



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • Aug. 9, 2017



Hurricanes' Waddell says team made \$2M, room for growth

PROFIT DOES NOT INCLUDE EXTRA \$16M TEAM RECEIVED FROM VEGAS EXPANSION; OWNERSHIP SITUATION ONGOING

August 9, 2017 Cory Lavalette

RALEIGH — For Don Waddell, president of the Carolina Hurricanes' parent company Gale Force Sports & Entertainment, it's "business as usual."

That said, it's been a busy summer for the team. The Hurricanes reshaped their roster with several additions via trade and added one of the biggest names on the July 1 free agent market, bringing back Justin Williams on a two-year contract.

Carolina also tied up two of its young defensemen, signing partners Jaccob Slavin (seven years, \$37.1 million) and Brett Pesce (six years, \$24.15 million) to contract extensions that will take effect in 2018-19 and keep the duo in Raleigh until at least 2025 and 2024, respectively.

The biggest news, however, is there has been movement on the ownership front. Chuck Greenberg, former managing partner of MLB's Texas Rangers and current owner three minor league baseball teams, has been revealed as the head of one group that has signed a nonbinding term sheet to explore purchasing the team. Greenberg's group is the only group to be publicly revealed.

"I would prefer for as long as you can to keep these things quiet until you get to a point where you're ready to take that next step," Waddell, in an interview Friday, said of the process of selling the team. "I think it's better for everybody, but I don't think there's been any damage done here."

The status of the team, which has been owned by Peter Karmanos Jr. since 1994 and was relocated to Raleigh from Hartford, Conn., in 1997, has been a hot-button topic locally and across the NHL for a couple seasons. Karmanos, 74, and NHL have repeatedly refuted claims the team could be relocated.

"Just because it's a sale, I don't know why people would say that because it's for sale it's leaving," Waddell said. "It's never been talked about, it's never been the intent. [NHL] commissioner [Gary Bettman] has said this franchise isn't going any place.

"Businesses sell all the time. But I think maybe that happening was maybe a good thing for our fans," he added about word of Greenberg's interest — and plans to keep the team in N.C. — leaking.

Despite ranking last out of 30 teams in attendance last season (11,776 per game), Waddell said the Hurricanes made approximately \$2 million.

While each of the NHL's 30 teams received a \$16 million cut of the incoming Vegas Golden Knights' \$500 million expansion fee, Waddell said the Hurricanes made money even without the one-time influx of expansion cash.

"The Las Vegas money would be up and above that," Waddell said of the team making a profit. "We made \$18 million — it's a true statement — but really you'd be selling something that's not going to continue, let's say."

Several factors, including a low player payroll, contributed to the Hurricanes turning a profit — the only time the team has done so without reaching the postseason.

"One is, from a revenue standpoint, our revenues have continued to escalate with new TV deals," Waddell said. "We have to make sure we give [the NHL] a lot of credit. They've done a tremendous job.

"From a local standpoint, our ticket revenue was up a little bit from the year prior; not much," he added. "Our sponsorship was up — it comes out someplace around 15 percent."

Waddell also said, in a surprise, that merchandise sales doubled last season.

"We did take a different approach in the merchandise store," Waddell said. "We had a lot more higher-end quality, and we found out people didn't mind spending a little bit more money to get a better quality [product], whether it be a golf shirt or a hat or something like that."

The team is also already seeing a bump in jersey sales this offseason thanks to the NHL's move from Reebok to Adidas and the team's revamped uniforms.

Waddell pointed out the team has added 53 new positions, including 41 in sales, since he joined Gale Force three years ago, and meshing the operations of the team and PNC Arena has helped streamline things.

"We try to cross these synergies as much as we can," he said.

Karmanos is still the one signing off on all decisions, including the offseason contracts, and remains in discussions with potential buyers, including Greenberg.

"Chuck can walk away at any time or Pete could walk away at any time," Waddell said. "Chuck's trying to get all of his investors in order, and if he does that we'll continue to move the process forward."

Those potential investors include people in the Triangle, Waddell confirmed.

The fact the Hurricanes made money even without the one-time influx of cash from expansion and while missing the playoffs for an eighth-straight season bodes well for the franchise's room for growth, even with the team's payroll expected to climb as its young players get new deals.



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"We're going to have challenges, but we also think the team's better," Waddell said. "It all goes hand-in-hand. We're investing more in the players, we're hoping that turns into

more wins, which will turn into more fans coming. We'd sell more tickets, sell more concessions, all that stuff."



