

SPORTS

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JACQUES BOISSINOT / CANADIAN PRESS

Idle chat with his idol: Double leg amputee Josh Pobursky takes in Quebec Remparts practice with NHL great and team co-owner Patrick Roy this week. Pobursky had more than his dream to meet Roy come true later, as he was invited to join in the QMJHL club's pre-playoff workout.

SPOTLIGHT STORY | Patrick Roy, who retired in May as arguably the greatest goalie in NHL history, has refocused his passion as part owner, vice-president and GM of the QMJHL's Remparts

St. Patrick's fire still burns

MARK CARDWELL
SPECIAL TO THE GAZETTE

QUEBEC CITY — It's early afternoon, and Patrick Roy is leaning back in a rich leather couch on his spacious office in Le Colisée, looking every bit retired.

Casually dressed in leather sandals and a black T-shirt and track pants — the same colour as his Hummer, which is parked outside the arena — he blandly answers questions about his decision to quit the Colorado Avalanche last May, and what he has been up to since.

But when Roy is asked about the reputedly arrogant words and gestures that made him a player opponents loved to hate, he suddenly sits bolt upright, his eyes flashing with the fearful intensity that helped make him, arguably, the greatest goaltender in hockey history.

"I think we should read the meaning

of arrogant in the dictionary," Roy said acidly. "I see myself more as a fighter, a guy with passion. I love the game of hockey and, in the position I played, I didn't have the right to show any weakness."

"As a goalie, if you show weakness to your teammates, they're gonna be nervous, they're gonna be afraid of the next shot on the net, they're gonna change their game. My job was to show them that I was accountable for every game in which I was involved."

"The last thing my teammates had to worry about was that I was ready to play. They knew they could count on me every night."

In many ways, Roy has brought a similar approach to his new career as a local sports entrepreneur — and with equally successful results.

Since moving back here to his hometown last summer with his wife, Michele, and their three school-age

children — Jonathan, Frederick and Jana — he has most notably immersed himself in running the day-to-day operations of the Quebec Remparts.

As minority owner, vice-president and general manager of the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League franchise, which practises and plays in the Colisée, Roy works closely with the team's administrative personnel and the coaching staff.

In addition to daily meetings in his trophy-lined second-floor office to discuss team and league business, road trips, trades and potential draft picks, Roy helps the coaches on the ice at almost every morning practice. He also does video research and often accompanies the team on road trips.

"It's been a huge challenge, but I've learned a lot and had a ton of fun," said Roy, who purchased the team seven years ago as an equal partner with two wealthy area businessmen —

Jacques Tanguay and Michel Cadrin — for \$850,000.

According to league officials, the team is now worth a cool \$3 million.

"I'm working with great people and everybody's involved and has input, even on small decisions. I refuse to make it a one-man show," said Roy, who is also a partner in his wife's Russian-style spa in downtown Quebec City and the city's annual Bell Challenge women's tennis tournament.

"I'm almost ashamed to say we're working, because we're having so much fun."

He added, however, that he gets most of his enjoyment from working with the team's two dozen players, who are gearing up for a first-round playoff series against the heavily favoured Prince Edward Island Rocket (formerly the Montreal Rocket).

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March Madness restores faith



PAT HICKEY
STANDING PAT

"Collegiate cagers offer a refreshing respite from the overpaid pros."

For a basketball junkie, there's no better time of year than March Madness. I can get excited by the occasional matchup in the NBA, and the Olympics allow for an opportunity to see how the rest of the world has closed the gap on the American Dream Team.

But the NCAA Tournament of the three weeks of competition drama. There are those who believe the best talent level in U.S. college basketball has dropped off, with players like Carmelo Anthony leaving school early and others like LeBron James going directly to the NBA. Even high school.

But the battles leading up to the tournament indicate there is still a high level of competition and the colleges offer a refreshing respite from the overpaid pros. The tournament offers David and Goliath matchups, such as today's first round game between Vermont and Connecticut. It's a battleground where St. Joseph's, a small Catholic school from Philadelphia, can share the No. 1 seedling with a state university like Kentucky, a traditional powerhouse with four times the enrollment.

While a No. 1 seed has never beaten a No. 1 seed, upsets are commonplace, and filling the brackets in an office pool can be as challenging as balancing a budget.

While this is an American event, few in Canada are better served when it comes to television coverage, especially in this weekend's first two rounds. Viewers in the U.S. often are locked into regional games, but the Canadian coverage on Rogers Sportsnet is more flexible.

