

HURRICANE WARNING

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The official newsletter of the Carolina Hurricanes Booster Club

December 2003

Adams continues to be bright spot for Canes

He was one of the few bright spots in and otherwise dismal year for the Carolina Hurricanes, but he's still not taking anything for granted.

Craig Adams says he can't afford to.

"I wouldn't be here if I didn't have a good work ethic," he told members of the CHBC at the club's November meeting. "Any success I've had, I know where it comes from. I don't have a choice. (Jaromir) Jagr can go and put in half an effort and still be better than most guys. If I put in half an effort...I'd be gone the next day. So there's not choice for me. Some guys aren't like that. I think it's great for them that they have that talent, that world-class talent. I don't begrudge anybody else for that. You might be able to go out and give 85 percent and still score more goals than me. That's life, right? I don't get frustrated by that. I get frustrated if I have five good chances and I don't score, but not because I compare myself to anybody else."

The Calgary, Alberta, native's journey from there to Harvard – where he played with Canes' Assist General Manager Jason Karmanos – to being the 223rd pick in the 1996 Entry Draft to now playing on a line with stars Rod

Brind'Amour and Erik Cole hasn't been meteoric. But it's been steady. And it's his steadiness, and his energy, that won him drastically increased minutes during the 2002-03 season, one year removed from playing in only a single game in the Hurricanes' run through the Stanley Cup playoffs.

Good chemistry requires the transfer of energy, and Adams teamed with Kevyn Adams – no blood relation – last season to spark the Hurricanes. This year, Craig Adams has played on a number of different line combinations, but the chemistry hasn't been lost.

"We have a really good group of guys," he said. "We're all pretty close. I obviously haven't played on another team, but from what I hear you can definitely run into a situation where things are more cliquish... maybe the guys don't get along as well. We do have a really good group. I love playing for the Hurricanes. As far as the team

dynamic goes, it's great. Guys who come from other teams...they appreciate it here, the way the whole team runs. It's not always that good in other places. I think we have a really solid organization here. I think Paul (Maurice) is a great coach to play for. He's very fair, and we're treated well by the community. What else can you ask for?"



Craig Adams' drive has continued to spark the Canes this year

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CHBC Holiday Party: mark your calendars for January 4th!

Next CHBC meeting: Tuesday, Dec. 16 • 7 p.m., RBC Center

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President's Message / John Gallagher



Pictured Left: Genius at work? I think not: At a recent Storm Shelter, Patrick Drollinger (right) attempts to give John Gallagher (left) Fantasy Hockey advice, but no one is apparently home!

Sugar plums are dancing in my head and I am all set to see the Canes in action in the month of December! I always enjoy watching our team on the Canadian road swing and against my second favorite team, the Pittsburgh Penguins!

The Booster Club and Hurricanes event calendar:

Our next general membership meeting will be **Tuesday, December 16th** at the RBC Center at 7pm. Our guest speakers will be a Ron the Ref and Donnie "the Iceman" Macmillan. Please RSVP to me at johng@hurricanesboosters.org if you are planning to attend. Guests will be permitted at this meeting provided they send an RSVP and accompany a member in good standing.

The annual **Kids 'N Community "Skate with the Canes"** charity event will take place **Sunday, Dec. 21 from 1 - 3 p.m.** at RBC Center. Tickets will be on sale at the RBC Center, The EYE locations, or by calling the Hurricanes Community Relations department at (919) 861-6231. Tickets are \$50 each, and children under two are admitted free. Please support the Carolina Hurricanes Kids N' Community by attending this wonderful annual event!

I am very pleased to announce that the **Annual CHBC Holiday Party** will return on **Sunday January 4th** immediately following the home game against the Phoenix Coyotes. Cost to attend will be for members will be \$10 in advance, \$12 at the door. We will have a dazzling array of chicken fingers and Oerders, free soft drinks, and a cash bar. This party will be one of our biggest fundraisers of the year and will include some silent auction items and a big raffle!

Please mail in your RSVP and payment for the Holiday Party as soon as possible. This event will be the biggest Booster Club Event this year (so far!). Guest list to be announced at a later date.

Please contact Cheryl Mulhern at cherylm@hurricanesboosters.org if you are interested in volunteering at the Booster Club booth located behind section 110. We need some assistance with recruiting new members and selling CHBC merchandise.

If there is anyone out there who can provide Fantasy Hockey advice, I'm all ears. Falling from 4th to 12th is bad for the image!

