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NEWS & VIEWS

Tales from the Habs-Lightning game in Tampa Bay



Mike Cohen

TAMPA- It was a pleasant coincidence for me over the holidays when my trip to Tampa overlapped with a visit by the Montreal Canadiens at the Amalie Arena to play the Lightning. The fact that I was granted press box access proved to be a real bonus, a clear item I can now check off from my bucket list.

FORMER HAB ENGBLOM: I am old enough to remember what a good defenceman Brian Engblom was for the Montreal Canadiens from 1977 to 1982, before then Managing Director Irving Grundman traded him to the Washington Capitals along with Rod Langway, Craig Laughlin and Doug Jarvis for Ryan Walter and Rick Green. It was the ultimate blockbuster transaction. I was pleased to connect with Engblom at the game. He is now in his third season as a television analyst for Lightning games on Sun Sport, working alongside play by play man Rick Peckham. I had a chance to see former Canadiens first round draft choice Mikhail Sergachev in action. The standout defenceman was traded to the Lightning last summer for centre Jonathan Drouin. "Sergachev is a heck of a player," said Engblom. "I do not know how high his ceiling is; he gets better every game. He has great hands

and two heavy shots; he is definitely one of those special players who plays a very bold game and has no fear at all."

SCOTTY BOWMAN: What an honour it was for me to cross paths with one of the greatest coaches in NHL history, Scotty Bowman. Now 84 years young, the Verdun native resides in Sarasota – a one hour drive from Tampa. His son Stan is the general manager of the Chicago Black Hawks, so as a special assistant he attends every Lightning home game in a scouting capacity.

PHIL ESPOSITO: Phil Esposito is a true NHL legend from his playing days with the Black Hawks, the Bruins and the Rangers. But 25 years ago he brought pro hockey to Tampa Bay, serving as the team's first president and general manager. There is a bronze statue outside of Amalie Arena of him, recognizing that feat. I was part of a special media tour of Tampa the year the Lightning entered the NHL. Our group attended an exhibition game and I got to interview Esposito. He serves as a color commentator for home radio broadcasts now and between periods I was able to get a photo and congratulate him on creating what is now one of the NHL's strongest franchises.

JULIEN BRISEBOIS: Montreal native Julien BriseBois was not in town when I

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Only police can issue tickets for moving infractions: SPVM

By Joel Goldenberg
The Suburban

The Montreal police department (SPVM) has confirmed that only their officers can issue tickets to motorists for moving violations, such as not stopping at a stop sign.

"We can confirm to you that reports of infractions for not having stopped in the presence of a stop sign can only be given by police officers under the Code de la Sécurité Routière," Sandrine Lapointe of the SPVM's media relations section wrote us in an e-mail.

The Suburban asked this question of the SPVM following a Hampstead council meeting in which residents Dan Sterlin and Howard Wallace recounted instances in which Sterlin's daughter and Wallace himself were stopped by a town public security officer (PSO) for alleged moving violations.

At that meeting, Steinberg responded that the town has a legal opinion that says, "if you have a [town] bylaw that says people must stop at a stop sign, not stopping is a violation of municipal law. If they see someone going through a stop sign and if they happen to know where the person lives, and if they go to that person's house and say 'we recorded you going through the stop sign,' we believe they can give a ticket."

The Suburban asked the Mayor after the meeting for more information about why the town believes it can stop motorists and ticket them for moving violations.

"There's a difference between chasing

someone and stopping them, and noticing that someone has broken a bylaw and going to them and saying 'you broke our bylaw,'" Steinberg told *The Suburban*. "That is an important distinction.

"Now, it may well be that our public security is not allowed to give tickets for going through stop signs, that may be the case," the Mayor added.

After conferring with each other, Steinberg and town director-general Richard Sun said public security has in fact not given out any tickets for going through stop signs.

We also asked Steinberg by e-mail if the town had any information to give regarding the actions of the PSO, who was alleged by Sterlin to have been aggressive and allegedly asked his daughter, "how come you don't drive a Porsche like everyone else around here?"

The Mayor maintained that he does not comment on personnel issues. He also had no comment on the SPVM response to us regarding moving violations.

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In the meantime, Sterlin told *The Suburban* last month that he spoke with two SPVM sergeant-detectives from a squad that deals with the protection of the municipal integrity of Montreal's municipalities.

"They just want to make sure everyone is doing their job properly, that police are doing police work and Public Security is doing Public Security," the resident explained. "They asked me if I would give them the e-mails I exchanged with the Mayor, and I

said yes. They also wanted to speak to Howard Wallace."

Sterlin said he brought his issue to public attention because "I didn't like the answers I was getting from the mayor."

"The detectives I spoke to said Hampstead was aware of their investigation, and that I should not be surprised if there is very little Public Security activity [regarding moving violations] over the next several months."

Sterlin stressed that he does not want to make trouble for the Mayor.

"I just don't like to see these PSOs, who

can perform a useful function, strutting around thinking they're the sheriff," he added. "It's not right."

Sterlin added that he agrees with the Mayor that personnel issues, such as the identity of the PSO who dealt with his daughter, should not be discussed outside the town administration.

"That's fine, it's a separate issue," the resident said. "I just want to make sure people are not given authority they shouldn't have." ■

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COHEN

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attended the Lightning game. He is the right hand man to general manager Steve Yzerman and widely considered to be the most likely candidate to succeed Marc Bergevin as the Habs boss should he be let go. "It's only a matter of time before (BriseBois) gets his opportunity," Yzerman said, according to the *Tampa Bay Times'* Joe Smith.

PIERRE HOUDE: Imagine my surprise while staying at the Saddlebrook Resort in Wesley Chapel, a suburb of Tampa, when I ran into RDS play by play man for Habs broadcasts Pierre Houde. He purchased a condo there for his family 12 years ago. Pierre

and I actually met decades ago when we were part of a group selecting the three stars at an international minor hockey tournament in St. Laurent. He has been an original member of the RDS team since 1989 and also appears weekday mornings on CHOM FM with Terry DiMonte.

THANK YOU TONY: Please see my blog about the Tampa hockey experience on *The Suburban* website. At the bottom is a link to my appearance on TSN 690 the morning after the game I attended. Thanks to host Tony Marinaro for making that happen.

Something to share? Email mcohen@thesuburban.com, follow me on Twitter @mikecohencsl and on our blog section at www.thesuburban.com



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