

Gretzky trade year's biggest surprise

by Canadian Press
Wayne Gretzky and Guy Lafleur, two names that speak volumes for the game of hockey, dominated The Canadian Press sports poll of 1988.

Gretzky's trade to the Los Angeles Kings was voted the surprise of the year in Canadian sports while Lafleur's return to the NHL after a four-year absence was selected comeback of the year in the annual poll of sportswriters and broadcasters by The Canadian Press and Broadcast News.

On Aug. 9 the unthinkable happened. The Edmonton Oilers traded Gretzky to the Kings.

One newspaper likened it to Paris losing the Eiffel Tower or New York selling the Statue of Liberty.

"It's like taking all the bridges away and saying, 'Edmonton, this is what you're going to look like,'" said distraught

Lafleur earns top comeback honor from CP

Edmonton Mayor Laurence Decore.

The trade caught all Canadians and the entire international hockey community with their shinpads drooping and was voted the overwhelming winner as surprise of the year in the CP survey.

The Gretzky trade received 36 votes as surprise of the year, more than double the 17 ballots naming the Ben Johnson steroid scandal as most surprising. Other runners-up in the surprise ballot were, with nine votes, figure skater Elizabeth Manley's silver-medal performance at the Winter Olympics and, with seven votes, the Grey Cup victory by the Winnipeg Jets.

In nine seasons as an Oiler, Gretzky had broken practically every scoring record.

He holds the NHL record for most goals (92), assists (163) and points (215) in a season. He is the all-time assist leader and by the end of this season could surpass Gordie Howe's all-time points total of 1,850.

Last May Gretzky and the Oilers won their fourth Stanley Cup in five years and the Great One was named the Conn Smythe winner as the most valuable player in the playoffs.

Rumors of a trade surfaced in late July but Canadians, despite the free-trade negotiations with the United States, were not inclined to believe another national treasure was California-bound.

Gretzky signed a five-year contract in the autumn of '87, making him a free

agent without compensation in 1992.

"When I agreed (last) September I figured that would be my last year," said Gretzky, 27. "I knew I was gone."

Gone too, but not forgotten, was the flashy left winger who wore No. 10.

When a balding, 37-year-old man with a nicotine habit scored the first New York Ranger power-play goal of 1988, the return of Guy Lafleur was official.

Lafleur retired in November 1984 after 14 seasons — including three scoring championships, five Stanley Cups and MVP honors twice — as the tour de force of the Canadiens.

"Maybe I'm not as motivated as in my big years," a teary-eyed Lafleur said at the time of his retirement.

Almost four years later the Flower bloomed again.

"I felt like an 18-year-old trying to make the team again," he said of the Rangers training camp. "I'm here to help the team and enjoy the game again."

On Dec. 17 Lafleur returned to the Montreal Forum as a New York Ranger. Sidelined by a broken bone in his foot, the ex-Canadien could only hobble to centre ice during a pre-game ceremony to the cheers of the Montreal faithful.

He donned a Rangers jersey and the cheering continued unabated. Guy Lafleur had truly returned.

Second in the comeback survey were the Saskatchewan Roughriders, who earned 18 votes for making the CFL's playoffs for the first time in 11 seasons. Manley, with seven, and the Bombers, with six votes, were also runners-up in the comeback voting.

Bengals' pivot most valuable

by Associated Press
Quarterback Boomer Esiason of the Cincinnati Bengals, the key figure in Cincinnati's recovery from a four win, 11-loss record last year, has been named the NFL's most valuable player by The Associated Press.

Esiason, who had the best rating of any NFL passer, completed 57 per cent of his passes and threw for 3,572 yards. That mark included 28 touchdowns with only 14 interceptions as the Bengals took control of the AFC Central early.

With a 12-4 record this season, the Bengals captured the division title and home field advantage throughout the playoffs. The Bengals' first playoff game is Saturday against Seattle.

Esiason won the award in a close, three-way vote among sportswriters and broadcasters covering each of the NFL's 28 teams.