Be sure to have a safe and happy Holiday Season! We'll see you in 2004!

And that's hockey to me...

A holiday Top 10 list – Cheap Seats style

The Top 10 signs that you've been a Canes' fan for a long, long time:

10. You have a three-year winning streak on the Pepsi Puck Shuffle...and counting
9. You beat your chest, clap your hands and chant "DEFENSE" when Godzilla and that dinosaur-looking thing appear on the Jumbotron...and long for those rare occasions when the boys in the control booth throw in a Mothra clip for a change of pace.
8. You try your best to prove to all your friends that not only does nothing shave ice like a John Deere Olympia, but that there really is such a thing as a John Deere Olympia.
7. You start a "WASH-ER FLU-ID clap clap clap-clap-clap" chant at 17:00 of the first period
6. You run an over/under pool on how long it will take for the first caller on the Aftermath call-in show on 850 the Buzz to claim that what the Hurricanes really need is a "big name player."
5. You actually remember when Tripp Tracy was the backup goalie.
4. You fondly remember the days when Bates Battaglia's long and freshly washed hair flowed halfway down his back during pre game warm ups... OK, at least you remember.
3. You yell "GET BACK IN THE CREASE, IRBE!!" whenever the goalie...ANY goalie...comes behind the net to play the puck.
2. You just KNOW that the Hardee's Thickburger race is every bit as fixed as the old airplane race used to be.

And the Number One way you know you've been a Canes fan for a long, long time...

1. You not only miss the remote control blimp, you REALLY miss the version of the blimp that looked like a giant bull.
(Much thanks to my friend Brian LeBlanc for four or five of those items and for the idea.)

Random Thoughts

As I sit here writing this column on the afternoon before Thanksgiving, am left wondering why **Thanksgiving Eve** doesn't get as much run as Christmas Eve? I mean, there seem to be just as few people actually working today as on a typical

December 24th. Maybe it's because there just isn't enough good Thanksgiving music.

If you tuned in on your Center Ice package to watch the **Heritage Classic** game between Montreal and Edmonton, which was played outdoors in front of an NHL record crowd of more than 57,000 hearty souls, then you were in for a treat.

I still can't get the image of Habs' goalie Jose Theodore playing with a touque stretched over his goalie mask in a vain attempt to ward off the effects of -19 degree Celsius temperatures. I mean, this game was memorable, but it was also brutal as the two teams basically froze in the Edmonton night. Fun TV, but I'm glad I didn't either play in the thing or watch it from the stands. I am a Southern boy after all, with the thin blood to prove it.

Jeff Daniels hung up the skates in mid-November after a better than 400 game NHL career. Daniels will join the Hurricanes' front office in a capacity that will be defined in the coming months, and will certainly bring the same work ethic to front office chores as he did to his job on the ice. Daniels received a well deserved standing ovation from Canes fans present for the Nov. 23rd game against the Lightning when his retirement was announced to the crowd. Professionalism, an open and generous attitude with fans and a willingness to be a role model for young players were the hallmarks of a solid career for the 35-year-old native of Oshawa, Ontario.

As the 2003-04 NHL season reaches the quarter pole, the annual slow start Olympics have started. The **Blackhawks** have already axed their entire front office after a tenuous beginning, and they're not the only team handing out pink slips. The **Panthers** have finally decided that the tension between Mike Keenan and GM Rick Dudley was too disruptive and have ended Keenan's tenure in his 7th NHL city. Last year's playoff darlings the **Minnesota Wild** are looking up at the entire Northwest Division, and **Washington's** owner just issued a public statement basically calling out his entire organization over the Caps' struggles. Remember, the Canes aren't the only team in the league with playoff aspirations that have some work left to do to meet their goals.

Happy Holidays everybody! See you in the New Year.

Q&A with Mel Fougere of Goal Line Collectibles

One of my favorite "Shoe" comic strips shows the Professor in a baseball card shop examining a baseball he's considering buying.

"Common sense tells me I don't need this autographed baseball," he says.

"Are you a big fan?" asks the clerk.

"Not of common sense," he replies, plunking down the money for the ball.

