

Hockey Night in Hershey

APBA Hockey Project
Steve Skoff
July 2016

Welcome to my new posting, **Hockey Night in Hershey**.

This concept is borrowed from Roy Langhans and his legendary APBA baseball Game of the Day post. This is intended as both an homage to Roy's GoD and as a means to continue my quest to get everyone to discover APBA hockey, which is a FANTASTIC game. Roy has graciously given me his blessing to borrow his idea, and it was Roy who suggested the title Hockey Night in Hershey, which I love (I am an ex-player, a longtime coach, and I reside in Hershey, so the name is perfect). I intend to play and post a random matchup of APBA hockey teams on a weekly basis, while I continue to play and post other projects, like my current 1984 Stanley Cup playoffs replay.

First, a little bit of touting of my adopted home, as the rationale of why the moniker is perfect for a hockey project. The Hershey Bears are one of the most storied franchises in professional hockey. Established by Milton Hershey himself, in 1932, the Bears have been a member of the American Hockey League (AHL) since 1938, making the Bears the longest continually operating AHL member club still playing in its original city. They played at the historic Hersheypark Arena from 1938 until 2002 and now play in the state-of-the-art Giant Center, built next door to Hersheypark. The Bears have won 11 Calder Cups, awarded to the AHL champion, most recently in 2010. They are currently the AHL affiliate of the NHL's Washington Capitals.

On a personal note, my favorite arena ever, as a player or a coach, is Hersheypark Arena. "The Old Barn," as it is known affectionately by the locals, just oozes history at every turn. Stepping on that ice for practices or onto the benches for games brings a feeling that you are some place special, and you can almost hear the roar from a ghost crowd cheering on a long-faded hockey legend. No less an authority than the late, great Gordie Howe has said of Hershey:

"Everybody who is anybody in hockey has played in Hershey." -Gordie Howe

(posted July 13, 2016)

For our very first Hockey Night in Hershey matchup, we feature a game I was lucky enough to roll face-to-face with none other than our very own T-Bo, Gilles Thibault. I can't think of a better example of the quality people I count as friends through our mutual love for the APBA games. If you've never met T-Bo, then you've not been to the convention in recent years and I can think of no better reason for you to do so. As nice a guy as he is, however, T-Bo came gunning with the 1992-93 Montreal Canadiens. I countered with perhaps my favorite team to watch growing up, the 1978-79 Rangers. This one is deserving of the honor of being the first game featured on Hockey Night in Hershey, as the game was stellar and T-Bo's company even better.

I do have to make one disclaimer, however. I personally abhor the shootout. To me, it is deciding the winner of a hockey game by . . . not playing hockey. I get why the NHL and the AHL cannot have games potentially going to multiple overtimes, with travel and fan considerations. I do not understand, though, how ties were such a terrible result that we have to now pretend that the winner of a game of showdown, which rightfully belongs only at the end of a practice or in a skills competition, is somehow deserving of prevailing in a hockey game that has just concluded with the teams at a literal deadlock. It would not be surprising if this were the only Hockey Night in Hershey game that features a shootout, and I do so not because of it, but in spite of it.

Game summary to follow . . .

(posted July 13, 2016)

Patrick Roy Stellar as '92-93 Canadiens Top '78-79 Rangers in a Shootout

July 13 HERSHEY, PA-- Canadiens goaltender Patrick Roy was outstanding in turning aside forty-two of the Rangers' forty-three shots on goal in regulation and overtime, before turning away all three of the Rangers' attempts in the shootout, to lead the Habs to a 2-1 victory. Roy was practically a one-man show early, keeping the game scoreless into the 2nd period despite the Rangers (40-29-11--91 pts, 3rd Patrick Division, lost in Stanley Cup Finals) outshooting Montreal (48-30-6--102 pts, 3rd Adams Division, won Stanley Cup) 16-6 in the opening period and 43-23 overall. New York had a 6-0 advantage in shots on goal in the five-minute overtime as well. Halfway through the middle period, left winger Mario Roberge finally broke through, beating Rangers netminder John Davidson between the pads after some nifty passing by defensemen J.J. Daigneault and Kevin Haller. The score remained that way until the midway point of the 3rd, when Rangers defenseman Ron Greschner finally solved Roy, beating the Montreal goalie from the point on a setup by Don Murdoch. Davidson and Roy made key saves down the stretch, before the Rangers dominated the overtime, with the key moment coming when Roy stoned Greschner on an excellent scoring chance with less than a minute to play, sending this one to the shootout. Roy was unbeaten in the shootout, while veteran Denis Savard beat Davidson to give Montreal the victory.



Patrick Roy stopped 42 of 43 shots on goal to lead Montreal to the victory

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|------------|-------------|
| 1992-93 Montreal Canadiens | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | - 2 | F/SO |
| 1979-80 New York Rangers | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | - 1 | |

1st Period Summary

No scoring.

Penalties: Bellows, Mon. (minor) at 0:16; Odelein, Mon. (minor) at 3:36; LeClair, Mon. (minor) at 7:58; Greschner, N.Y. (minor) at 7:58; Marois, N.Y. (minor) at 11:10; Dejardins, Mon. (minor) at 14:46.

2nd Period Summary

Roberge, Mon. 1 (Daigneault, Haller) at 9:21.

Penalties: Dejardins, Mon. (minor) at 6:54; Talafous, N.Y. (minor) at 6:54; Don Maloney, N.Y. (minor) at 10:41; Roberge, Mon. (minor) at 10:41.

3rd Period Summary

Greschner, N.Y. 1 (Murdoch) at 7:58.

Penalty: Bellows, mon. (minor) at 18:18.

Overtime Summary

No scoring.

No penalties.