"There's a certain regional component, but basically we go where the action is," said Jack Armstrong, a New York native who serves as the studio analyst and ringmaster for the Sportsnet coverage.

Please see HICKEY, Page C2

Souray's return places Komisarek on roster bubble

"I'm hoping that I stick around here and help the team any way I can," Habs defender says

PAUL HICKEY
THE GAZETTE

Mike Komisarek has been part of the Canadiens' success story in recent weeks and he's hoping that he gets a chance to stick around for the final chapter.

Sheldon Souray's knee injury has given Komisarek a chance to play and his confidence — and ice time — have increased over the past two weeks.

But with Souray poised to regain his spot in the lineup, Komisarek finds himself on the bubble. Because there is no roster limit after the NHL trading deadline, the Canadiens can keep Komisarek in Montreal as insurance, or they can send him to the Hamilton Bulldogs of the American Hockey League,

where he can see more ice time than he'd probably get with the Canadiens.

"I don't know what they have planned for me," said Komisarek, who was recalled from Hamilton in November. "Last month, they told me to find a place to live here and I felt that gave me some security. I'm hoping that I stick around here and help the team any way I can."

At the same time, the Canadiens hedged their bets by placing Komisarek and fellow defenseman Karl Dykstra on Hamilton's 30-man roster, making them eligible for the AHL playoffs.

Souray said he's ready to resume playing, but added there were no guarantees he'd be in the lineup tomorrow night in New Jersey when the Canadiens

play the first of back-to-back games against the Devils. The teams meet again Saturday night at the Bell Centre.

"I've worked to get back into shape, but it's the coach's decision on whether I play Friday and how much I play," said Souray, who was averaging a team-high 20:47 of ice time a game before he strained the medial collateral ligament in his left knee on Feb. 11.

"I want to get back as soon as possible, but with the team playing as well as it has, there's no sense of urgency," Souray said.

"If I sit out another game or two, I'd understand because the guys who have been out there are playing well and deserve to play."

Souray was one of nine players who participated in an optional workout at the Bell Centre yesterday.

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David S. J. / AP/WIDE WORLD
Canadiens' Mike Komisarek, jousting with Sabres' Andrew Peters in January, faces a battle for ice time with return of Sheldon Souray

ON THE TUBE

8a.m. — College Basketball: NCAA Tournament, CBS, RSE.

230 p.m. — College Basketball: NCAA Tournament, CBS, RSE.

3 p.m. — PGA Golf: Bay Hill Invitational, TSN.

5 p.m. — College Basketball: NCAA Tournament, RSE.

7 p.m. — College Basketball: NCAA Tournament, CBS.

730 p.m. — NHL: Hockey: Colorado Avalanche at Ottawa Senators, RSE, RDS.

930 p.m. — College Basketball: NCAA Tournament, CBS.

10 p.m. — College Basketball: NCAA Tournament, RSE.

1130 p.m. — Tennis: Pacific Life Open (same-day tape), TSN.

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NHL ROUNDUP



Blackhawks' Matt Keith takes down Hurricanes' Jaroslav Svoboda in battle for rolling puck.

Devils cool off Penguins

SIX-GAME UNBEATEN STREAK ENDED

Friesen line combines to score 11 points as Pittsburgh pounded by New Jersey

ASSOCIATED PRESS

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. — Jeff Friesen had two goals and two assists to help the New Jersey Devils rout Pittsburgh 4-1 last night, ending the Penguins' six-game unbeaten streak.

Scott Clemmensen, making his third career start with Martin Brodeur getting a break after starting 12 straight games, made 14 saves for his second victory — both against Pittsburgh.

The line of Friesen, Sergei Brylin and centre Viktor Kozlov combined for three goals and 11 points. Kozlov also had a four-point game, with a goal and three assists.

Scott Niedermayer, John Madden and Paul Martin added goals

for the Devils, who stretched their winning streak to two.

Matt Hussey scored for the Penguins with 4:32 remaining, spelling Clemmensen's shutout bid. It was Hussey's second goal in two games since being recalled from the minors on Tuesday.

Friesen and Niedermayer scored in a 1:21 span early in the first period to help the Devils take control.

After outshooting Pittsburgh 10-4 in the first period, the Devils added three more goals in the second to make it 4-0.

