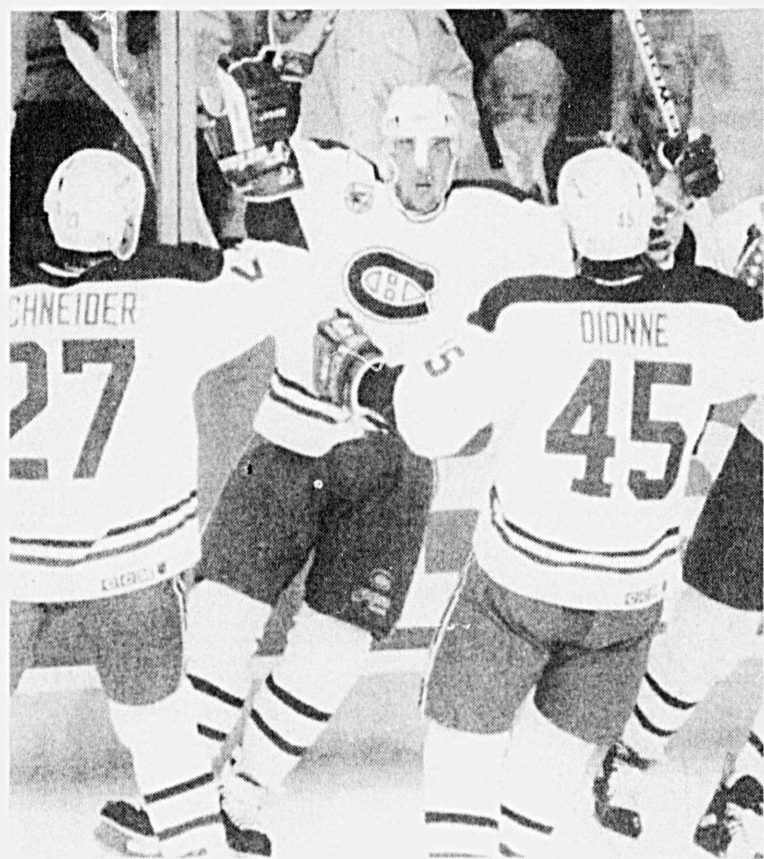


Sports

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CP Photo
Habs' Stephan Lebeau, centre, celebrates his overtime winner.

Canadiens remain cautious

by BILL BEACON
Canadian Press

MONTREAL — Stephan Lebeau's double overtime goal may have been a backbreaker for the New York Islanders, but no one on skates believes that.

Not even Lebeau's Montreal Canadiens, who have now won 10 consecutive playoff games, more than any of the Canadiens dynasty teams of the 1950s, '60s or '70s.

"It's a big win, but we have to stay focussed on what we're doing," said Lebeau, who blasted a shot past goaltender Glenn Healy's glove 6:21 into the second overtime period on Tuesday night.

The win gave Montreal a 2-0 lead in the best-of-seven Prince of Wales Conference final heading into Game 3 on Thursday night in Uniondale, N.Y.

"We've got to keep both feet on the ground and come out even harder in Game 3," said Lebeau, who had also scored in the second period.

The Canadiens, fresh from a four-game sweep of Buffalo in the

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Adams Division final, had won the series opener by 4-1 last Sunday afternoon against a tired Islanders team that had won Game 7 of the Patrick final over the Stanley Cup champion Pittsburgh Penguins only 38 hours before.

The Islanders came out smoking in Game 2, forced extra time and had the better chances in the first overtime period before Lebeau's crushing goal.

"They played a better game, no doubt, but we knew they'd come out stronger," said Lebeau. "They're a hard-working team."

"We didn't expect an easy round," said teammate Kirk Muller. "A lot of people think that, but we knew they'd give us a tough go."

The Islanders didn't appear to be in the mood to throw in the towel either. Much can change in a play-off series when the teams switch venues and the Islanders showed

against Pittsburgh they can bounce back.

"If you get to double overtime, you know you've done something right," said Healy. "If we go to double OT back home, I'd feel just as comfortable as I did tonight."

"A bounce our way tonight and we win."

The good news for New York was that star centre Pierre Turgeon returned to action and looked fully recovered from a separated shoulder suffered in the first round against Washington.

Turgeon had a goal and an assist and was the Islanders most dangerous forward.

"I felt fine," said Turgeon. "It's maddening to lose, but you've got to keep a positive attitude."