Shootout Summary

Lebeau, Mon. unsuccessful versus Davidson.

Nilsson, N.Y. unsuccessful versus Roy.

Muller, Mon. unsuccessful versus Davidson.

Don Maloney , N.Y. unsuccessful versus Roy.

Savard, Mon. **successful** versus Davidson.

Esposito, N.Y. unsuccessful versus Roy.

Shots on goal: Montreal 6-10-7--23; New York 16-12-9-6--43.

Goaltenders: Roy, Mon. (65 mins, 43 shots, 42 saves, 1-0-0); Davidson, N.Y. (65 mins, 23 shots, 22 saves 0-0-1).

Power plays: Montreal 0-for-1; New York 0-for-4.

1992-93 Mon. Canadiens (1-0-0); 1978-79 N.Y. Rangers (0-0-1)

(posted July 14, 2016)

The second installment of Hockey Night in Hershey brings a little personal flavor for me. In the mid-2000s I was a goalie coach for the Keystone Generals, a U18 AAA program based out of Harrisburg, PA. The organization had a roving goalie instructor working with the U18 and U16 teams by the name of Dave Parro. It was my pleasure to work with Dave for three years, and also as rivals when I was on the Lower Dauphin High School bench and he was an assistant with Hershey High School. So, as a tribute to Dave and my way of thanking him for our time together, the '81-82 Washington Capitals have been invited to Hersheypark Arena for this one.

Dave Parro was selected 34th overall, the second selection by the Boston Bruins in the 1977 NHL Entry draft. After two years in the AHL with the Rochester Americans, Dave was claimed by the Quebec Nordiques in the 1979 expansion draft, but was dealt two days later to the Washington Capitals. He played the 1979-80 season for the AHL Hershey Bears, and split the following season between Hershey and Washington before playing 52 games with the Capitals in '81-82. He returned to Hershey the following two seasons and played just 7 more NHL games, so '81-82 is his most representative APBA season.

As for Parro's and the Capitals' opponent, the 2005-06 Columbus Blue Jackets were invited into the Bears' Den for this showdown of ex-Hershey Bears goaltenders. Marc Denis was drafted 25th overall by the Colorado Avalanche in the 1995 NHL Entry Draft. He played most of the next three seasons for the Avalanche's then-AHL affiliate Hershey Bears. Marc played the next nine years in the NHL for Colorado, Columbus, Tampa Bay and Montreal. Although there are higher-profile NHLers who cut their goaltending teeth in Hershey, such as Ron Hextall and Braden Holtby, I chose Denis to join Parro as the first Bears' goaltending representatives to appear at Hockey Night in Hershey.

As an added personal treat for me, center Tim Tookey appears here for the '81-82 Capitals. Tookey was a fifth round selection, 88th overall, of the Capitals in the 1979 Entry Draft. He played parts of seven seasons in the NHL, scoring 22 career goals with the Capitals, Nordiques, Penguins, Flyers and Kings. A local legend, Tookey played parts of 8 seasons in Hershey, amassing 251 regular season goals in a Bears uniform and 353 regular season goals total. He added another 38 career post-season goals and his sweater has been retired by the Hershey Bears. The reason Tookey's presence in this HNH game is a treat for me is because, when I was a college goaltender in the 80's, my summer vacations were spent in central Pennsylvania and me and my dad were among the practice goalies that Tookey, and other Hershey Bears that were in town over the summer, used for target practice at the very-spirited morning skates held informally at Hersheypark Arena. It is with great pleasure that I share this HNH matchup with the APBA community.

Game summary to follow . . .

(posted July 20, 2016)

Dennis Maruk's Four Point Night Keys '81-82 Capitals Victory

July 19 HERSHEY, PA-- Washington center Dennis Maruk scored a pair of goals and assisted on two others as the 1981-82 Washington Capitals (26-41-13--65 pts, 5th in Patrick Division) defeated the 2005-06 Columbus Blue Jackets (35-43-4--74 pts, 3rd in Central Division) by a 5-3 score tonight at Hersheypark Arena. Tonight's game saw an emphasis on special teams, as four of the eight goals were scored on the power play with one shorthanded tally. Capitals defenseman Darren Veitch opened the scoring with a power play goal sixteen minutes into the contest, beating Columbus goalie Marc Denis with Maruk assisting. Thirty-four seconds after Veitch's goal, Nicholai Zherdev drew Columbus even when he beat Washington goalie Dave Parro, finishing off a nice scoring play from line mate Sergei Federov and defenseman Bryan Berard. In the final minute of the opening period, with Zherdev in the penalty box, Bobby Carpenter scored a power play goal, assisted by Maruk and Veitch, to send the teams to the dressing rooms with Washington ahead 2-1. Early in the 2nd, David Vyborny, who led Columbus in scoring in '05-06, tied the game on a nice feed from defenseman Ron Hainsey. Zherdev then netted a power pay goal of his own, assisted by Federov and Rick Nash, before the Capitals' captain Ryan Walter tied the game on the power play with just one tick left on the clock in the middle period. There was a bit of controversy over whether the puck had beaten the green light, but long-time Hershey goal judge Rich Zerbe was adamant that it had. After consultation in center ice, the officials agreed with Zerbe and the game headed to the 3rd tied at 3-3. Just four minutes into the period, Maruk scored his first of the night, a shorthanded goal with Veitch and Greg Theberge getting the assists, which proved to be the game winner as the only other scoring in the period was Maruk's unassisted goal with just a minute and a half to play to seal the deal. Parro had twenty-nine saves to help lead the Capitals to the 5-3 victory.



