

FROZEN FAITH

by : Drew Adams

Is it possible to build an empire overnight? On January 9, 2013, Brian Burke—President and General Manager (GM) of the Toronto Maple Leafs—was fired from his duties for failing to live up to his own expectations set years prior. Personally, I believe that he had dismantled a team that was holding onto old assets. He stepped into the office with virtually a star depleted team, and rebuilt most of the foundation that Toronto currently occupies today. This is a big deal to me, as well as Leaf Nation, because I believe that Burke had not only lived up to what he promised, but he had created a whole new atmosphere and a new look to an original franchise. I would like to take a look at what Brian Burke accomplished during his tenure with the Leafs, why Dave Nonis shouldn't have control of the club, and why Kyle Dubas should be the next GM of Toronto.

Brian Burke was hired on November 29, 2009, after stepping down from a management position with the Anaheim Ducks. At this point the Leafs were coming off numerous disappointing seasons having not made the playoffs since before the lockout in 2003. I am the avid fan watching the games from the comfort of my living room; I was ecstatic about the change. I would tell myself that things could not get any worse since the team was already one of the worst teams in the league. The way he handled himself in interviews was phenomenal. Saying he would create a new look to the organization



and build a team that was fit for North American style hockey. He would use intriguing words like truculence, pugnacity, testosterone, and belligerence when he would describe the team that he envisioned. It sounded like just the team I wanted, and just the team we needed. These are just words he spoke though, so would he follow through? During Burke's four year tenure as GM of the Leafs he had brought in a core group of players. Within the first year he had made over twelve trades. The first big splash was when he traded two first round draft picks for Phil Kessel, an already developed and promising superstar. Leaf Nation erupted—pissed off about giving up two years of first round picks for an American born hockey player. He acquired defensemen like Dion Phaneuf and Francios Beauchemin, tough guys like Colton Orr and Jay Rosehill, and one prospect that particularly stands out, Nazem Kadri.