

Forum

Playoff whining

Whalers General Manager Emile Francis wants to have the NHL playoff format restructured to make sure only the best teams make the playoffs.

How many times have we heard this stupid refrain? I remember a few years ago when the Toronto Blue Jays finished a close second to the Detroit Tigers in baseball's American League East. Upset Blue Jay fans said if their team played in the American League West it would have finished first and been in the playoffs.

Most sports fans today have lost all understanding of what the playoffs are about. The playoffs are a post-season tournament among teams which excelled during the regular season. Its purpose is to determine which team is best in the league. In the case of the Jays, why should they have a shot at winning the overall title in a two week tournament when they spent the preceding six months proving they weren't even the best team in their own division.

The Pittsburgh Penguins are in the same dilemma. They consistently finish out of the playoffs in the competitive Patrick Division so want to be moved to the lackadaisical Norris Division where they could surely see some post-season action. What right do they have to see post-season action anywhere if they can't finish higher than fourth in their own division?

By the same token, having teams make the playoff tournament (and grab playoff money) while having fewer regular season points than non-playoff teams is technically unfair. But here the pluses outweigh the minuses. Years back, the NHL had regular season format whereby all the teams played each other an equal number of times. The top 16 teams made the playoffs wherein the top-ranked team played the 16th, 2nd met the 15th, etc. This system was completely equitable, but all rivalry was lost. How much rivalry can be built up between the Oilers and the Flames or the Habs and the Nordiques if they only meet each other a few times during the regular season and rarely in the playoffs.

While also fostering inter-divisional rivalries (if, as in the NHL, only four teams from a given division make the playoffs, inter-divisional games obviously become more important), the problems stir up healthy controversy. For example, I think the Toronto Maple Leafs are the worst pro hockey team on the planet. I mean, if you can muster only a .400 winning percentage while playing the likes of the Red Wings, North Stars, Blues, and Blackhawks eight times a year, then you must really stink. Yet, the Leafs may make the playoffs while the Penguins, who have three more points than Toronto, probably won't. Now if this controversy stirs up a lot of interest (and a lot of newspaper ink), then it's a good thing. And if the Penguins get shafted, so what? Both teams are just varying shades of lousy and with last year's playoffs being the gross exception, the average to mediocre teams don't travel that far in the post-season tournament anyway. So Toronto makes a few more playoff bucks than Pittsburgh. Small price to pay for good rivalries.

Thankfully, the NHL owners were smart to foster inter-divisional rivalries and appear smart enough to keep it.

Which, in itself, is a surprise.