Dennis Maruk had two goals and two assists to lead the Capitals to the 5-3 win

| | | | | | |
|---------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2005-06 Col. Blue Jackets | 1 | 2 | 0 | - | 3 |
| 1981-82 Was. Capitals | 2 | 1 | 2 | - | 5 |

1st Period Summary

Veitch, Was. 1 (pp) (Maruk) at 15:56; **Zherdev**, Col. 1 (Federov, Berard) at 16:30; **Carpenter**, Was. 1 (Maruk, Veitch) at 19:24.

Penalties: Gustafsson, Was. (minor) at 10:06; Goertzen, Col. (minor) at 14:15; Zherdev, Col. (minor) at 19:24.

2nd Period Summary

Vyborney, Col. 1 (Hainsey) at 3:24; **Zherdev**, Col. 2 (pp) (Federov, Nash) at 13:42; **Walter**, Was. 1 (pp) (Valentine, Green) at 19:59.

Penalties: Gould, Was. (minor) at 4:11; Robertson, Was. (minor) at 12:34; Foote, Col. (minor) at 18:32.

3rd Period Summary

Maruk, Was. 1 (sh) (Veitch, Theberge) at 4:07; **Maruk**, Was. 2 (unassisted) at 18:44.

Penalties: Foote, Col. (minor) at 0:20; Gartner, Was. (minor) at 2:26; Murray, Was. (minor) at 16:22.

Shots on goal: Columbus 13-10-9--32; Washington 9-7-12--28.

Goaltenders: Denis, Col. (59:30, 28 shots, 23 saves, 0-1-0); Parro, Was. (32 shots, 29 saves, 1-0-0).

Power plays: Columbus 1-for-5; Washington 3-for-4.

2005-06 Col. Blue Jackets (0-1-0); 1981-82 Was. Capitals (1-0-0)

(posted July 20, 2016)

After enjoying the Hershey goaltending connection in our last HNH matchup, I hope you will indulge one additional such matchup. Those of you who know me have probably learned by now that hockey has been a part of my life since I was a little boy. And anyone who is familiar with youth travel hockey knows that the entire family ends up immersed in the games and travel and practices, as it is quite ambitious at the higher levels and thus very time intensive. I was lucky enough to have a dad who supported my efforts at playing at the highest levels as I grew up, and my mom and sisters spent way too much of their lives schlepping to one game or tournament or other. My dad was always right there on the glass, watching me play goalie, throughout my youth and college career. Most of the NHL games I attended as a kid in junior high or high school, however, were many Rangers games with my friends, taking the Long Island Railroad into Penn Station in NY with Madison Square Garden right upstairs.

I do recall one real treat with my dad, however, when I was a sophomore in college. Having just come home from the spring semester in May of 1986 to our new home in Pennsylvania, my dad took me to a Calder Cup Finals game at Hersheypark Arena to see the Hershey Bears battle the Adirondack Red Wings. Late in the game, with the Bears protecting a 2-1 lead and the Adirondack net empty, the Bears' goaltender made a save on a long shot, then corralled the puck and shot a high-lofted attempt over the Red Wings' point men and down the ice. The puck slid just wide of the empty net as the crowd roared in anticipation. At this point in history, the only NHL goalie to ever have been credited with a goal was Billy Smith, but he merely made a save before Colorado Rockies defenseman Rob Ramage put the puck in his own vacated net, with Smitty getting credited with the goal. No goalie had ever actually shot the puck the length of the ice to score. I remember my dad telling me two things about that goaltender in Hershey that night. First, he said "this guy belongs in the NHL," and second, "he will score an empty-netter someday."

Proving that his hockey skills analysis was as keen as ever, my dad was proven right on both counts in short order. The following season, Ron Hextall made his debut with the Flyers, and before that season was over, Hextall made history when he shot the puck the length of the ice into a vacated Boston Bruins net, becoming the first goaltender to do so.

In the years since, I have had the pleasure of taking my dad to numerous Bears games in Hershey, including a handful of playoff games. The most recent one of these was in 2012, when we attended Hershey's first round matchup with their rivals, the Wilkes Barre-Scranton Penguins. That night my dad watched the Bears young goaltender and simply said "what is this guy doing down here?" The following season, Braden Holtby became the starting goaltender for the Washington Capitals and is now one of the NHL's premiere netminders.

This week's matchup is a shout-out not to the Hershey Bears as much as to my dad. Some of my most cherished memories in life flow from our times together around the great game of hockey and the rinks of my youth. I am forever indebted to him for keeping me on the ice all of those years and for teaching me more about life than everyone else I know combined. It is with love and great appreciation for my father that I share with you this week's HNH matchup between the 1986-87 Philadelphia Flyers and the 2015-16 Washington Capitals, as these two great goaltenders match up at Hersheypark Arena for Hockey Night in Hershey.

(posted July 28, 2016)

Tim Kerr Scores Twice, Hextall Outplays Holtby in 3-2 '86-87 Flyers Win

July 26 HERSHEY, PA-- Bookend goals by Tim Kerr and three assists by captain Dave Poulin highlighted the '86-87 Flyers victory over the 2015-16 Capitals at Hersheypark Arena tonight. Philadelphia goaltender Ron Hextall turned aside twenty-four of Washington's twenty-six shots in a game in which the Caps held the Flyers to just eighteen total shots. With just twelve seconds remaining in a tight-checking 1st period, Kerr broke a scoreless deadlock when he flipped a rebound shot over a sprawling Braden Holtby after a point shot from Brad McCrimmon off of a nice feed from Poluin. Seven minutes into the 2nd period, Mark Chimera drew the Capitals even, going strong to the net to convert a cross ice pass from Tom Wilson. With just over four minutes to play in the middle frame, Murray Craven put the Flyers back on top, after Hextall found Poulin with a pass near the red line and Poulin chipped it to Craven. The game stood at 2-1 for nearly an entire period, with Holtby and Hextall trading solid save after solid save, controlling rebounds to limit scoring chances. With fewer than seven minutes left in the 3rd and Derrick Smith in the box serving a Hextall slashing penalty, Washington captain Alex Ovechkin drilled a one-timer past Hextall off of a great setup from Marcus Johansson and Evgeny Kuznetsov. With the Hershey crowd reacting in anticipation to each scoring chance down the stretch and time winding down in regulation, Kerr would strike again. Poulin again was the playmaker, taking a pass from Mark Howe and shoveling the puck to the doorstep where Kerr outmuscled Karl Alzner and beat Holtby five-hole for the game winner with just 1:21 left in regulation as Hersheypark Arena erupted.



