

Logan is shut-out

by Ira Nayman

A few years ago, I mentioned to a friend that I wanted to win a Stephen Leacock Award for humour. He asked why. I told him that the Award was one of the few given for humour, and the

only one given specifically for Canadian humour.

"Yeah," my friend responded. "But, look at some of the people who have won it."

He had a point; neither of us regarded past winners very

highly. For one thing, winners were chosen because they wrote in Leacock's gentle style, ignoring 50 years of advances in comedy. For another, all those *ersatz* Leacocks invariably missed the social criticism in his work; for instance, a book like *Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town*, in its gentle way, mocks the pretensions of small town Ontarians.

This is my way of explaining why all the hype about Paul Quarrington as Stephen Leacock Award winner (for the novel *King Leary*) didn't impress me. In fact, I wondered what Quarrington, whose earlier novel *Home Game* was pretty entertaining, had done to deserve such a dubious distinction.

Logan in Overtime, Quarrington's latest novel, ex-

plained everything.

Logan in Overtime is about a very minor league hockey game that turns into a national sensation when, through the efforts of extraterrestrial and supernatural agencies, it breaks the record for most overtime periods, with no end in sight. The game turns on a goaltending duel between Logan, a washed up former NHLer with knees like nothing on this planet, and Bram Ridout, a snotty kid with superhuman reflexes.

A lot happens, but little of it is particularly interesting. Characters are not especially well motivated. The fantasy elements seem familiar (too familiar; W. P. Kinsella did this kind of story much better in *The Iowa Baseball Confederacy*.)

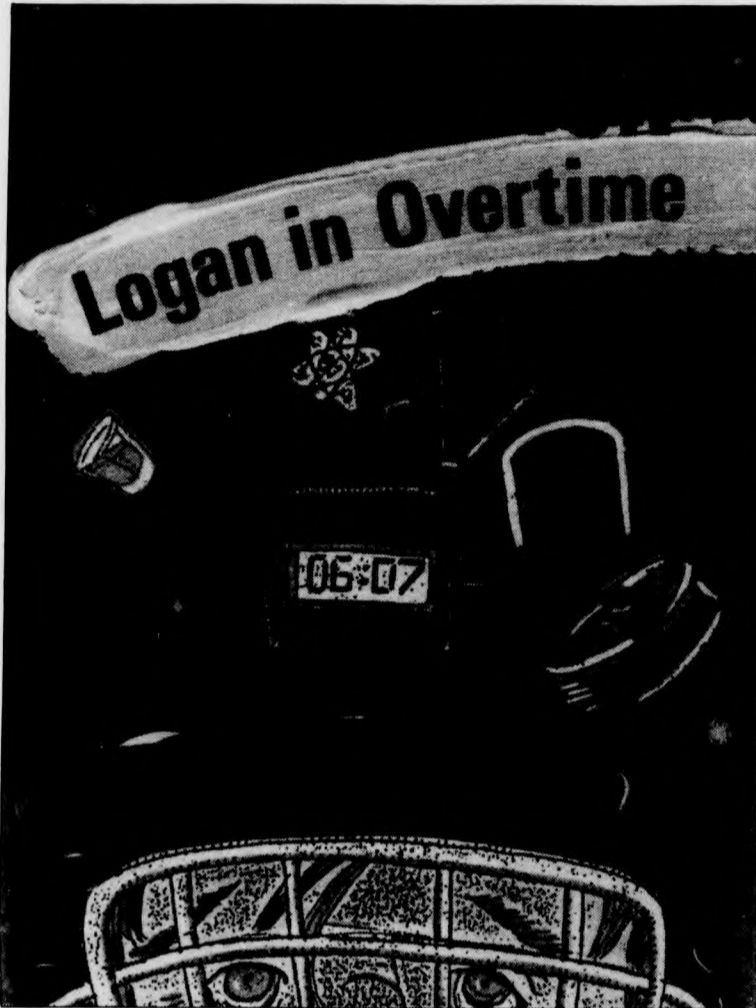
But, worst of all, the writing is, for the most part, simply not funny (unless you think Mindfuckers from the Dog Star Sirius are funny). While the reader will find some elements amusing (I liked Hockey Night

in Canada commentators Don and Dan, for instance), they seem few and far between.