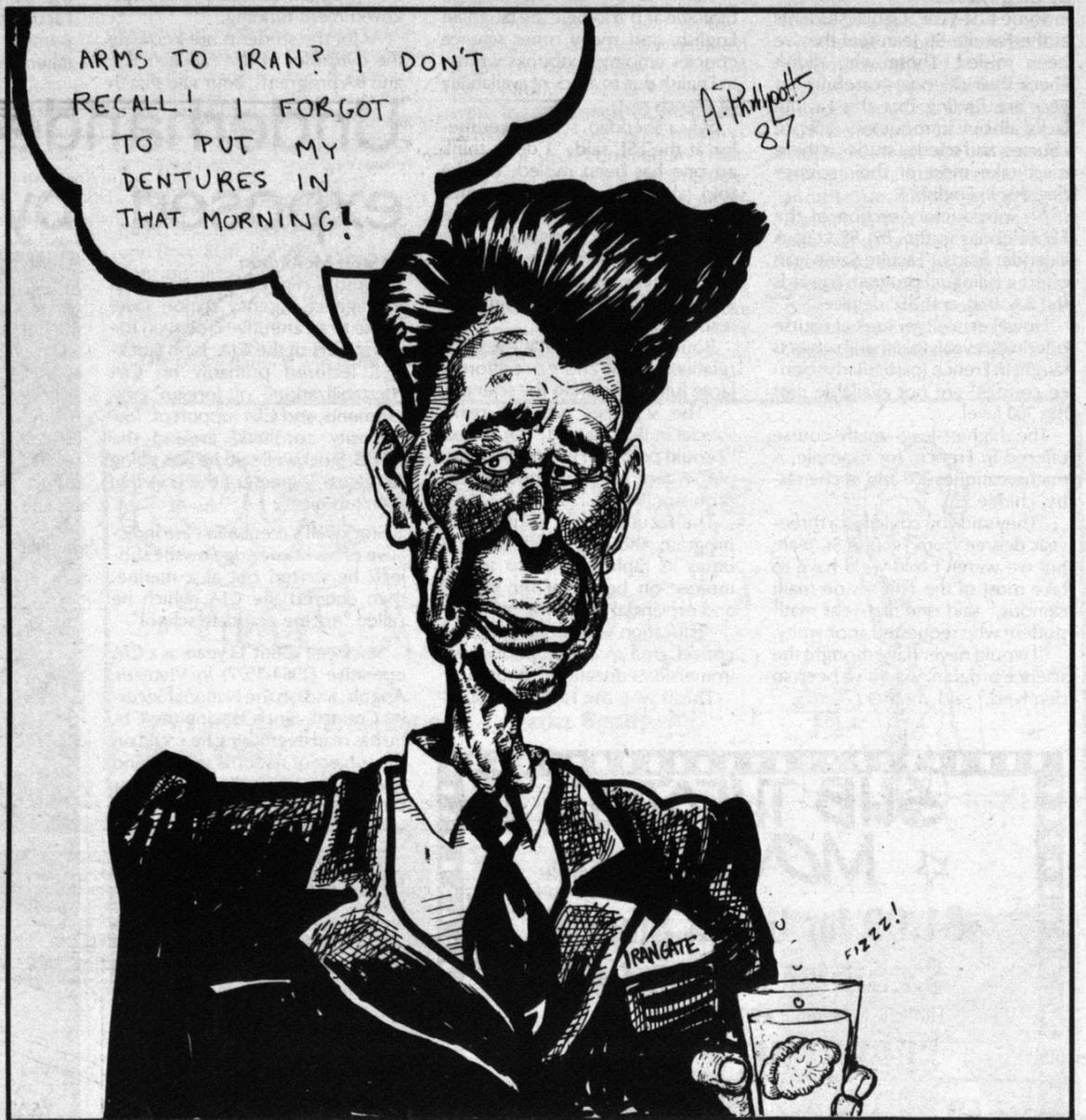
Dean Bennett

The Gateway

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The Gateway were no Bruce Gardave has gone before. These are the voyagers of the starship Alan Small. Mike Spindloe's and Dragos Ruiu's five year mission: to seek out Emma Sadgrove, Jerome Ryckborst, Marc Simao, Andy Phillpotts, Moreen Murray, Tina Christini, Ron Checora, Susan Winkelaar, Jeff Cowley, Cam McMulloch, Ken Bosman, Roberta Franchuk, Randa Smathers, Scott McKinnon, Lisa Hall, and Dan Skinner.



Letters...

In defence of Chapelski

To the Editor:

Re: Mr. Hahn's letter of March 17th

Mr. Hahn, are you really that blind to the facts of the recent election?

1. The THINK slate printed falsehoods in their campaign material which would mislead the students concerning the present financial situation of the Students' Union.

— Does this mean you approve of people deceiving the students of the U of A? (Now that's a quality all executives should possess.)

2. The slate which was removed from the election may have walked off with \$610 of our (the students') money after last year's election.

— I guess you approve of possible theft as well.

I would like to suggest that you re-examine the facts, Mr. Hahn. If you do, you will see that Ms. Chapelski took the only actions available to ensure an honest election, and one that did not violate the Students' Union constitution.

I guess the chances of her going out with you now are even less, eh big guy?!

Chuck Remson

In defence of Home Ec.

To the Editor:

In response to the annoyance of certain members in the Faculty of Home Economics with regard to the label BECKY, we say the following:

How many of you out there know that the Faculty of Home Ec exists at U of A? How many of you have supported the various events put on by the Fac. of Home Ec Students' Association (FHESA)? (Idle Eyes, Mexican Dinner, Walking Rally, Health Week display.)

Also, how many of you know what a BECKY is? For the benefit of those who do not know, they are Home Ec students. The term is what many, but not all Home Ec students think is an affectionate term rather than a derogatory one. This is much like Agriculture students being referred to as "Aggies."

BECKY's are not solely involved with cooking and sewing. Surprised? When we graduate we will be professionals helping people to make their daily lives better. People eat

everyday; thus, we have the Dept. of Foods and Nutrition. People wear clothes everyday; thus, we have the Dept. of Clothing and Textiles. People interact with others everyday; thus, we have the Dept. of Family Studies. If you did not know already, then you are now enlightened by knowing the three facets of Home Ec.

We stress, Home Ec grads will be professionals, not housewives or blue collar workers.

It has been brought to our attention that BECKY is not presenting a professional image. We have been told that it is a demeaning term to the profession and that this is where the negative stereotyping starts.

BECKY's are actually going to be professionals some day. BECKY's are human beings. Who said that professionals are not human beings? Should not human beings have an element of fun and enjoyment in their lives? Cannot one learn to laugh at oneself? Does this not help keep you sane? What would this world be with nicely dressed, nicely fed professionals who do not laugh?

In a sense, this BECKY label is just another way of having fun. To draw some parallels: Engineers are known to be beer guzzlers, but we still let them design computers. Medicine students have their annual raunchy Med Show, but we still go to a doctor if we are ill. Law students have their annual stags and "smokers", but we still go to a lawyer if we are being sued.

Which stone is engraved stating that being a professional excludes having fun and being able to laugh at yourself?

Finally, if any of you know and respect a BECKY for what he/she is and will be, let him/her know!!

Thank you.

Diane Hoy
 Carol Daly
 Kim Wagner
 Debra Molen
 Kerry Schwing

Ruiu: "Spreading Hate?"

To the Editor:

Why don't you ask Mr. Dragos Ruiu to change the name of his article from "Making Waves" to "Spreading Hate"? That seems to be Mr. Ruiu's real intention.

I have been watching Mr. Ruiu's articles for quite a while now, ever since he started writing the fashion column for the Gateway. Even in that column Mr. Ruiu seemed unnaturally preoccupied with the female body and the male birthright to observe the female body and make

Letters to the Editor should not be more than 250 words in length. They must include your signature, faculty, year of program, I.D. number, and phone number. We reserve the right to edit for libel and length. Letters do not necessarily reflect the view of The Gateway.