Tim Kerr scored late in the 1st and the 3rd periods

| | | | | |
|------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|------------|
| 1986-87 Phi. Flyers | 1 | 1 | 1 | - 3 |
| 2015-16 Was. Capitals | 0 | 1 | 1 | - 2 |

1st Period Summary

Kerr, Phi. 1 (McCrimmon, Poulin) at 19:48.

Penalty: Zezel, Phi. (minor) at 4:38.

2nd Period Summary

Chimera, Was. 1 (Wilson, Niskanen) at 7:00; **Craven**, Phi. 1 (Poulin, Hextall) at 15:54.

Penalty: Winnik, Was. (minor) at 10:03.

3rd Period Summary

Ovechkin, Was. 1 (pp) (Johansson, Kuznetsov) at 13:09; **Kerr**, Phi. 2 (Poulin, Howe) at 18:39.

Penalties: Marsh, Phi (minor) at 8:20; Hextall, Phi. (minor, served by D. Smith) at 12:43.

Shots on goal: Philadelphia 6-7-5--18; Washington 6-11-9--26.

Goaltenders: Hextall, Phi. (26 shots, 24 saves, 1-0-0); Holtby, Was. (18 shots, 15 saves, 0-1-0).

Power plays: Philadelphia 0-for-1; Washington 1-for-3.

1986-87 Phi. Flyers (1-0-0); 2015-16 Was. Capitals (0-1-0)

(posted July 28, 2016)

While not the first league to attempt to rival the NHL, the World Hockey Association was perhaps the most successful. The WHA pioneered international scouting, importing European talent to the North American game at a time when the vast majority of NHL players were Canadian-born (err Canadian-bourne, eh?). Add to this the heavy scouting of college and U.S.-born players, and the WHA truly was a World Hockey Association. The league was successful in prying some stars from the NHL by allowing players to seek their true market values by taking advantage of the fact that the NHL employed the reserve clause in its player contracts, meaning players could only obtain market value by fleeing the league. The NHL made the fateful decision not to abandon its reserve clause requirement, which could have upended the WHA before it ever got a foothold, but it chose not to on the assumption that the new league would collapse without ever starting play.

The brainchild of two California businessmen, Dennis Murphy and Gary Davidson, the league was formed in 1971 as a Delaware corporation but run out of the league offices in Orange County, California. These businessmen, however, were no strangers to creating rival leagues by luring stars and changing ingrained styles of play, as Murphy co-founded the American Basketball Association (the ABA) in 1967, installing Davidson as its first president. To attract players, the WHA announced in 1971 that it would not employ the reserve clause in its contracts and, just as significantly, it would not recognize the restriction in NHL contracts. As word of the new league spread around NHL rinks, players became wary of locking themselves into long-term NHL contracts, meaning many of the games' stars were soon entertaining offers worth two or three times their NHL salaries from WHA franchises, initially located in New York (the Raiders), Chicago (Cougars), Los Angeles (Sharks), St. Paul, MN (Fighting Saints), Quebec City, QC, Edmonton, AB (Oilers), Calgary, AB (Broncos), Winnipeg, MB (Jets), Miami, FL (Screaming Eagles), Dayton, OH (Aeros), Boston, MA (New England Whalers) and Ottawa, ON (Nationals).

The new league, although quietly dealing with finances and the movement of franchises in its early days (such as the Dayton Aeros moving to Houston due to the unavailability of a professional-worthy arena in the Dayton area), was able to make its mark with the signing of its first major star, goaltender Bernie Parent, in June of 1972 on the eve of its very first season. Later that month, a shockwave spread through the hockey world when the league announced that Chicago Black Hawks' superstar Bobby Hull would defect to the Winnipeg Jets on a five-year, \$1 million contract. Other NHL players followed, including Derek Sanderson, J.C. Tremblay, John McKenzie and goaltender Gerry Cheevers. The first season ended with the New England Whalers (who later entered the NHL as the Hartford Whalers following the merger of the two leagues by having Winnipeg, Edmonton, New England and Quebec join the NHL for the 1979-80 season) winning the World Trophy (to be renamed the Avco Cup when Avco Financial Services bought the trophy's naming rights in another example of the forward financial thinking of Murphy and Davidson). As the calendar turned to 1973, another shockwave would soon be unleashed.

In June of 1973, one month after the Houston Aeros drafted two Toronto junior hockey defenseman, Mark and Marty Howe, the sons of NHL legend Gordie Howe, coach Bill Dineen, Gordie's old Detroit Red Wings teammate, convinced Mr. Hockey to come out of retirement to play alongside his sons. Howe, who was unhappy as a figurehead vice president of hockey operations with the Red Wings, enthusiastically joined the new league. Rejuvenated, the 45 year-old Howe scored 100 points in leading the Aeros to their first of consecutive Avco Cups in 1974. More NHL stars would follow Howe to the WHA, including Frank Mahovlich, the then third-leading scorer in NHL history behind Howe and Hull). At the same time, European players began taking their high-speed styles to the WHA. Czechoslovakian superstar Vaclav Nedomansky defected and signed with Toronto, Finnish star Heikki Riihiranta and Swedish teammates Anders Hedberg and Ulf Nilsson all signed with Winnipeg. The WHA marked the genesis of the weaving style of play we see today and had theretofore only witnessed when the Russian Red Army team competed in the Canada Cup series or the Olympics.

