come to realize what is being perpetrated in the NHL. Hopefully by reading this you will be awakened some what to what is going on around us.

Unfortunately this conspiracy against the Canadiens has been somewhat successful. To the general hockey fan the Canadiens appear to be just one of the countless teams of mediocrity in

the NHL. This however is not the case. It takes a very special team to overcome what les Habitants face in order just to finish around .500. Yet the shadowy figures who control this plot have not been able to completely break the Canadiens. They don't understand that the Canadiens transcend not just the NHL, but hockey itself. It is the team of a higher power. In league of impartiality, the Bleu, Blanc et Rouge would un-

doubtedly thrive once again. Under the current circumstances it takes a special moment in time for the Canadiens to rise up to past glory. This time happens every seven years.

For it is every seven years that the planets align themselves in a certain, special way. This alignment opens up cosmic forces in the universe which allows les Habitants to rise above the dregs of the NHL and beat back those who look to keep them down. You can see it in the divine playoff performances turned in by Patrick Roy, Claude Lemieux and Mats Naslund in 1986 and by Kirk Muller, Vincent Damphousse, and Patrick Roy again in 1993. During these times, the boys are able to overcome every cheap shot and bunk call sent at them and are able to reclaim their trophy. It also during these times that I get a tingly feeling inside that tells me good shall conquer evil, a feeling I am experiencing right now. That is why this year's Stanley Cup winner is inevitable. That is why the Canadiens will win the cup in four games over whoever in the final and Trevor Linden will claim the Conn Smythe. END