Whether it makes sense or not, the growth of the Internet and of auction sites like eBay (www.ebay.com), has made the sports memorabilia business – already big – a mammoth industry. Athletes have learned to cash in on their popularity with fans hungry for autographed pictures, cards, equipment, etc. Hockey has helped fuel that growth because of the sport's growing reach and the fact that its players are the most accessible among the four "major" sports. In addition, hockey's stars – notably **Wayne Gretzky** and **Bobby Orr** – were among the first to license themselves and their autographed memorabilia and develop a new level of exclusivity in dealing directly with collectors.

Today, collecting can be enriching and rewarding, but it's also fraught with frustration. And sometimes the lack of common sense can lead to mistakes and bad purchases on the part of collectors.

That's something **Mel Fougere** has seen plenty of. Fougere is one of the undisputed leaders in the sports, and particularly hockey, memorabilia business. A former private investigator and someone involved for years with the Canadian Football League, Fougere has channeled his experience into a business that's conducted from his Hamilton, Ontario, home, primarily on-line through his own website (www.goallinecollectibles.com) and eBay. His contact over the years with pro athletes and his private investigator's eye for hidden problems give him instant credibility in a business full of fraud. So if anyone is qualified to help a collector get started, Mel is. **Trading Corner** spoke with him about collecting.

What advice would you give a new collector?

A new collector can get easily caught up and sometimes overwhelmed with this hobby. It is at this stage where the consumer is least educated and most enthused about adding to their collection, and subsequently the most vulnerable. The best advice: if possible, attend an arena or forum where the star

you want an autograph from is performing. The most rewarding part of growing an autograph collection is most certainly retaining as much as you can in person from the players themselves.

What about buying autographs?

If you are purchasing autographed memorabilia as a novice buyer, always ask questions. How was the autograph retained? Where? Was the star a nice person? Do or did they sign much? How do I know this is a real autograph? Does it come with a picture of the star signing? Does it come with a COA (Certificate of Authenticity)? All these questions will allow you to determine a good feeling as to whether the seller of the product is genuine and selling authentic memorabilia. If at any time you lose confidence, based on an answer, don't make that purchase! And be certain to retain a 100 percent money back guarantee on any and all autographed memorabilia.

Anything else collectors should watch out for?

If the price is too low, don't "assume" you are getting a good buy. If any "red flag" is raised, be cautious and learn as much as it takes to make you confident enough to purchase the item. If you cannot purchase with "confidence," do not purchase.

How do you know something is legitimate and not fake?

Research is the key. As much enjoyment as it brings, we must still be prudent and careful buyers. Like any other business, there are good and bad sellers. The best suggestion is to acquire as many solid samples of the autograph you are seeking and view them closely for similarities. Also, consider there are many players who just don't sign for many people, if rarely anyone. For example, let's suggest the collector is seeking a **Wayne Gretzky** or **Dan Marino** autograph. Because these players are the highest profile in their respective sports, one must beware they are equally the most frequently forged autographs on the market. The same can be said for the **Mark McGwire**, **Joe DiMaggio**, **Mickey Mantle** and so on. Most of the **Mark McGwire** autographs you'll see out there are not real. A lot of research and comparison is necessary to educate yourself before purchasing an item as such.

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What is the hardest hockey collectible to obtain?

One could argue that a particular Gretzky piece is the rarest ever found. But I suggest the very toughest autograph to find, both authentic and in good shape, would be that of **Terry Sawchuk** or **Tim Horton**, as far as notable players in history. Both these NHL legends had their lives end earlier than they should have, each during their NHL careers. Their autographs are particularly hard to come by, because during the 1950s and 60s mostly children collected hockey cards and memorabilia. I am sure we all cringe at how much money we threw down the drain, throwing our **Bobby Orr** rookie cards against the wall to knock down the bunch!

What do you collect yourself?

I personally have taken an interest in game tickets, special date programs from various stadiums, some autographed memorabilia and select magazines. This is my interest and I very much enjoy collecting programs in particular, since I am fairly confident I can hold onto these. Mind you, I have already had to sell some of my nice programs. When a customer asks for something, I provide it if I have it.

What's your favorite item?

My favorite item in my collection would have to be a toss-up between a custom framed 2002 US Open Bethpage Black pin flag and 8x10 signed by **Tiger Woods** and 22 others in the final round, and a **Ken Dryden**-signed authentic Montreal Canadiens jersey, which unusually is extremely hard to come by because Dryden doesn't sign publicly, nor does he do private signings – except on a handful of occasions over the past 30 years. He also happens to be a personal favorite of mine.