While the league certainly was not without its trouble and turmoil on and off the ice, it changed the game of North American hockey both in magnifying the skills required to for players individually and teams to compete and in increasing the revenues generated by the clubs while forcing the owners to share that financial success with its star players.

It is with this backdrop that Hersheypark Arena invites Gordie Howe and the 1974-75 Houston Aeros to take on Bobby Hull and the 1974-75 Winnipeg Jets in this installment of Hockey Night in Hershey.

(posted August 18, 2016)

Mr. Hockey Stars in Chocolate Town

August 18 HERSHEY, PA-- The stars were certainly out tonight in central Pennsylvania, and Gordie Howe was a force all night long, throwing elbows and firing six shots on the Winnipeg goal, scoring twice to help the 1974-75 Houston Aeros (53-25-0--106 points, 1st in the WHA West Division, Avco Cup champion) overcome the five points that the 1974-75 Winnipeg Jets' (38-35-5--81 points, 3rd in WHA Canadian Division) top line amassed tonight at Hersheypark Arena. Howe's empty-netter capped off the 5-2 victory, and Mr. Hockey almost completed the hat trick in the waning seconds only to be denied on the doorstep by Winnipeg netminder Joe Daley, who returned to the crease after Howe's clincher. Any thought that these two teams did not come to compete was soon dispelled by the fight-filled 1st period, and the veteran Howe, who once said of Hershey, "everybody who is anybody in hockey has played in Hershey," seemed rejuvenated all night long by both the Old Barn's crowd and the experience of playing in this great venue with his sons Mark and Marty. Early in the 1st, it appeared that this might be a long night for the Howes and the Aeros, however, as the Jets opened a quick 2-0 lead. Anders Hedberg scored on the game's first shot, blistering a one-timer past Houston goalie Ron Grahame, after some nice passing by line mate Bobby Hull and defenseman Lars-Erik Sjoberg. Just two and a half minutes later, Hull scored a goal of his own off of two crisp cross-ice passes by Hedberg and center Ulf Nilsson. With backup goaltender Wayne Rutledge stretching in the space between the benches here in Hershey in preparation for replacing Grahame between the pipes, Grahame was able to settle down and eventually lead his team to victory. Ten minutes after Hull's goal, winger Murray Hall got Houston on the board after Mark Howe's pass up the left side to Terry Ruskowski who deftly redirected it to a streaking Hall. In the closing seconds of the period, Grahame's glove save of Nilsson's point-blank try left the crowd buzzing through the intermission. After the teams traded chances for more than half of the middle period, Gordie pulled the Aeros even by out-muscling Jets' defenseman Heikki Riihiranta just off of Daley's doorstep and depositing the puck behind the sprawling netminder. In the 3rd, Ted Taylor gave Houston its first lead of the night, and with less than three minutes to play, the Aeros' top center, Larry Lund, gave them a two-goal cushion. With a minute and a half left and the Jets' goal vacated for the extra attacker, Mr. Hockey gave the crowd one more thrill, digging a loose puck off of the boards in front of the Winnipeg bench and depositing it in the Jets goal. Then, with the crown still standing in appreciation of Mr. Hockey, he outhustled the Jets to the puck in the Winnipeg end, but Daley spoiled the moment by denying Howe and the crowd of the hat trick with only seconds left on the clock.



Bobby Hull (l.) and Gordie Howe (r.) chat during warmups before doing battle

1974-75 Houston Aeros **1** **1** **3** - **5**
1974-75 Winnipeg Jets **2** **0** **0** - **2**

1st Period Summary

Hedberg, Wpg. 1 (Sjoberg, Hull) at 0:51; **Hull**, Wpg. 1 (Hedberg, Nilsson) at 3:24; **Hall**, Hou. 1 (Ruskowski, Mark Howe) at 13:14.

Penalties: Schella, Hou. (major-fighting) at 7:57; Young, Wpg. (major-fighting) at 7:57; Ruskowski, Hou. (major-fighting) at 15:30; Ashton, Wpg. (major-fighting) at 15:30; Houston (bench minor) at 17:52.

2nd Period Summary

G. Howe, Hou. 1 (Hughes, Lund) at 13:55.

Penalty: Labossiere, Hou. (minor) at 1:47.

3rd Period Summary

Taylor, Hou. 1 Schella, Popiel) at 6:46; **Lund**, Hou. 1 (Hughes, Popiel) at 17:04; **G. Howe**, Hou. 2 (en) (Lund) at 19:01.

Penalties: Lund, Hou. (minor) at 1:56; Hedberg, Wpg. (minor) at 2:17; Popiel, Hou. (minor) at 14:03.

Shots on goal: Houston 13-7-15--35; Winnipeg 10-11-7--28.

Goaltenders: Grahame, Hou. (28 shots, 26 saves, 1-0-0); Daley, Wpg. (59 mins; 34 shots, 30 saves, 0-1-0).

Power plays: Houston 0-for-1; Winnipeg 0-for-4.