"We all know we played well enough to win. We'll have to play the same kind of game against them next time but there's no doubt that we can't lose that one."

Turgeon scored the game's first goal at 13:41 of the opening period, but the Canadiens stormed

back with goals from Brian Belows and Lebeau in the second frame.

Montreal goaltender Patrick Roy let in a weak one — a long shot from Steve Thomas that got through his pads — at 10:31 of the third period and David Volek put the Islanders in front at 12:41.

The Canadiens pressed and Paul DiPietro slid one in from the slot at 14:50 to force overtime.

Brad Dalgarno and Ray Ferraro missed open nets in the first five minutes of overtime. Muller rang one off the crossbar for Montreal.

But the game dragged on until defenceman Patrice Brisebois made a fine play to put the Canadiens in on a three-on-two. Vincent Damphousse dropped the puck to Lebeau for the game-winner.

The Los Angeles Kings and the Toronto Maple Leafs In Game 2 of the Wales Conference championship 4:30 p.m. on CKPG and CBC-French.

Expos edge Braves

ATLANTA (AP) — Gil Heredia knows what will keep him in the major leagues — performing like he did against the Atlanta Braves.

Heredia, activated only hours before Tuesday night's game after his recall from the minors, shut down the Braves on four hits over 6 1-3 innings in the Montreal Expos' 1-0 victory.

John Wetteland earned his fifth save with 1 2-3 innings of scoreless relief, striking out four.

"I don't know what's going to keep me here, but I guess a performance like this can't hurt," said Heredia (1-0). Now 27, Heredia has had a couple of brief flings in the majors, with the San Francisco Giants and Expos.

"I just want to be a pitcher that keeps his team in the game," said Heredia, whose 3-5 career mark includes a 1991 win over the Braves when he was with San Francisco.

The right-hander struck out a career-high seven and walked only one.

"His forkball was great," Montreal manager Felipe Alou said. "He was hitting every spot with it. He didn't make two bad pitches all night. He was razor sharp."

Alou said Heredia would get another start.

"If he pitches like that, he's here to stay for years and years," Alou said. "Any kid that comes up has a shot of staying. You do well and you stay."

It was the Expos' fifth victory in six games and only the Braves' fourth loss in 15 games.

The Braves announced after the game that outfielder Deion Sanders will rejoin the team in several days.

Sanders was placed on the disqualified list on April 29 when he told the club he was not returning because he was unhappy with contract negotiations and his lack of playing time.

The only run of the game came in the sixth inning when Wil Cordero led off with a single, was sacrificed to second by Heredia and took third on a groundout. John Vander Wal singled with two outs, scoring Cordero.

The Chicago Cubs meet the St. Louis Cardinals 5:30 p.m. on WGN (Cable 25).

Love affair with soccer

GORDON HOEKSTRA
Citizen Staff

Love brought Clive Bickley to town; soccer is likely to keep him here.

Bickley, the North Cariboo Senior Soccer League's newest coach, moved to Prince George from the Lower Mainland because he and his fiancée, who lives in Prince George, are going to get married soon.

As coach for Honda North, Bickley will also be able to pursue a love of a different sort.

"Prince George will get 200 per cent out of me as far as soccer is concerned," said Bickley, who most recently coached the Highway Regents to a 17-0-1 record in the first division of the Fraser Valley League.

Bickley is originally from Birmingham, England where he played a couple of years in that country's fourth division elite league.

A motorcycle accident in Chilliwack, B.C. in 1976 more or less ended his career as a player, although he continued to play. But after 16 operations on his right leg and five on his left, he had to have his right knee fused in 1987.

Bickley continued his love affair with soccer in Prince Rupert and coached some hugely successful soccer teams there from 1976 to 1988.

A Prince Rupert squad placed third out of 28 teams — which included those from Sweden, Norway, Cuba, Mexico and the Philippines — at the under-19 USA Cup in Minneapolis, Minn. in 1986.

The next smallest place represented at the tournament had a population of one million, said Bickley. Prince Rupert's population is 17,000.

"We beat Mexico City 5-0 in our opening game, and that kind of set the tone," he said.

Some of the players he coached in Prince Rupert had a lot of success as well. Arnie Mears played for the Seattle Sounders and the Vancouver 86ers.

Gerry Mears played for Middleberg — which was in the first division then — in the British league.

Bickley also coached a couple of B.C. Summer Games gold-medal teams and a under-21 championship team while in Prince Rupert.