He had 31 votes to 21 for quarterback Randall Cunningham of Philadelphia and 17 for running back Roger Craig of San Francisco, who was named the league's top offensive player.

While Esiason said he thinks the award should go to his entire team, Coach Sam Wyche disagreed.

"Boomer deserves it, every bit

of it," Wyche said. "He's had a tremendous supporting cast this year. (But) I think he's been the leader of that supporting cast and helped make them play to their potential."

It was also a personal comeback of sorts for Esiason, who was the focal point for a lot of fan criticism last year. He was the team's outspoken union representative during the players' strike, and took a lot of abuse from fans at Riverfront Stadium for the on-field failings when the strike ended.

This year, he eschewed the credit.

"I always have believed that the quarterback gets too much attention when we win and too much when we lose," he said.

"There is no way in the world that I could have ever won this award without the people up front that block, the people that catch and the people that run."

In fact, Esiason's yardage total was only the second highest of his five-year career — he threw for 3,959 yards and had a 58-per-cent completion percentage in 1986, when the Bengals went 10-6 but missed the playoffs in a tiebreak.

Buddy-buddy show overshadows game

by Associated Press
While Buddy and Buddy's buddy Mike pose as the main event in Chicago Saturday, there will also be a sideshow — the NFC semi-final between the Chicago Bears and Philadelphia Eagles.

The game is at Soldier Field, which is where the Bears love to be during the playoffs — unless they're playing Washington, to which they've lost there the last two years.

The Buddy-Mike hype aside, the game probably turns on two things — the Chicago offensive line controlling Reggie White and the Chicago defence controlling Randall Cunningham.

If White doesn't get pressure on Mike Tomczak, he'll probably do to the Philadelphia secondary what just about every other quarterback it's faced has done — pick it apart. If the Chicago defence holds Cunningham to just an average game, there goes the Philadelphia offence.

The bottom line is this: Chicago is a good team; Philadelphia is a half-dozen stars — add Keith Jackson, Mike Quick and a couple of others to the equation — and a lot of "who dats?"

Chicago also has playoff experience.

BEARS, 24-16.

Seattle (plus 6½) at Cincinnati: The question here is which Seahawks team (and which Dave Krieg) shows up, which might depend on the weather.

Seattle scored 85 points in its past two games, in which Krieg was 38 of 54 with four touchdown passes. In game No. 13, Krieg threw five touchdown passes and the Seahawks scored 35 points. Two of those games were in the Kingdom, the other in Los Angeles.

In between, the Seahawks got a total of just 67 yards and two first downs in the wind of New England.

Whatever, Cincinnati on Dec. 31 is closer in climate to Foxboro, Mass., than Los Angeles or the Kingdom.

BENGALS, 38-20.

Minnesota (plus 3) at San Francisco: The omens look good for Minnesota — in Phil Simms' graphic words, the 49ers finished their season "laying down like dogs" against the Rams, the team that Minnesota ousted nicely last Sunday. Moreover, the Minnesota secondary almost completely shut down Jim Everett until it was too late.

Moreover, the 49ers have a corner problem — Don Griffin, out two months with a separated shoulder is being forced back into action because Eric Wright has a pulled hamstring.

49ERS, 21-20

Houston (plus 3½) at Buffalo: An iffy game.

The Bills lost three of four after clinching the division; the Oilers, notwithstanding their victory in Cleveland last week, have been

abysmal on the road and went downhill quickly as soon as the snow started coming in off Lake Erie.

The chances of snow in Buffalo at this time of year are always at least 50-50 and the Bills were 8-0 at home this year.

BILLS, 16-14.

Last week: 0-2 (spread), 1-1 (straight up).

The Eagles visit Chicago at 9:30 a.m. Saturday on CKPG (channel 2, cable 3) and KIRO (cable 7). The Seahawks visit Cincinnati at 1 p.m. Saturday on CKPG, ITV (cable 2), KING (cable 6) and WDIV (cable 22). The Oilers visit Buffalo at 9:30 a.m. Sunday on CKPG, KING and WDIV. The Vikings visit San Francisco at 1 p.m. Sunday on CKPG, ITV and KIRO.