1974-75 Hou. Aeros (1-0-0); 1974-75 Wpg. Jets (0-1-0)

(posted August 18, 2016)

For this installment of Hockey Night in Hershey, it is my pleasure to bring you another face-to-face matchup, this being one I had the pleasure of rolling with none other than APBA Hall of Famer Greg Wells. While some in the APBA community are known for their baseball prowess, like John Duke and Greg's son Brian, or their football acumen, Ray Dunlop, Greg Barath and Mark Zarb, Greg has been reaching legendary status in multiple APBA games. Greg, the former football columnist for the APBA Journal, has been scarfing up regional APBA baseball tournament titles, recently won the inaugural APBA Convention Football Tournament and the inaugural APBA Convention Golf Tournament, and has embarked on some interesting APBA hockey projects that have developed quite the following on these message boards. It is also just a matter of time until he breaks through and wins the Convention baseball tournament, as he has recently been a regular in the playoff rounds in Alpharetta. While he may be best known as one of the foremost authorities on APBA football, he has immersed himself in this great APBA hockey game, and I am never surprised when he uncovers another nuance for me. It is with great pleasure and sincere thanks that I thank my friend Greg for sharing with me this week's Hockey Night in Hershey matchup between two of the best teams in NHL history.

With apologies to the great Russian Red Army teams, the Maple Leafs teams of the 40s, the Canadiens teams of the 50s, the Islanders and Oilers teams of the 80s, the Red Wings of the 40s, 50s and more recent vintages, and a smattering of other great teams over the years from Boston, Chicago, Pittsburgh, etc., the 1976-77 Montreal Canadiens are considered by many to be the best team ever assembled, and with no fewer than nine Hockey Hall-of-Famers on the ice and another behind the bench (Scotty Bowman, not Greg Wells), it is difficult to argue the point. This team won an amazing sixty games in the '76-77 regular season against only EIGHT losses and won the Norris Division by an stunning 49 points over the second place L.A. Kings before cruising to the Stanley Cup with a 12-2 post-season record. This was the second of four consecutive Cups for *Les Habitants*, only the second time that was accomplished after the Canadiens of the late-50s took five consecutive. Fresh on the heels of those four Cups, though, another dynasty was in the making.

The New York Islanders of the early 80s became only the second different franchise, and third overall, to win four in a row, doing it right after the Canadiens' run of four in a row. Unlike the storied Montreal franchise, however, this team was barely a decade from being an expansion club. The legendary hockey mind Bill Torrey assembled a pretty impressive roster of his own, and had it not been for a stunning upset by the Rangers in the semifinals of the 1979 playoffs just before this four-Cup run, these two franchises would have gone head-to-head the year the Canadiens won their fourth consecutive. The 1981-82 version of this Islanders team may be its best. Boasting five Hall-of-Famers of its own and winning fifty-four regular season games while dropping only sixteen, the Islanders went on a 15-4 tear in the playoffs, sweeping the Quebec Nordiques in the semifinals before doing the same to the Vancouver Canucks in the finals to win their third of four consecutive Stanley Cups.

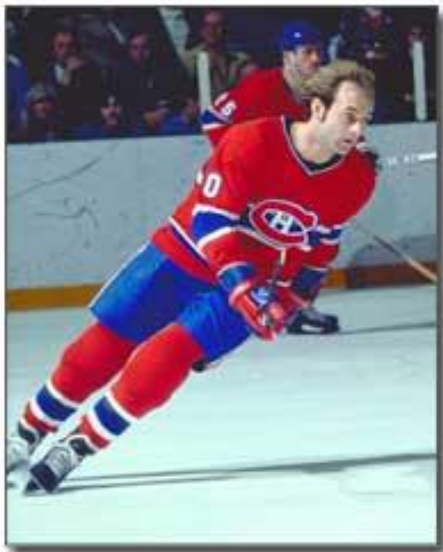
Greg Wells takes the 1976-77 Canadiens into Hersheypark Arena to challenge the 1981-82 New York Islanders, as these two dynasties finally go head-to-head in a game that did not disappoint.

Game summary to follow . . .

(posted August 21,2016)

LaFleur Turns Chocolate Town into Flower Town

August 21 HERSHEY, PA-- Guy LaFleur would have none of it as some were whispering that the 1981-82 New York Islanders (54-16-10, 118 points, first in the Patrick Division, won Stanley Cup) might be the equal of the 1976-77 Montreal Canadiens (60-8-12, 132 points, won Stanley Cup). LaFleur didn't so much steal the show as put on a show for the Hershey crowd, scoring no less than four times off of Islanders goaltender Billy Smith to lead the Canadiens to a thrilling 5-4 victory before another packed house at Hersheypark Arena. "The Flower" wasted no time in sending a message to the Islanders, ripping a wrist shot over Smith's glove just twenty-five seconds into the contest, with the crowd barely settled in their seats, as Larry Robinson and Jacques Lemaire picked up the assists. The Islanders would soon answer, however, when Mike Bossy, who had sixty-four goals in the '81-82 campaign, finished some nice passing by Stefan Persson and Bryan Trottier and deposited the puck behind Ken Dryden less than two minutes after LaFleur's tally. LaFleur would strike again in short order, however, this time on the power play with Serge Savard and Lemaire getting the helpers. Several minutes later, Doug Risebrough would pick up the puck off of a Tomas Jonsson turnover and race up the wing to beat Smith and give the Habs a 3-1 lead. Back came the Islanders however, as Bossy struck again with the Islanders on the man-advantage this time, finishing a nice feed from Trottier with Denis Potvin getting the other assist. The crowd in the Old Barn must have sensed something special in the Arena, as barely ten minutes had been played and these teams were putting on a show of offense with five goals. The goalies seemed to settle in a bit, especially Smith, as the teams were unable to break through for the rest of the period, one in which the Canadiens appeared determined to make a statement, outshooting New York by a 15-4 margin. Despite the apparent lopsided shots on goal, however, the score stood at 3-2 after one period. The game took a decidedly defensive tone in the 2nd, as neither team could reach double-digits in shots. The lone goal of the middle frame came with (who else?) LaFleur getting the hat trick, netting his second power play goal of the night with Lemaire assisting for the third time along with Steve Shutt. The intermission resulted in the Islanders seeming to circle the wagons as they played the 3rd period with a determination to go down swinging, firing sixteen shots on Dryden in the period. Just two and a half minutes in, Trottier put the rebound of a Clark Gillies try behind Dryden, with Bossy also assisting. With just under nine minutes to play, Islanders' defenseman Dave Langevin threw a wrist shot through a crowd in front which eluded Dryden, tying the game at four goals apiece. With the Hersheypark fans on the edges of their seats as the teams traded chances down the stretch, LaFleur would strike again, beating Smith with a backhand after a shot from Robinson careened back in front off of the post with a tick less than three minutes to play. With just over a minute to go in regulation and Smith on the Islanders' bench for the extra skater, John Tonelli found a loose puck in front of the Canadiens cage but was denied by Dryden, preserving the 5-4 Canadiens' victory in this thrilling, end to end contest.