At any given time, it seems like there are hundreds of Wayne Gretzky items on sites such as eBay. Has Gretzky memorabilia lost its luster, because there is so much out there?

The collecting public will never get tired of seeing **Wayne Gretzky's** autograph, or equal caliber athletes from their favorite sports. All the same, there is a point when the market simply becomes flooded. That is definitely the case with Wayne Gretzky autographed memorabilia. For his entire career, he had endorsements with many companies and primarily autographed for Upper Deck Authenticated. In my humble opinion, Mr. Gretzky is very smart for many reasons – but in particular when

it comes to his autograph and game-used memorabilia. He went through his career marking all his game attire with ID codes. There are significant markings on all Wayne Gretzky's game-used apparel, which only the seasoned collector would be able to decipher. He's also established his own line of memorabilia, now under the title of WGA (Wayne Gretzky Authentic) for several years now. He is now signing his own items with a "full autograph," totally unlike any signatures he left on Upper Deck Memorabilia. This was another calculated move in my opinion on his part – never really signing a full autograph on many occasions in the past, when endorsing other products. But at the end of the day, there is no Wayne Gretzky memorabilia that won't carry its value. I have found the UDA Gretzky line has definitely lost its luster, simply because the WGA line is profoundly more appealing, with the full and beautiful autographs. Pricing is higher for the WGA line, but most buyers would prefer to pay for – and buy – the best quality available.

What are your thoughts on athletes who start their own line of autographed memorabilia, and start their own websites?

I think this has had some positive and some negative effects. It may well be that this will take away from the hard working seller such as myself. However, in the long run, no matter who you are or I am, the buyer/collector will always go back to the people they trust. Therefore, these sites are a compliment to our industry – as they present a research tool to view comments, inventory of autographed memorabilia, etc. In most cases, even though many top-named players have websites now, it will not take away from the reputable seller. The seller should be using this as a tool to assist and educate their customers. Most star/celebrity Internet sites offer pricing that is unaffordable to the regular everyday consumer. The reason for this is because they are not necessarily trying to sell on their site, but offering "online availability" to their main wholesalers, as well as gaining exposure for their products.

What experiences have you had with hockey's biggest names such as Wayne Gretzky? Who is the best to work with and the worst?

Wayne Gretzky is not the easiest person to see or meet but he's definitely the class act everyone has come to see.

(Go to "Trading Corner" on page 9)

Thunder and Lightning A No-B.S. Hockey Memoir

by Phil Esposito and Peter Golenbock

Phil Esposito's new memoir occupies a unique place on my hockey bookshelf. It stands alone – literally.

First, it's the only hockey book of any length (283 pages) I've ever read in a single day. And second, it's the only one I own that I won't let my 11-year-old son read.

Esposito leaves out the "B" but includes plenty of the "S" – not to mention the "F" and lots of other unmentionables – in this book. It's just plain vulgar. It contains too many trashy, and unimportant, stories and anecdotes for my taste, things that ultimately mean nothing to hockey and that, for a fan of the game, are better left untold. That's why it's out of reach, high up on a shelf away from the rest of my hockey book collection.

But at the same time, many parts of this book are so entertaining I couldn't put it down, reading it start to finish over parts of an 11-hour stretch in mid-November.

Many of us know Phil Esposito best from his "Bubble Boys Hockey League" beer commercials from ESPN telecasts a couple of years ago. What makes him such a compelling hockey personality, though, is his unique place in the game: during his time, the game's greatest scorer, a perennial all-star and a two-time Stanley Cup-winner; after his playing days ended, a general manager for the New York Rangers and the force behind the creation of the Tampa Bay Lightning franchise.

It's in the latter roles – Rangers GM and Bolts founder/co-owner, and later GM – that Esposito devotes the most focused time and detail. His hockey-related stories (there are plenty of non-hockey ones in there) from those time periods give readers fascinating insight into hockey boardrooms and dealings with players. Included, and of particular interest to Hurricanes fans, are his experiences in the summer and fall of 1991, when he and his partners

competed against Peter Karmanos and Jim Rutherford to land the Tampa Bay franchise.

What's missing from the book, or at least what I missed most, are more on-ice exploits. A perfect example: buried in the middle of a narrative about Esposito's marital problems and his secretive liaisons with a girlfriend (including telling readers about the time he skipped out of a Boston Bruins practice to fly cross-country to spend the night in San Francisco with her), he writes, with no fanfare: "We won the Stanley Cup again that season."