Broadcaster Olczyk diagnosed with colon cancer

Former NHL forward, coach says he expects to return to booth after treatment

NHL.com @NHL August 8th, 2017

Former NHL forward and NBC Sports hockey analyst Eddie Olczyk was diagnosed with colon cancer last week.

"I have been working with outstanding health care professionals and expect to be back in the broadcast booth after I complete my treatment," Olczyk said in a statement issued by the Chicago Blackhawks on Tuesday. "Having the support and encouragement from my family, the Chicago Blackhawks organization, NBC Sports and all my friends and fans means the world to me and will give me continued strength to beat this. My family and I appreciate privacy during this time as we focus our attention on my treatments."

Olczyk, who turns 51 on Aug. 16, has been the in-game analyst for Blackhawks games on Comcast SportsNet Chicago and WGN-TV since the 2006-07 season. He was selected by the Blackhawks with the third pick in the 1984 NHL Draft, and played five seasons for Chicago from 1984-87 and 1998-2000.

The Blackhawks team physician said Olczyk had a procedure to remove a tumor, is recovering well, and will receive further treatment, including chemotherapy.

"Eddie Olczyk is a treasured member of the Chicago Blackhawks family and we will be supportive of him as he

fights this disease," president and CEO John McDonagh said. "We encourage our fans to keep him in their thoughts as we all look forward to having him back in good health as soon as possible."

Olczyk had 794 points (342 goals, 452 assists) in 1,031 games for the Blackhawks, Pittsburgh Penguins, Los Angeles Kings, Winnipeg Jets, New York Rangers and Toronto Maple Leafs. He coached the Penguins for two seasons between 2003-05, going 31-64-10 with eight ties.

Olczyk has been the lead hockey analyst for NBC Sports since 2007, working regularly with play-by-play announcer Mike "Doc" Emrick. In the past two years, he also has worked Triple Crown and other major horse racing events for NBC.

"I read in the [Washington] Post that 75 percent of Americans of all faiths pray at least once a week," Emrick told the Chicago Sun-Times. "So there is something I/we can do. I think it makes a difference. Eddie loves ice cream. So each time I pass an ice cream parlor (or a race track), he will come to mind. I will look forward to our next game even more than the previous 12 years' worth. Cause I have a great original brother in Indiana, but a second 'brother' in Chicago."



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LWOS HOCKEY

Carolina Hurricanes Trade History: Best and Worst Trades of All-Time

By **Nick McVicar**

August 8, 2017

The History of Trade is a mini series going through each team's best and worst trades of all time. Each team has their own history and some may cross over, but the series will try to stick to each team. This article will focus on the Carolina Hurricanes trade history, finding the best and worst of all time.

The Carolina Hurricanes franchise dates back a long ways. It goes all the way back to the days when they wore the green and blue jerseys of the Hartford Whalers in 1979-80 season. For a team with some beautiful and questionable jersey options, their trade history is very similar: beautiful and questionable.

Carolina Hurricanes Trade History

Best Trade

For a team from the south with a small fan base, Carolina managed to pull some big name players through their rink. Players like **Ron Francis**, **Mark Howe**, and **Brendan Shanahan** all pulled on either the Whalers or Hurricanes jerseys. But one player who will go down in Hurricanes lore is one they actually acquired through a trade.

The Trade

Hurricanes acquire **Rod Brind'Amour**, **Jean-Marc Pelletier**, and a second round pick in 2000 draft (later traded to Colorado) from Philadelphia for **Keith Primeau** and a fifth round pick in 2000 (later traded to the New York Islanders)

Traded Away

Keith Primeau is a tough one to judge in this trade. After he arrived in Philadelphia, Primeau had a shortened season in 1999-00. He managed only 17 points in 23 games. But after returning the next season, Primeau put up a career high 34 goals and 73 points. He soon regressed back down to earth the next season and never reached the 20-goal mark or 50-point mark during the remainder of his career. Had he continued the pace he set in 2000-01 this trade would have been different.

The draft pick that was traded was soon flipped to the New York Islanders with **Mikael Andersson** for **Gino Odjick**. Gino played parts of two seasons in Philly never really having any impact.

The Return

The draft pick Carolina got in this deal was soon dealt to the Colorado Avalanche along with **Nolan Pratt** and two other draft picks for **Sandis Ozolinsh** and a second round pick. Ozolinsh's stay in Carolina was brief, but he did manage to put up 67 points in 118 games across two seasons. The return may not have been direct but it bolstered the trade even further.

Pelletier never played a single game for the Hurricanes, but will go down as a piece in their best deal ever.