Guy LaFleur put on a show, scoring 4 times tonight

| | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|------------|
| 1981-82 New York Islanders | 2 | 0 | 2 | - 4 |
| 1976-77 Montreal Canadiens | 3 | 1 | 1 | - 5 |

1st Period Summary

LaFleur, Mon. 1 (Robinson, Lemaire) at 0:25; **Bossy**, N.Y. 1 (Persson, Trottier) at 2:13; **LaFleur**, Mon. 2 (pp) (Savard, Lemaire) at 5:55; **Risebrough**, Mon. 1 (unassisted) at 8:33; **Bossy**, N.Y. 2 (pp) (Trottier, Potvin) at 10:25.

Penalties: Nystrom, N.Y. (minor) at 4:49; Risebrough, Mon. (minor) at 9:19; Kallur, N.Y. (minor) at 14:29.

2nd Period Summary

LaFleur, Mon. 3 (pp) (Lemaire, Shutt) at 8:09.

Penalties: Mahovolich, Mon. (minor) at 3:38; Merrick, N.Y. (minor) at 6:12; McEwen, N.Y. (minor) at 8:38; Trottier, N.Y. (minor) at 13:06; Jonsson, N.Y. (minor) at 13:56; Morrow, N.Y. (minor) at 15:32.

3rd Period Summary

Trottier, N.Y. 1 (Gillies, Bossy) at 2:34; **Langevin**, N.Y. 1 (Merrick, Bourne) at 11:13; **LaFleur**, Mon. 4 (Robinson) at 17:01.

No penalties.

Shots on goal: New York 4-6-16--26; Montreal 15-8-12--37.

Goaltenders: Smith, N.Y. (58:30; 37 shots, 32 saves, 0-1-0); Dryden, Mon. (26 shots, 22 saves, 1-0-0).

Power plays: New York 1-for-2; Montreal 2-for-7.

1981-82 N.Y. Islanders (0-1-0); 1976-77 Mon. Canadiens (1-0-0)

(posted August 21, 2016)

For this edition of Hockey Night in Hershey, special thanks go out to my friend Mark Zarb, who graciously posted his 1978-79 Soviet National team set on these boards for all of us to enjoy. Mark, whose innovations with the APBA hockey game took it from a fun game to one that truly embodies the intricacies of the great game of hockey, is undoubtedly proud that his innovations have become staples of the current APBA hockey game. The current version of APBA hockey would not be the fantastic game that it is were it not for Mark and detailed additions to the game engine.

That Soviet National team traveled to the U.S. in 1979 to take on the NHL All Stars in a three game series held at Madison Square Garden in New York. Called the Challenge Cup, the series replaced the NHL's All Star Game in 1979 and boasted what might be the best collection of international stars to take the ice at one time. The Russians brought their weaving brand of offense to the states to take on an NHL squad made up primarily of veterans whose style contrasted with that of the Soviets. While the Russian Weave is the seminal style that has evolved into today's approach to advancing the puck, the North American game employed primarily a style in which the forward filled their lanes, threw the puck in deep and attacked. The Russian style featured the forwards "following their passes" into each of the lanes and thus weaving through center ice, penetrating wide to pull the opponent's defenseman apart and then finding the trailers with crisp cross-ice passes. Today's NHL and international games are virtually indecipherable from each other as the weave has permeated the game and led to the high-speed skill game that excites today.

The 1979 Challenge Cup, though, was a fascinating contrast of styles, and the three game series drew great interest both in North America and overseas. The conventional wisdom had it that the Russian style, developed on the wide ice surfaces in Europe and the Soviet Union would not translate well on the smaller Garden ice. The Soviets were determined to demonstrate to the world that the weave could indeed be adapted to the smaller ice surface and the results of the series seemed to bear that out. Game 1, played on February 8th, seemed to redeem the old guard who insisted that the NHL style was superior for these conditions, as the NHL won 4-2. Two nights later, however, the Russians got the better of the NHLers, winning a wide open 5-4 contest. Game 3, however, would be the Russian's coming out party, as they blitzed the NHL squad 6-0 before a stunned Madison Square Garden crowd. Perhaps no one paid more attention to that result than Herb Brooks, who would spend the next twelve months figure out how to get a group of college kids from Massachusetts and Minnesota to match the high octane Soviets in a 1980 Olympic tournament that was to become no less than legendary.

It is with great pleasure that we invite the 1978-79 Soviet National team into Hersheypark Arena to take on the 1978-79 NHL All-Stars. Game summary to follow . . .