In order to bring his style into the '90s, Quarrington has thrown in a couple of sex scenes and some vulgarity. This tends to work against the gentle pace he tries to maintain. Moreover, it misses the point: adult books deal with mature themes as well as mature subject matter. *Logan in Overtime* doesn't have an idea in its wonky head.

The failure of *Logan in Overtime* may be because of the subject matter. Baseball, with its slow rhythms and building tension, seems a natural subject for romantic myth-making; hockey, on the other hand, is violent by nature, making it a far less likely subject for poetic treatment.

Perhaps sensing how lightweight the book is, Quarrington refers to it as "one for a rainy day at the Lodge." I would add, "be sure to get all your chores done first."



artscalendar

compiled by Kristy Gordon

Be at Calumet College March 26 at 8pm for an interesting mix of "food" and music. **The Strawberry Jam**, some of Toronto's hottest musicians, will be jamming at York. Phone 736-5549 for info on the musicians.

On March 23 at 12 noon in DACARY Hall (050 McLaughlin) the **Student Chamber Concert** will feature a classical guitar ensemble, sax quartet, flute ensemble, brass quartet and others.

If you're interested in an afternoon of music, set aside March 27. At 3pm, **Annemarie Mazzafarro** will perform a flute recital featuring works by Le Clair, Debussy and Mozart. At 3:30pm, **Valerie Magnan** will perform a piano recital with works by Bach, Schubert, Debussy and Schumann. The day will conclude with an 8pm clarinet recital by **Junichiro Suwa** performing works by Glick, Brahms, Mozart and Debussy. All of these recitals will take place in DACARY Hall.

The IDA Gallery (first floor Fine Arts Building) presents **Sandra Gregson's** MFA thesis exhibition featuring sculpture and drawing. The display runs until March 30 and is open weekdays from 10am-5pm.

What do you have planned for your weekend? This Saturday (March 24) at the Apocalypse Club (750 College Street), **Lillian Allen and the**

Revolutionary Tea Party and Fijahtive will perform a benefit for El Salvador's Radio Farabundo Marti, the voice of the Salvadorean People in Struggle. Tickets are \$17 at the door. Sponsored by CKLN, CIUT and the York Women's Centre. For more info call 531-8497.

Come to the **Arts and Crafts of Africa** sale in the West Bear Pit (Central Square) March 27 from 10-3pm. Sponsored by the Association of African Students at York University.

Three Men In A Lounge: Fourth Exhibition of silver photography by David Smith Theo Bennink and Stephen Haines. March 26, 3-7. Purple Lounge (2nd floor, fine arts phase II).

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atkinson explores malraux

by Michele Greene

The spirit of France is coming to York. On March 23 and 24 York will be hosting the Andre Malraux Conference in the Atkinson Fellows Lounge.

As a French novelist and politician, Malraux was active in both the culture and literature of France, as well as international affairs. He became France's minister of cultural affairs in 1959 and, during his term, promoted national museums and supported regional cultural centres known as Maisons de la Culture. In international affairs, Malraux played an important role in establishing relations between China and Western democracies. In 1933, one of Malraux' best known novels, *La Condition Humaine*, was published.

The conference was organized by Assistant Professor Sergio Villani through the Etudes Francaises et Langue Moderne at Atkinson College. Many knowledgeable speakers from around the world will be present to discuss Malraux' accomplishments, including Villani who will speak Saturday at 9:00 a.m. on "L'Aquarium dans L'Espoir," one of Malraux' books.



and influential individual, hosted by York, says Villani. It will be a "unique opportunity for our students to listen to knowledgeable speakers of a modern novelist." He added that everyone is invited to participate free of charge.