The main piece to this trade was and still is Rod Brind'Amour. After nine seasons and 601 points in Philadelphia, Brind'Amour was sent to Carolina. He may have been unsure of the situation when he arrived; taking over for a captain can do that to a player. But Brind'Amour soon found home with the new squad and became a fan favourite in no time.

Brind'Amour would go on to become one of the faces of the Hurricanes. He was a perennial Selke Trophy contender, playing one of the smoothest two-way games in recent history. But defense was not his only strength, as he would put up 20 goals on four separate occasions. The highlight of his career came in 2005-06. Brind'Amour and the lowly Hurricanes managed the unthinkable; they won the Stanley Cup. The run was magical and Rod brought his A-game, scoring 12 goals in 25 games to help lift Lord Stanley's Cup. One of the greatest captain moments in the history of the NHL, Brind'Amour lifted the Cup with his eyes closed high above his head. It was the perfect way to end an unbelievable playoff run.

Carolina wouldn't make the playoffs again until 2008-09, but that would be the last time Brind'Amour would play for the Cup. He would retire after the 2009-10 season with 473 points to his name as a Hurricane. His impact on the team would go much deeper than points though. He made Carolina a more desirable place for players to go to play and for that this trade becomes even more valuable.

Honourable Mentions: Hartford (Carolina) acquires **Pat Verbeek** from the New Jersey Devils for **Sylvain Turgeon**; Carolina trades **Danny Markov** to the Philadelphia Flyers for **Justin Williams**; Carolina acquires **Jussi Jokinen** from the Tampa Bay Lightning for **Wade Brookbank**, **Josef Melichar**, and future considerations (2009 fourth round pick, later forfeited)

Worst Trade

For their part, the Hurricanes have not been a part of many truly bad trades. Unfortunately, their predecessors were not so lucky. With players like Verbeek and Shanahan being traded away, you would hope to get decent return. Unfortunately the Whalers brass weren't able to, and in the worst trade, they managed to lowball themselves once again.

The Trade

Hartford trades **Ron Francis**, **Ulf Samuelsson**, and **Grant Jennings** to the Pittsburgh Penguins for **John Cullen**, **Jeff Parker**, and **Zarley Zalapski**.



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Traded Away

Grant Jennings may have been the throw in to this trade. He managed to stay in Pittsburgh for parts of five seasons before being traded to Toronto in 1994-95. Across 210 games in Pittsburgh, Jennings only managed to put up 28 points, including two playoff points in his first year. But Jennings was the beneficiary of the right time and right place, being on the back-to-back Cup winning Penguins teams.

Without the additions of Samuelsson and Francis though, the cups may never have arrived in Pittsburgh. Samuelsson became a fan favourite quickly due to his ferocious play on the blue line. Never a big point producer, Samuelsson reached 20 points in only two seasons while in Pittsburgh. But the Penguins could care less. Samuelsson was never scared to throw his body and created a fear in opponents for his entire career in Pittsburgh.

Francis was the real target for Pittsburgh in this deal. Along with Samuelsson, Francis had been personally successful in Hartford. He managed to put up 70 points or more in every season except his rookie year. Francis even managed to put up 101 points the season prior to the trade. After arriving in Pittsburgh, Francis took very little time to get comfortable. He would finish the season with 11 points in 14 games for the Penguins heading into the playoffs. He helped lift the Cup that year with 17 points during the postseason, finishing sixth on the team in that category.

Francis would find another gear the next postseason. After a mediocre regular season by his standards, Francis would put up a career high 19 assists and 27 points in the postseason. His effort would put him third in team scoring and help the Penguins win their second straight Stanley Cup.

After that, Francis would get back to his regular season success, scoring 100 points the next season. He would finish his Pittsburgh career with 613 regular season points. In the summer of 1998, Ron would sign a new contract with the team that traded him away, although they would be in a new location. The trade helped bring the Cup to Pittsburgh with a team that was just supposed to sneak into the postseason. For Hartford though, it was a much different outcome.

The Return

When the trade was made, this deal was not so one sided. In fact, many professional writers and fans alike thought that Hartford go the better side of the deal. To many people's surprise, including the Whalers, the deal did not turn out that way.

The throw in for the Whalers was Jeff Parker. Parker never actually played for the Penguins prior to the trade, signing with the club a month prior to the deal after not playing all season. He would have very little mention in the history books either. Parker's Whaler career lasted all of four games

and a grand total of zero points. But he was never supposed to be the keys to this trade.