(posted September 5, 2016)

The Soviets Invade Central Pennsylvania, Rout the North American Squad

September 5 HERSHEY, PA-- What had been billed as a goaltending showdown for the ages between Montreal great Ken Dryden and Russian legend Vladislav Tretiak quickly devolved into a Soviet show of passing and shooting that left the Hersheypark crowd in awe. The Soviets scored five times on Dryden in the opening frame on fifteen shots on goal and never looked back, reaching double digits on a night when even five goals from five NHL stars, four of whom are in the Hockey Hall of Fame, was not nearly enough to match the Russian fire power. Russian winger Helmut Balderis opened the scoring seven minutes into the contest, taking a crisp cross-ice pass from defenseman Yuri Federov and depositing the puck in the cage behind Dryden. Three minutes later, Aleksandr Golikov parked on Dryden's back door where Slava Fetisov found him and Golikov made it 2-0 for the Russians. Just a minute and a half later, Sergei Makarov made it 3-0 as brothers Aleksandr and Vladimir Golikov put on a show of passing and set up Makarov for the one-timer that brought audible gasps from those in attendance. Two minutes later, the Islanders' Mike Bossy would provide an NHL answer, beating Tretiak from the near circle on a play set up by Maple Leafs' defenseman Borje Salming and Islanders' line mate Bryan Trottier. The Soviets were not nearly done in the period, however, as just a minute and a half after Bossy's tally Vladimir Kovin beat Dryden before Russian legend Boris Mikhailov did the same in the closing minute of the period and the Soviets took a 5-1 lead into the first intermission. As the teams emerged from the dressing rooms for the 2nd period, there was a stunning sight as Dryden took a seat on the home bench in favor of Chicago Black Hawks' goalie Tony Esposito. Balderis welcomed Espo to the game with his second goal of the night just three and a half minutes into the middle period, and two minutes later Vladimir Golikov made it 7-1 in favor of the Russians. This NHL team was not about to quit, however, finally awakening as the Los Angeles Kings' Marcel Dionne beat Tretiak from in close, on a nice setup by young Colorado Rockies' defenseman Barry Beck, who followed that playmaker with a goal of his own when he redirected a Trottier shot through Tretiak's pads for a power play goal halfway through the period. With just over three minutes to play in the 2nd and the teams skating at four aside, the Philadelphia Flyers' Bill Barber brought the NHL to within 7-4 on a nice feed from Flyers' teammate Bobby Clarke. With the NHLers swarming, Tretiak came up big on two goal-mouth offerings before Mikhailov provided the dagger by getting behind the NHL defense and beating Esposito inside of two minutes to play, with his longtime line mates Vladimir Petrov and Valeri Kharlamov getting the assists. In the 3rd period, Gennadiy Tsygankov scored just twenty-seven seconds in to make it 9-4 before the Buffalo Sabres' Gil Perreault banged home a nice pass from the Toronto Maple Leafs' Darryl Sittler. Russian coach Viktor Tikanov then lifted Tretiak in favor of backup goalie Vladimir Myshkin, and the greatly anticipated Dryden-Tretiak matchup was but a distant memory. Seven minutes later, Viktor Zhlukto gave the Russians double digits as the Soviets skate all over the Hersheypark ice en route to the 10-5 drubbing of the NHL All-Stars.



Russian great Boris Mikhailov had two goals and an assist in the 10-5 win

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|------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|-------------|
| 1978-79 Soviet Union | 5 | 3 | 2 | - 10 |
| 1978-79 NHL All-Stars | 1 | 3 | 1 | - 5 |

1st Period Summary

Balderis, Rus. 1 (Federov, Zhlukto) at 6:50; **A. Golikov**, Rus. 1 (Fetisov, Bilyaletdinov) at 10:07; **Makarov**, Rus. 1 (A. Golikov, V. Golikov) at 11:32; **Bossy**, NHL 1 (Salming, Trottier) at 13:28; **Kovin**, Rus. 1 (Varnakov, Skvortsov) at 14:57; **Mikhailov**, Rus. 1 (Vasiliev, Federov) at 19:14.

Penalty: Clarke, NHL (minor) at 7:45.

2nd Period Summary

Balderis, Rus. 2 (Fetisov, Zhluktov) at 3:30; **V. Golikov**, Rus. 1 (A. Golikov, Makarov) at 5:33; **Dionne**, NHL 1 (Beck, Shutt) at 8:24; **Beck**, NHL 1 (pp) (Trottier, Bossy) at 10:46; **Barber**, NHL 1 (Clarke) at 16:42; **Mikhailov**, Rus. 2 (Petrov, Kharlamov) at 18:12.

Penalties: Skvortsov, Rus. (minor) at 10:21; Potvin, NHL (minor) at 14:59; Fetisov, Rus. (minor) at 14:59.

3rd Period Summary

Tsygankov, Rus. 1 (Kharlamov, Mikhailov) at 0:27; **Perreault**, NHL 1 (Sittler, Salming) at 0:57; **Zhluktov**, Rus. 1 (Balderis, Vasiliev) at 7:59.

Penalty: Dionne, NHL (minor) at 10:24.

Shots on goal: Russia 15-8-4--27; NHL 9-14-8--31.

Goaltenders: Tretiak, Rus. (41 mins; 24 shots, 19 saves); Myshkin, Rus. (19 mins; 7 shots, 7 saves); Dryden, NHL (20 mins; 15 shots, 10 saves); Esposito, NHL (40 mins; 12 shots, 7 saves).

Power plays: Russia 0-for-2; NHL 1-for-1.

1978-79 Soviet Union (1-0-0); 1978-79 NHL All-Stars (0-1-0)

(posted September 5, 2016)