Smith scores early and late

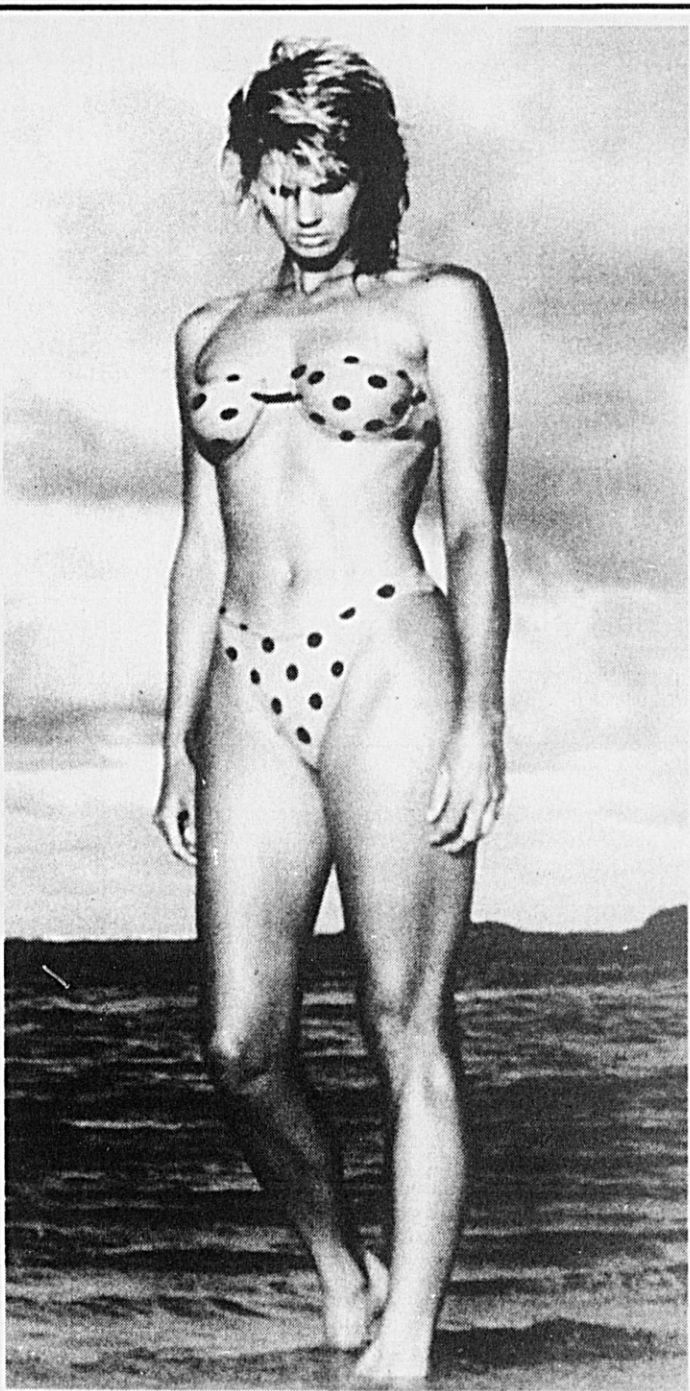
Emmitt Smith scored on the game's first play and then rallied Florida to a late score as the Gators defeated Illinois 14-10 Thursday night in the U.S. college football All American Bowl in Birmingham, Ala.

Meanwhile, in Anaheim, Calif., Jason Caffetz kicked a 35-yard field goal with 2:33 to play, lifting Brigham Young to a 20-17 win over Colorado in the Freedom Bowl.

Smith, the game's most valuable player, ran for 159 yards on 28 carries. The sophomore's winning two-yard run around right end came with 4:28 left.

In Anaheim, Chaffetz, who tied the game with a 31-yard field goal with 4:11 to play, connected again after defensive back Scott Peterson intercepted backup quarterback Darian Hagan's pass at the Colorado 45 with 3:14 left.