Zarley Zalapski and John Cullen, on the other hand, were. Zalapski, a top five pick in the 1986 NHL Entry Draft, had very high expectations in Pittsburgh. He managed to produce on the offensive end with no issues, racking up 112 goals in his first three seasons with the Pens. Zalapski would add 48 more points before being sent to the Whalers. He would have some offensive success in Hartford as well, but his stay was fairly short. After just parts of four seasons, including 165 points, Zalapski was traded to Calgary in hopes of improving their blue line. It was to no avail and Zalapski will go down as a disappointment in this trade.

But neither of the aforementioned pieces can compare to the return the Whalers got for Cullen. The season prior to the trade, Cullen became a force to be feared in the NHL. He put up 32 goals and 92 points in his sophomore year, intriguing many general managers around the league. The following season Cullen never slowed down. Through 65 games prior to the trade, he had already managed to put up 94 points in 65 games. It was beginning to look like he was going to become a star in the league for years.

When the Penguins general manager Craig Patrick offered the then 26-year-old to the Whalers it was impossible to turn down. The Whalers were struggling to get fans to embrace the team and buy tickets. They believed Cullen could be the answer. He was young, fast and could score in bunches. The Whalers brass thought the fans would be crawling over each other to buy tickets. Things didn't exactly work out that way. The following season Cullen would only manage 77 points, still a team high by a wide margin. That season would end up being Cullen's first and only full season in Hartford though as the following year, after only 19 games, Cullen was traded to the Maple Leafs for a second round pick.

The final nail in the Whalers coffin may have been losing Francis and Samuelsson. The Whalers would last only four more seasons in Hartford before being moved 1,007 kilometres southwest to Raleigh, North Carolina. They became the Carolina Hurricanes and have gone on to win the Stanley Cup once. But the questions remain if things would have been different had Francis and Samuelsson not been traded away.

Dishonourable Mentions: Whalers trade Mark Howe and a 1983 third round pick (Derrick Smith) to the Philadelphia Flyers for Greg Adams, Ken Linseman, 1983 first round pick (David Jensen), and 1983 third round pick (Leif Carlsson); Whalers trade Pat Verbeek to the New York Rangers for Glen Featherstone, Michael Stewart, 1995 first round pick (Jean-Sebastien Giguere), and 1996 fourth round pick (Steve Wasyliko); Whalers acquire Paul Coffey, Keith Primeau and a 1997 first round pick (Nikos Tselios) from the Detroit Red Wings and Brian Glynn

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Articles from outlets covering the Hurricanes' upcoming opponents and league-wide news

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NHL releases full 2017 pre-season schedule

Sportsnet Staff

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The 2017 NHL pre-season will begin on Sept. 16 with the Vancouver Canucks visiting the Los Angeles Kings, and will end with the Vegas Golden Knights hosting the San Jose Sharks on Oct. 1.

The league released its full slate of exhibition games on Tuesday, which features the opening of Little Ceasars Arena in Detroit, the debut for the expansion Golden Knights, and the first NHL games to be played in China.

The Kings and Canucks will take part in a two-game series on Sept. 21 and 23 at Mercedes-Benz Arena in Shanghai, while Little Ceasars Arena hosts the Detroit Red Wings for the first time on Sept. 23, when the Boston Bruins come to town.

Vegas will play its first game as a franchise on the road in Vancouver on Sept. 17, before breaking in T-Mobile Arena for the first time on Sept. 26 against the Kings.

The Ottawa Senators will host the New Jersey Devils in Summerside, P.E.I., on Sept. 25 for Kraft Hockeyville, while the Pittsburgh Penguins and St. Louis Blues will face off a night earlier in Cranberry Township, Pa., for Kraft Hockeyville USA. The nearby town of Belle Vernon was the actual winner of Hockeyville USA, but its arena was deemed unfit to host an NHL game.

Saskatoon and Quebec City are among eight other non-NHL cities to host a pre-season game. They are: Allentown, Pa. (NY Islanders vs. Philadelphia, Sept. 20); Bridgeport, Conn. (NY Islanders vs. NY Rangers, Sept. 22); Kansas City, Mo. (Minnesota vs. St. Louis, Sept. 28); Quebec City, Que. (Montreal vs. Boston, Sept. 18, and Montreal vs. Toronto, Sept. 27); Saskatoon, Sask. (Carolina vs. Edmonton, Sept. 27); State College, Pa., on the campus of Penn State University (Buffalo vs. Pittsburgh, Sept. 19); Tucson, Ariz. (Anaheim vs. Arizona, Sept. 25) and Uniondale, N.Y. (NY Islanders vs. Philadelphia, Sept. 17).