Huh?

What about Bobby Orr? What about the playoff run? What about team made up partly of cast-offs from around the league coming together to become one of the greatest teams in hockey history?

"We won the Stanley Cup..."??

That's what's frustrating.

There's enough real history there to whet your appetite. There's just not enough to totally satisfy.

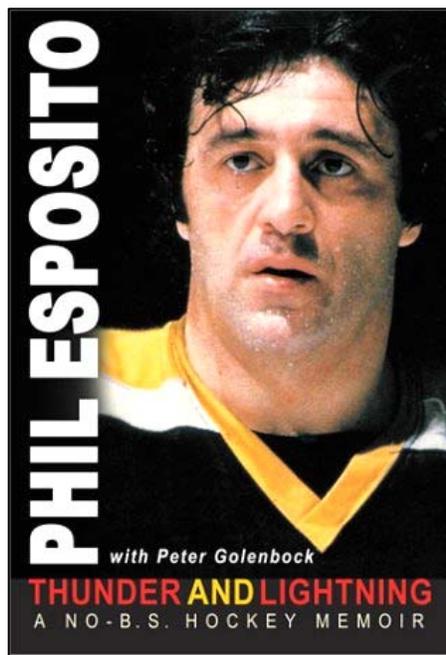
Among the highlights, and part of the meat of the book, is a wonderful 21-page portion devoted to the 1972 "Summit Series," pitting a team of Canadian NHLers against the Russians for eight games that summer. Esposito led the Canadians to a 4-3-1 record, going so far as to chastise fans in a live television interview after the fourth game, a loss which dropped their record to 1-2-1 and drew boos and obscenities from the Vancouver crowd which witnessed

the loss. It's compelling stuff.

But he glosses over the Bruins' two Cup runs, spending more time on his unhappy days as a Ranger than his glory days with the B's. I did learn some new things about the legendary Bobby Orr, which was a motivation for buying the book...it's just that I was simply left wanting more – more than three quick pages on the team's run through the playoffs in the spring of 1970, for example.

There's no question that Phil Esposito was, and is, a fun-loving character, and a personality who has added a great deal to the great game of hockey.

As for his memoir, that's a different story. This book isn't what it could have been. And because of that, most fans of the game would be better off filling that space in the hockey bookshelf with something else.



What are the most significant positives and most significant disappointments for the Canes this season?

From a positive, I can honestly say that Markov and Boughner are significant improvements on defense. Boughner has that unique quality where he can get under an opponents skin and take away from his game. Another positive is Staal...this guy is the real deal...once he gets 20-30 pounds of muscle on him, he will be scary good. Disappointments? Easy. This is a bad offensive team. For the past three years I have been watching this team, I have always thought they were a bit sloppy in the offensive zone, and the power play is just bad. And this is not a new thing...this has been an ongoing problem, with varying levels of severity. However, I do not subscribe to the philosophy of trading for a scorer will solve our problems. I think it is simpler...get men in front of the net. Night after night, it seems our opponents have people in front of the net on almost every shot, to redirect, get a rebound, etc., yet we have a rough time doing it in any regularity. My opinion, this change would assist, at least marginally in scoring.

Nick Gregory

The most significant positive: Eric Staal, his moves, his aggressiveness, his general hockey maturity for a 19-year-old. Most significant disappointment: that Ron Francis had a +/1 of -10 going into the Tampa Bay game, and it's a reflection of the whole team's problems, not just Ron's. FYI: I started following the Canes during their run through the playoffs in 2002. I saw some games in the first half of the 02-03 season. I became a certified Caniac sometime in the second half of last season and I managed to talk people into going to the games with me even though we usually lost. But we were seeing a lot of young guys that we hoped would help us this year. I am still a Caniac, but it has gotten very hard to enjoy games. I have 24-game tickets with my brother, who enjoys the Canes but WANTS A WIN (I do too)! He threatened half seriously, to start yelling "Let's Go Mets" at the Tampa Bay game the other night. I am frustrated, disappointed, and considered crazy for thinking of getting season tickets next year. And I want to cry when I think of the guys who go out on the ice, work hard, and come away with a loss (or a tie). I thank God that my work performance is not evaluated by thousands of people on a nightly basis, but only by one person over a year's time. I am ready for a win, still believe we have a team that can make the playoffs – but it gets harder to believe with every game that goes by.

