

Gord Stech

Smythe Division

Calgary vs. Los Angeles
After the Jets bounced the Flames early last spring, the Flames have prepared a whole year for this series. LA ruined its chance for a surprise attack by giving the Flames two wake-up calls last week. Flames in a six game shootout.

Winnipeg vs. Edmonton
Unfortunately only in this league does a brutal stretch-drive slump help a team in the playoffs. The Jets have NOTHING going for them. They've rarely beaten the Oilers and they stink now. This is why they'll surprise. Jets in... ah I just can't. Oilers in six.

Why bet against the champs when they're probably still good enough. Besides, the Oilers have Fuhr, Gretz, Muckler's defense and a ton of experience. Flame hunger won't compensate for rookie mistakes and shaky D. Oilers over Flames in six.

Norris Division

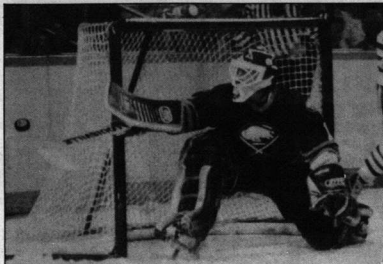
Toronto vs. Detroit
When the Wings lost Stieve they automatically came out of the Norris. His injury and resulting lack of offence scares the Wings to death every time they get scored

Only poolsters care about the Chicago-St. Louis series.

on. They'll let in even fewer goals than they did last spring. If the Leafs were healthy, maybe, but Wreggett's spent, and Bester's unproven. When too many people are aware of the upset it doesn't happen. Anyway, who cares? No Clark, no Smith, no Semenko, no Flirt, no Wings in five.
Chicago vs. St. Louis
Only poolsters care about this one.

Here's saying the Hawk goalies get hotter than Miller while Denis and the boys re-catch their playoff spirit of a few years ago. Federko and Gilmour magic act won't dazzle, even with healthy supporting cast. Hawks in five.

Wings'll fly over the Hawks in five becoming nicely rested for the



Buffalo may pull off an upset over the Bruins in the first round.

Campbell final. They also break the three year 1st place Norris jinx. If it's Calgary, Detroit shuts down the tired Flames and goes to its first final in 22 years. Since I say it'll be Edmonton, the Oilers'll have trouble with the Wings but will prevail in seven.

Adams Division

Hartford vs. Montreal
Since there are always a few surprises, Hartford wouldn't shock me. Especially since Montreal's due for a quick exit after a couple of successful playoffs. And since the Whaler's similar defensive style scares the Habs more than... ah I just can't. Habs in six.

Buffalo vs. Boston
Damn. The year I wanna pick the Bruins to beat the Habs and they run into a road block. One built by Ted Sator. The Sabres are a perfect dark-horse if you don't believe the Bruins this year, even with Moog, two spunky Oly kids and general health...finally. Bruins in the max.

For no other reason other than I'm trying to be one of the smart-asses that picks the year Boston ends the Habs jinx. Every year some

team wastes a good regular season. This year it's Montreal. Bruins over the Habs in five.

Patrick Division
New Jersey vs. Islanders
Geez. I'm running out of series and no upsets yet. Although the Devils only finished four wins back of the Isles they have no chance. Isles

final.

Oilers spoil dream series for Smathers-McCulloch types. McSorley over Miller. Fuhr over Moog, arrogance over humbleness, Canada over U.S., etc.... Oilers in seven.

Alan Small

Smythe Division

Calgary vs. Los Angeles — Even though the Kings are peaking for the playoffs, the Flames have more of everything, and should defeat the Kings. But not without a fight. If Rollie Melanson gets hot, this could be one of the most exciting series in the first round, since both clubs have run-and-gun offences. Calgary in six.

Edmonton vs. Winnipeg — Last season, the Jets had a team made to beat the Flames but one that would lose to the Oilers last year. They've made the fewest changes in the division, thus one could say that they'll lose to the Oilers again. Besides, the Oilers have won 22 consecutive playoff games with Winnipeg, and are one team that just loves streaks like this. Edmonton in four.

Look for the Oilers to gain revenge in the Smythe final when the Oilers defeat the Flames in the best playoff in NHL history. Gretzky will smoke and lead the Oilers to a seven game victory.

Norris Division
Detroit vs. Toronto — Coaltending will save the Wings in this series as lack of scoring will kill them in long run. Great to watch Harold Ballard laugh at the league again though. Detroit in four.

St. Louis vs. Chicago — The name of the game is to score goals, and the Blackhawks can certainly do that. The Blues have trouble with it. Goaltending is suspect on both clubs. Savari will be the difference. Chicago in seven.

Opposites will collide in the Norris final when the defensive Wings take on the offensive Blackhawks. Darren Pang will be red hot going into the series, which will be the Red Wings. Waterloo.

Adams Division
Montreal vs. Hartford — This series

will be such a breeze for the Habs that they might get windburn. Two years ago these teams met and since then Montreal's improved and Hartford hasn't. Canadiens in four.

Boston vs. Buffalo — Upset special. Buffalo is peaking at the right time and the holes in the Buffalo nets. Hayward will be hot for the Habs.

The Canadiens will steamroll the Sabres in five games when they expose the holes in the Buffalo nets. Hayward will be hot for the Habs.

Patrick Division
Islanders vs. New Jersey — Islanders lucked out of subway series when Jersey beat out the Rangers and will thank them for it by stomping on the Devils' talk in the Patrick semis. Lafontaine will lead the Isles. New York in five.

Washington vs. Philadelphia — The Flyers will bring all their players from injury well rested. The Capitals on the other hand, tired themselves out for first two in second game. Hextall wins the battle of the goalies.

Hextall will win the battle of the goalies over Malarchuk and Peeters.

over the two quintessential non-playoff goalies, Malarchuk and Peeters. Malarchuk nearly cost the Nord's last year, and it was Mason in the nets for the Caps last year. Philadelphia in seven.

The Islanders will use their youth and defeat the aging and beat up Flyers. Kelly Hrudey should lead the Isles to the Stanley Cup finals with a six game upset over the Montreal Canadiens in the Wales final, but will come up short in the championship series when the Oiler speed and scoring trounces them in five. Grant Fuhr will grab the Conn Smythe in the process.

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