The full schedule is below.

SATURDAY, SEPT. 16

Vancouver at Los Angeles, 5 p.m.

SUNDAY, SEPT. 17

NY Islanders vs. Philadelphia, at Uniondale, N.Y. (NYCB Live), 1 p.m.

Las Vegas at Vancouver, 5 p.m.

MONDAY, SEPT. 18

Boston vs. Montreal, at Quebec City, Que. (Centre Videotron), 7 p.m.

Carolina at Buffalo, 7 p.m.

Washington at New Jersey, 7 p.m.

NY Islanders at NY Rangers, 7 p.m.

Toronto at Ottawa, 7:30 p.m.

Minnesota at Winnipeg, 8 p.m.

Calgary (split-squad) at Edmonton (split-squad), 9 p.m.

Edmonton (split-squad) at Calgary (split-squad), 9 p.m.

Los Angeles at Arizona, 10 p.m.

TUESDAY, SEPT. 19

Florida at Nashville (split-squad doubleheader), 4:30 and 8 p.m.

Detroit at Boston, 7 p.m.

Buffalo vs. Pittsburgh, at State College, Pa. (Pegula Ice Arena, Penn State), 7 p.m.

Chicago at Columbus, 7 p.m.

Ottawa at Toronto, 7:30 p.m.

Carolina at Tampa Bay, 7:30 p.m.

St. Louis at Dallas, 8:30 p.m.

Las Vegas at Colorado, 9 p.m.

Anaheim at San Jose, 10 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 20

Washington at Montreal, 7 p.m.

New Jersey at NY Rangers, 7 p.m.

Philadelphia (split squad) at NY Islanders (split squad), 7 p.m.

Philadelphia (split squad) vs. NY Islanders (split squad), at Allentown, Pa. (PPL Center), 7 p.m.

Tampa Bay at Carolina, 7 p.m.

Detroit at Pittsburgh, 7 p.m.

Columbus at St. Louis, 8 p.m.

Edmonton at Winnipeg, 8 p.m.

Vancouver at Calgary, 9 p.m.

Arizona at Anaheim, 10 p.m.

THURSDAY, SEPT. 21

Los Angeles vs. Vancouver, at Shanghai, China (Mercedes-Benz Arena), 7:30 a.m.

Philadelphia at Boston, 7 p.m.

New Jersey at Montreal, 7 p.m.

Winnipeg at Minnesota, 8 p.m.

Detroit at Chicago, 8:30 p.m.

Dallas at Colorado, 9 p.m.

Las Vegas at San Jose, 10:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, SEPT. 22

St. Louis at Washington, 7 p.m.

Pittsburgh at Columbus, 7 p.m.

Buffalo at Toronto (Ricoh Coliseum), 7:30 p.m.

NY Islanders vs. NY Rangers, at Bridgeport, Conn. (Webster Bank Arena), 7:30 p.m.

Nashville at Tampa Bay, 7:30 p.m.

Arizona at Calgary, 9 p.m.

Vancouver at Edmonton, 9 p.m.

Los Angeles at Anaheim, 10 p.m.

SATURDAY, SEPT. 23

Los Angeles vs. Vancouver, at Beijing, China (Wukesong Arena), 3:30 a.m.



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Colorado at Minnesota, 6 p.m.

Montreal at Ottawa, 7 p.m.

Toronto at Buffalo, 7 p.m.

NY Rangers at New Jersey, 7 p.m.

Carolina at Washington, 7 p.m.

Boston at Detroit, 7 p.m.

Dallas at St. Louis, 8 p.m.

Columbus at Chicago, 8:30 p.m.

Winnipeg at Edmonton, 9 p.m.

San Jose at Arizona, 9 p.m.

SUNDAY, SEPT. 24

Nashville at Columbus, 3 p.m.

Florida at Tampa Bay, 4 p.m.

Minnesota at Colorado, 7 p.m.

Las Vegas at Anaheim, 8 p.m.

Pittsburgh vs. St. Louis, at Cranberry Township, Pa. (UPMC Lemieux Sports Complex), 8 p.m.

MONDAY, SEPT. 25

New Jersey (split squad) vs. Ottawa, at Summerside, P.E.I. (Credit Union Place), 6 p.m.

New Jersey (split squad) at NY Islanders, 7 p.m.

Chicago at Boston, 7 p.m.

Philadelphia at NY Rangers, 7 p.m.