The fact that these teams and

players had the success they did is even more surprising considering there was no competition in Prince Rupert; they had to travel 100 miles to get a game.

The fact that they trained six days a week was probably what made them so successful, said Bickley.

"Training and commitment — that was our advantage."

Bickley wants to use these same principles to revive the winning tradition of Honda North, which dominated the Prince George men's league in the 80s.

Last year Honda North finished tied for second in the regular season with a record of 12-4-2 but got knocked out in the first round of the playoffs by the Niners, who finished last in the regular season.

"If you don't train hard, you don't play hard," said Bickley.

So far, under Bickley and manager and co-coach Gaetano Mauro, the philosophy seems to be paying off.

Honda North is 2-0-1 in league play and beat Niners Diner in the opening game of the Summer Games playdowns.

Sunday, Honda North dispatched Remco Insulation, one of the stronger teams in the league, 3-2.

Bickley is hoping to introduce a different style of play to the team. "Short build-ups a lot . . . more of a total play, rather than the long-ball game or the kick-and-run game," he said. "Eleven men in attack and 11 men in defence."

"He knows the game," said Mauro, who although he has known Bickley for about 12 years, didn't know he was moving to Prince George.

"When he came up here, I grabbed him right away."

Bickley and Mauro's philosophy on creating a winning attitude are similar.

"His expectations are a lot like mine," said Mauro. "We accept mistakes, but you have to learn from them."

Bickley's enthusiasm is not restricted to the adult game, and he hopes to become involved with the local youth program.

"It's been my life," he said. "I got a lot of good things out of it, so I want to put something back into it."

"I wish I could coach them all."



Citizen photo by Brent Braaten
Honda North's new coach Clive Bickley will be a familiar face on the soccer pitch this summer.

World-class skier campaigning in the classroom

by DON SCHAFER
Sports Editor

Felix Belczyk is getting almost as comfortable in a classroom as he once was on the World Cup slopes.

Belczyk, a 31-year-old Castlegar native, will be in Prince George Thursday as part of the Positive Lifestyles Tour. He and three other international-calibre athletes arrive to do two days of public appearances to promote drug- and alcohol-free lifestyles.

Belczyk and fellow Canadian Olympians Misty Thomas, Chris Wilson and Tanya Clarke, will attend a number of functions Friday and Saturday.

After more than a decade in the international arena, Belczyk retired last year.

The first year off the World Cup ski tour was tough, but his way was smoothed by the fact that he chose his time to leave.

"Only about 10 per cent of the skiers on the tour retire without major injuries," Belczyk said Tuesday from Fort St. John, where he and the others are on their second week of the tour. "I was lucky — I had knee injuries, but they never required major surgery."

"I ended my career on a healthy note. . . I was on the tour for 10 years, and it was time to make a new career choice."

Changing careers couldn't have come easily to Belczyk, who has that decade of success to look back on. Campaigning alongside some of the legends of Canadian skiing, he recalls two events with the

greatest pride — winning a World Cup super-giant slalom event in Austria and marching into McMahon Stadium in Calgary for the opening ceremony of the 1988 Olympic Winter Games.

"Marching in there as part of the Canadian team, the feeling was indescribable," he said. "It was a real highlight."

His career choices include running ski camps during the winter at a number of sites, including Blackcomb, Cypress Bowl and Todd Mountain, and he hopes to run summer camps on a glacier.

But he finds time to spend doing tours like this one, during which the four Olympians tour Northern B.C. delivering a no-nonsense message.

"Our message is that if kids choose to say no to drugs, to say no to alcohol, their lives will be better," he said. "You have to make positive choices."

"If you let negative approaches get in the way, life will be a lot more difficult."

Belczyk and Thomas, who played in the Barcelona Olympics as part of the Canadian Olympic team, will be with a pair of athletes familiar to Prince George. Clarke, who finished 12th in ballet at the Albertville Olympics, spent a number of years growing up in Prince George and often visits family here.

Wilson, a former junior world champion wrestler who attended the past two Olympics, has visited Prince George a number

of times with his Chris Wilson Power Tour, another positive-lifestyle promotional tour.

Some question the effectiveness of tours like this one, but Belczyk isn't put off by any criticism of the group's efforts.

"I don't know if you can get a definite sense of how it's affecting the kids," he said. "I think you only get the full results over time."

"People have to realize this isn't going to be just one hit and run — it's something that's going to be followed up and continued. It's something that can affect their whole lives. And if we make a positive impact on just one person, it's been worth it."