Wyoming plays Oklahoma State in the Holiday Bowl at 9 tonight on TSN (cable 16) (taped). Georgia plays Michigan State in the Gator Bowl at 5 p.m. Sunday on TSN. Syracuse plays LSU in the Hall of Fame Bowl at 10 a.m. Monday on KING (cable 6). Arkansas plays UCLA in the Cotton Bowl at 10:30 a.m. Monday on KIRO (cable 7). Clemson plays Oklahoma in the Citrus Bowl at 10:30 a.m. Monday on KOMO (cable 8). Notre Dame plays West Virginia in the Fiesta Bowl at 1:30 p.m. Monday on KING. Michigan plays USC in the Rose Bowl at 1:45 p.m. Monday on KOMO. Miami plays Nebraska at 5 p.m. Monday on KING. Auburn plays Florida State in the Sugar Bowl at 5:30 p.m. Monday on KOMO.



Hey, golf fans!

Professional golfer Deborah McHaffie models a swimsuit on a beach in Hawaii. Why, you ask? Well, it's part of a photo spread shot for the February issue of Golf Magazine.

BYRON WINS BYRON

The first Byron Nelson golf tournament was held in 1944. The winner? Byron Nelson.

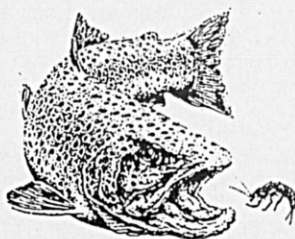


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Seasons Greetings

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Notice of Public Hearing

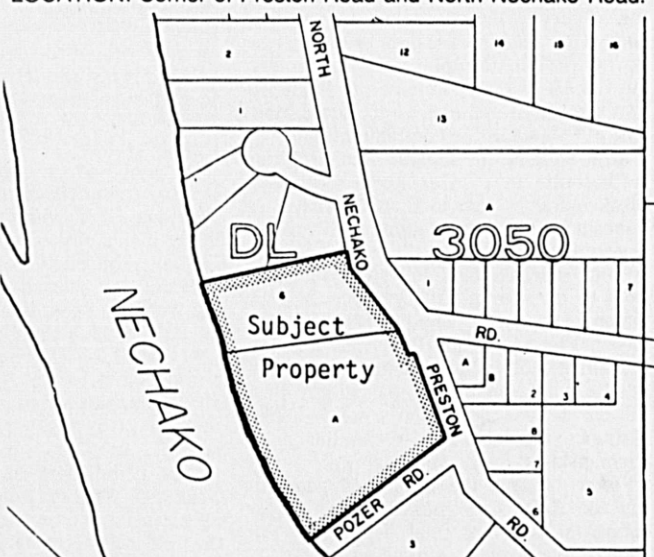
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a Public Hearing with regard to the following amendments to City of Prince George Zoning By-Law No. 3482 will be held in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 1100 Patricia Boulevard, Prince George, B.C. on Monday, January 9, 1989 at 8:00 p.m.

ZONING AMENDMENT

By-Law No. 5235

That Lot A, District Lot 3050, Cariboo District, Plan 18149 and Lot 6, District Lot 3050, Cariboo District, Plan 1454, except Plans 20750 and 33105, be rezoned from SRS-1A (Suburban Residential) to URM-1A (Town Housing), to allow for construction of approximately 45 luxury town houses, or other uses pursuant to the URM-1A zoning classification.

APPLICATION: Camp Development Corporation
LOCATION: Corner of Preston Road and North Nechako Road.



A copy of the proposed By-Laws may be inspected at the office of the undersigned on any business day between the hours of 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon and 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. (except Statutory Holidays). At the Hearing all persons who deem their interest in property affected by the proposed By-Laws shall be afforded an opportunity to be heard on matters pertinent to the By-Laws. In order to be included in the Council Agenda, written objections or petitions, if any, should be delivered to the City Clerk no later than 5:00 p.m. on the Wednesday immediately preceding the Public Hearing.

BRUCE WILLIAMS
CITY CLERK
CITY OF PRINCE GEORGE

City of Prince George