Montreal at Toronto (Ricoch Coliseum), 7:30 p.m.

Pittsburgh at Detroit, 7:30 p.m.

Calgary at Winnipeg, 8 p.m.

Colorado at Dallas, 8:30 p.m.

Carolina at Edmonton, 9 p.m.

Anaheim vs. Arizona, at Tucson, Ariz. (Tucson Arena), 10 p.m.

TUESDAY, SEPT. 26

NY Rangers at Philadelphia, 7 p.m.

St. Louis at Columbus, 7 p.m.

Tampa Bay at Florida, 7:30 p.m.

Minnesota at Dallas, 8:30 p.m.

Los Angeles at Las Vegas, 10 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 27

Montreal vs. Toronto, at Quebec City, Que. (Centre Videotron), 7 p.m.

New Jersey at Washington, 7 p.m.

Buffalo at Pittsburgh, 7 p.m.

Ottawa at Winnipeg, 8 p.m.

Carolina vs. Edmonton, at Saskatoon, Sask. (SaskTel Centre), 8 p.m.

THURSDAY, SEPT. 28

Boston at Philadelphia, 7 p.m.

Chicago at Detroit, 7:30 p.m.

Tampa Bay at Florida, 7:30 p.m.

Columbus at Nashville, 8 p.m.

Minnesota vs. St. Louis, at Kansas City, Mo. (Sprint Center), 8 p.m.

Calgary at Vancouver, 10 p.m.

Colorado at Las Vegas, 10 p.m.

San Jose at Anaheim, 10 p.m.

Arizona at Los Angeles, 10:30 p.m.

FRIDAY, SEPT. 29

Florida at Montreal, 7 p.m.

NY Islanders at Buffalo, 7 p.m.

Washington at Carolina, 7:30 p.m.

Toronto at Detroit, 7:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, SEPT. 30

Columbus at Pittsburgh, 3 p.m.

Ottawa at Montreal, 7 p.m.

Detroit at Toronto (Ricoch Coliseum), 7 p.m.

Tampa Bay at Nashville, 8 p.m.

Dallas at Minnesota, 8 p.m.

Boston at Chicago, 8:30 p.m.

Winnipeg at Calgary, 9 p.m.

Edmonton at Vancouver, 10 p.m.

Arizona at San Jose, 10 p.m.

Anaheim at Los Angeles, 10:30 p.m.

SUNDAY, OCT. 1

Washington at St. Louis, 3 p.m.

NY Islanders at Philadelphia, 5 p.m.

San Jose at Las Vegas, 8 p.m.

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IOC's Dick Pound says NHL has 'betrayed' its fans and players

Mike Johnston

@MikeyJ_MMA

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Dick Pound was in the spotlight last week after harshly criticizing the NHL in an op-ed column he wrote for the Montreal Gazette regarding the league not sending its players to the PyeongChang 2018 Winter Olympics.

Well, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) senior member doubled down on his comments during a Tuesday appearance on Prime Time Sports.

"I think ultimately they have betrayed their fan base, their global fan base, and they've betrayed the players that would like to have this unique chance to represent their country in the Olympics," Pound said. "I think that ultimately translates into bad business because there's a price for ignoring your players and your fans and they've got to think about that. I don't think they have."

Pound's latest comments come one day after NHL deputy commissioner Bill Daly confirmed to Stephen Whyno of The Associated Press that players with active NHL contracts, including players in the minors, would not be permitted to participate—even if they had permission from their individual team owner.

One major sticking point in NHL-IOC negotiations earlier this year involved intellectual property rights. Another was the NHL potentially wanting financial compensation for sending its players overseas.

"I think it's all money and I think the approach by the NHL scared the IOC and they could see the potential of a floodgates situation where by OK so now hockey insists on being paid for its players to come, what about



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tennis? What about beach volleyball? What about basketball?" Pound said. "At that point the IOC says, 'Whoa, whoa, wait a minute, we're delighted to have you here and participating but you've got to participate on the same basis as everybody else.'"

Alex Ovechkin, Erik Karlsson and Connor McDavid were among the many NHL stars on record saying they were hoping to participate in the next Games.

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Capitals a prime candidate to take a step backwards

By Travis Yost

One of the things that I've been thinking about this off-season is how the Washington Capitals will follow up last year's incredible season.

Incredible at least until the playoffs began. Which, of course, is the story of the Capitals in the modern era. There's no better way to illustrate their dominance (and postseason futility) than reminding everyone that Washington owns the three best regular seasons by points accumulated in the modern era.