Edith Creasy

Biggest positive (and surprise) is the performance of Eric Staal. He sort of reminds me of a young Joe Thornton. He needs some time to develop, be more physical and be better in the face off circle (seems like when I see him he is losing more than winning). He has helped the offense this year and looks like he will become a legitimate scoring threat. Biggest disappointment is watching Ron Francis play on the 3rd line. Yeah, I know he isn't exactly young anymore and maybe his age limits his ice time, but I believe his finesse could be more helpful on the 1st or 2nd lines (and maybe move Staal to the 3rd line).

Ken Laflamme

The most significant move was trading a soft Tanabe for the hard hitting Danny Markov, which has invigorated the Defense. Markov just a warrior and gives us the 'go to' defenseman the team lacked as he is playing 24+ most nights. Because of injury we have not seen much from Bob Boughner, but another good pick up to add "grit" to the defense. The biggest disappointment has been an inability to generate good scoring chances and quality shots. Many nights will have 30+ shots, but only about 4-7 "quality" shots that are not directed at the goalies pads. This team has better skill to pick spots on their shots.

Patrick Drollinger

The biggest surprise is the defensive troubles this team has had to go through. Injuries to Aaron Ward and Bob Boughner seemed to have brought back some of the problems the Canes struggled through last season. Cole and Vasicek emerging as scoring leaders is a natural progression of a team rebuilding process and it is nice to see them develop into veterans. Their progression along with Eric Staal is critical to long-term team success.

(continued on page 9)

■ Your Turn *(continued)*

Seeing Ron Francis on the third and fourth lines is tough to watch, but I also believe this is a true act of leadership on his part to do whatever it takes to put the Canes in the winner's circle and part of a long-term plan for the Canes to rebuild for the future. Francis continues to be a class act and we continue to get the privilege of being able to see him skate for another season. Regardless of any outcomes, he should get a standing ovation every time he touches the puck.

John Gallagher

Positive: Eric Staal. He is becoming more comfortable as each game passes and is going to be a star in this league for a long time to come. Disappointment: Power Play. We just haven't been able to put the puck in the net. With all of the fire power on the man advantage, we should be scoring more goals. In time, things will start clicking.

Brett Ciancanelli

The biggest positives I see are the team's intensity of effort and the fact that we've outshot opponents most nights. Those are two areas where the Hurricanes have been inconsistent over the years. If you were to grade the team's effort and its intensity, and compare shot charts, for every single game so far this season – and not have any other statistics – you'd think we'd be five or six games above .500. Biggest disappointment? That we've gone so long without a good break. I know there are plenty of people tired of hearing others moan about the lack of breaks, but when a team loses its confidence, and doesn't get the little breaks, the losses can pile up quickly. Even worse is that after this long, it takes longer to get real confidence back. It's easy, after awhile, to think after a good win or a few good breaks that it's just a fluke, that it's not real – that you're really not that good. The Hurricanes are a good team. They've played well enough to win a bunch more games than they have.

Bill Horner III

TRADING CORNER *(continued from page 5)*

Bobby Orr?

Like Gretzky, he's a true gentleman and pleasure. He will also sign until everyone is accommodated.

What other stars are among the best to deal with?

Guy Lafleur is full of energy; he is very approachable and he'll joke and laugh with anyone. He's a great character. Curtis Joseph is very approachable, genuine and polite. He is a true and charitable gentleman in Toronto, even though he now plays in Detroit. Tony Esposito likes to chat with everyone and leaves a good impression. Very approachable and enjoyable. Gordie Howe is always a nice man. In the past five years, he only signs certain items and very rarely adds inscriptions such as "Mr. Hockey" anymore, unless through a private signing of items. The money in this business has become an influence here.

To see Mel Fougere's website, go to:
www.goallinecollectibles.com

UPCOMING HOME GAMES

Thursday, Dec. 18 vs. Penguins
Monday, Dec. 22 vs. Stars
Saturday, Dec. 27 vs. Canadiens
Monday, Dec. 29 vs. Sabres
Wednesday, Dec. 31 vs. Mighty Ducks
Friday, Jan. 2 vs. Red Wings
Sunday, Jan. 4 vs. Coyotes
Tuesday, Jan. 6 vs. Blues
Thursday, Jan. 8 vs. Rangers

■ CanePoll



Will the Atlanta Thrashers stay on top of the Southeast Division?

YES

29

NO

2