Last year was particularly noteworthy for Barry Trotz's team. Prior Washington teams were, at least in part, plagued by some inconsistency – usually shaky goaltending. But with all-world goaltender Braden Holtby complementing a lineup that ran most teams out of the building in the regular season, it was reasonable to assume they would push further than the second round of the Eastern Conference playoffs. Ultimately, they ran into another strong team in Pittsburgh, and the rest is history.

The interesting question is where Washington ends up next season. On the positive side of the ledger, their goaltending situation is still firmly squared away and a number of key pieces – T.J Oshie, Dmitri Orlov, and Evgeny Kuznetsov – have all been extended long-term. But the team did incur a few notable cap casualties. Marcus Johansson was traded to New Jersey, Justin Williams signed down in Carolina, and defenders Nate Schmidt, Kevin Shattenkirk and Karl Alzner departed for other organizations.

I think Washington genuinely believes they can replace a majority of the players they lost this off-season internally, and that preserving their core would mean another legitimate run at the Stanley Cup. On its face, it's hard to dispute that claim. The Capitals have gone through plenty of turnover through the years and it hasn't mattered much. In the modern era, they've averaged about 106 points per season – comfortably making the playoffs and, in most instances, winning the division.

But there are still a couple of reasons for concern. One of which is the fact that Washington's vaunted power play – which has absolutely dominated the modern era – took a small step backwards last season. Another? At even strength, it's difficult to discern just how great they really were.

One of the things people (myself included) pointed to with last year's Capitals team was how they dominated goal differential at 5-on-5. Washington was +66 (61 per cent of all goals in their favour), which is extraordinarily high. Their goaltending was a big reason, with Holtby and Philipp Grubauer stopping 93.7 per cent of shots – the highest number of the last three years. They also converted on 9.2 per cent of their shots, which ended up being the third-highest number in all of hockey in the last three years. Combine elite shooting with elite stopping power, and you have a virtually untouchable 5-on-5 team.

With such wild goal variance, you would expect Washington to have dominated games territorially – much like those great Detroit Red Wings and Chicago Blackhawks teams of yesteryear. But that's not exactly the case. Washington only had 52 per cent of the scoring chances last year – a playoff-worthy number, but not nearly as dominant as the goals would suggest. Five teams – Boston, Los Angeles, Minnesota, Pittsburgh, and Montreal – all finished better on this front.

How big of a spread is that? To give you an idea of magnitude, I pulled out the biggest variances we have seen between goal and scoring chance differential over the last three seasons. Outside of the 2015 New York Rangers, there isn't really a comparable:

The interesting thing to me is where the goal percentages went for these teams in the following year. Outside of 2015-16 Capitals, every team saw their goal dominance drop year-over-year – and in some cases,

substantially so. I do think part of this has to do with the difficulty of sustained success, but I also think part of it is the reality of scoring chance (or, alternatively, Corsi rates) data being more indicative of true talent than goal numbers because of sample size.

The next logical question: Was there a specific group of skaters on the Capitals that greatly benefited from some white-hot shooting and goaltending, or was this a consistent theme across the board? Below, you have the same type of variance analysis, but at the individual level:

It probably says something when the bottom guy here – Williams – was still six percentage points better in goal differential than scoring chance differential.

On the individual scoring chance data, there are a couple of other interesting takeaways. Two of the guys who were floating around break-even in Alzner and Daniel Winnik have moved on, which seems like a good thing if you are a Capitals fan. However, look at some of the other names there – namely Nicklas Backstrom and Alex Ovechkin. Here are two forwards who have absolutely dominated competition for close to a decade. Surely Backstrom and Ovechkin are still fantastic players, but I do think it's fair to wonder just how effective they are at 5-on-5.

I'm certain that the Washington Capitals are a good team – they're probably a very good team. But last year's team has the look and feel of a group that benefited from everything breaking in their favour. And although the Capitals have been able to sustain lofty goal differentials for close to a decade, we haven't really seen many seasons like last one. Can we reasonably expect a team to continue scoring on one of every 11 shots? And can we, at the same time, reasonably expect a team to hold their opponents to about 6 per cent shooting?

Historically, the answer to that question is no. So while I think it's reasonable to expect Washington to still push around most of the Eastern Conference next year, I do think it's possible (and perhaps likely) that they take a step backwards next year.

Capitals fans, you have been warned.

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Caps' Kuznetsov cashed in on KHL interest

Evgeny Kuznetsov

The Canadian Press

Evgeny Kuznetsov cashed on an eight-year, \$62.4 million contract as a restricted free agent earlier this month and Washington Capitals general manager Brian MacLennan admitted KHL interest led to the team paying extra to keep the Russian centre.

Kuznetsov will carry an annual \$7.8 million cap hit throughout the deal and is now the second-highest paid Capital, behind only Alexander Ovechkin. MacLennan said, however, he still believes Kuznetsov's contract should still be considered a fair value for the player.

"We went a little above where we thought we were going to be," MacLennan said of the contract, per the Boston Globe, "initially because of the situation Kuznetsov was in - his ability to go play in Russia for two years, earn as much money or more than he was making here, then come back as a UFA. He had the leverage. We lost our arbitration leverage with his ability to do that. We had to comply with his demands.

"If you look at it in the total scope, I think he's going to be a top-end center in the league. Next year and going forward, it's going to be a good contract."

Kuznetsov had 19 goals and 40 assists for 59 points last season, down from his 20 goals and 57 points the previous year. The 25-year-old had a strong playoffs though, with five goals and 10 points in 13 games. He owned six goals and nine points in 26 playoff games previously.

Shortly after Kuznetsov was re-signed, the Capitals traded fellow restricted free agent Marcus Johansson to the New Jersey Devils for draft picks. That trade, MacLennan said, was forced by the cost of Kuznetsov's contract.

"I like Marcus," MacLennan told the Globe. "He's a good player. He's done a great job here. He's a second-line left winger and a real good power-play guy. But he was making the money we needed to shed to sign Kuznetsov. The decision at the end was, 'Do we let Kuznetsov walk to



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Russia and be a UFA in two years? Or trade Marcus? The priority was to have the best center ice we could have and do our best to fill in with the left-wing spot."

Johansson scored 24 goals and posted 58 points last season while averaging three seconds more time on ice per night than Kuznetsov. He finished with two goals and six assists in the playoffs.

Last season, Dallas Stars restricted free agent Valeri Nichushkin, who like Kuznetsov was a first round pick in his draft class, left for the KHL and is not expected to return to North America until at least next season.

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NHL

Not only will Sidney Crosby, Connor McDavid, Auston Matthews and most of the best hockey players in the world not be going to the Olympics, neither will anyone on an NHL contract.

The league has decided that players with active NHL contracts, even those in the minors, will not be allowed to participate in the Olympics next February in South Korea. Deputy Commissioner Bill Daly confirmed the league's stance to The Associated Press on Monday.

The league announced in April it wouldn't be stopping its season to go to the Olympics for the first time since 1994, but questions had remained about players in the American Hockey League and ECHL.

"A decision has been made that all players under NHL contract will be subject to similar treatment," Daly said.

This means players signed to two-way NHL contracts or who are loaned to minor league affiliates by their clubs won't be available to the United States, Canada or other national teams. The AHL said earlier this summer that general managers could decide to allow players on AHL contracts to play in South Korea.

Chicago Blackhawks

Former NHL forward and coach Eddie Olczyk has been diagnosed with colon cancer.

Olczyk, who turns 51 on Aug. 16, had surgery last week, and Chicago Blackhawks team physician Dr. Michael Terry says he "will be undergoing further treatment in the coming weeks, including chemotherapy." Olczyk is a color analyst for Blackhawks games and nationally for NBC.

New York Islanders

The Islanders announced the signing of forward Stephen Gionta to a one-year, two-way contract. The 33-year old scored six points in 26 games for the Islanders last season. His prorated contract splits will be \$650,000 for time spent with the Islanders, \$250,000 at Bridgeport.

San Jose Sharks

The Sharks have re-signed forward Barclay Goodrow to a two-year contract extension, the club announced on Monday.

The contract, a two-way deal, is worth \$650,000 at the NHL level for both years according to a source.

St Louis Blues

The Blues won't have an affiliate in the AHL, the highest level of minor-league hockey in North America this season, but they will have an affiliate in the ECHL, the lower of the two minor leagues.

The Blues have agreed to a one-year affiliation with the Tulsa Oilers, who had previously been a farm team of Winnipeg. The Blues haven't had an ECHL affiliate the previous two seasons. Before that, they were connected to the team in Anchorage, Alaska.

The Blues will have an AHL affiliate for the 2018-19 season, in San Antonio, though that has not been officially announced by the team. This season, the Blues will send some of their players to Chicago, last season's AHL affiliate, though the Wolves will now be the affiliate of the expansion Vegas Golden Knights. The Blues will also loan some players to San Antonio and to other AHL teams if needed.

END