Panthers 6, Islanders 4

At Sunrise, Fla., Roberto Luongo stopped 40 shots, including 26 in the first period, and Florida rallied to beat the New York Is-

landers.

Nathan Horton, Olli Jokinen and Matt Cullen scored in the second period to give Florida a 4-2 lead. Stephen Weiss, Mikael Samuelsson and Donald Audette also scored for Florida, which was outshot 19-26 and trailed 2-0.

The victory snapped the Panthers' eight-game winless streak (0-5-3) against the Islanders. Florida is seven points behind the eighth-place Islanders, with both teams having nine games remaining. The top eight teams in the Eastern Conference will advance to the post-season.

Sabres 4, Thrashers 3 (OT)

At Atlanta, Derek Roy scored only 12 seconds into overtime as Buffalo rallied to beat the Thrashers and keep its slim playoff hopes alive.

Jochen Hecht brought the Sabres back into a tie when he scored with just over six minutes remaining to erase the Thrashers' lead.

Roy | 'He's a maniac for details'

CONTINUED FROM C1

"I consider myself privileged to have a chance to work with young players who have the same dream I had at their age — with the exception that I know how to get there and I want to help them prepare for that," said Roy, who has billeted two 16-year-old players, Joey Ryan and Andrew Andricopoulos, in his home on nearby Lac Beauport. "Obviously, some won't make it and some will. Our job is to make sure they all have a positive experience."

According to Éric Lavigne, the Remparts' second-year coach, Roy's energy and enthusiasm have been an inspiration to the coaches and players.

"It's a great pleasure to work with him," Lavigne said. "He's a very passionate person who likes to talk hockey. He's a maniac for details. He's like a computer."

He added that Roy is most interested in positional play and spends most of his time on the ice working with the team's defencemen.

"He talks to them a lot, tells them the goalie doesn't like this thing or that," Lavigne said. "He's very intense, but he's also smart and competitive. He wants to win all the time."

Roy's partners have been equally impressed with his performance this season.

"Patrick's been a huge plus for the team," said Tanguay, who manages his family's province-wide furniture business and is the founding president of Université Laval's football team.

"He's got incredible passion for the game of hockey and he's got such a positive attitude. He always finds solutions to problems. He's a tremendous role model for our kids."

Tanguay also said that Roy has shown himself to be an astute businessman.

"He's shown good judgment about what it takes to make businesses profitable. Sports is a field that relies on its fans and its financial partners. Patrick understands that, and he's worked hard to develop those bases. He goes to a lot of games and signs hundreds

THE PATRICK ROY LEGACY

After 18 NHL seasons and numerous records, Patrick Roy retired from the NHL on May 18, 2003. Here's a look at some of his records and statistics:

Regular Season

Most games played: 1,029
Most minutes played by a goaltender: 60,254
Most wins: 551
Highest winning percentage (goalies with 400 wins or more): .618
Career goals-against average: 2.54 (25th all-time)
Career shutouts: 66 (11th)
Most 30-win seasons: 13

Playoffs

Most games played: 247
Most minutes played: 15,209

Most shutouts: 23

Most consecutive wins in play-offs: 11 (1993, tied with Ed Belfour and Tom Barasso)

Most playoffs with 10 or more wins: 9

Winning percentage: .616 (third all-time)

Goals-against average: 2.30 (13th all-time)

Awards

11-time NHL all-star. Four-time Stanley Cup champion (1986 and '93 with Canadiens; 1996 and 2001 with Avalanche). A record three Conn Smythe Awards as playoff MVP (1986, 1993, 2001). Three Vézina Trophies as NHL's top goaltender (1989, '90, '92).

SOURCE: 2003-04 COLORADO AVALANCHE MEDIA GUIDE

of autographs in the stands.

"His charisma and notoriety haven't diminished," Tanguay added. "We don't just have Sidney Crosby in the league this year, we've got Patrick Roy."

For Roy, who was born, bred, and schooled not far from the Colisée, and who still has family and friends in the area, retirement is working out according to plan.

"I always knew I'd do something, and that it would be here," said Roy, who admits to being preoccupied about what he'd do after his playing career. "I'm not the kind of guy to stay at home."

Interestingly, Roy credits former New York Islanders great Brian Trottier with helping him prepare for the angst that eats away at many players when their careers end.

"There's an emptiness," said Roy, who walked away from the final year of a three-year, \$24-million (U.S.) contract — although, thanks to a clause in his contract, he received \$1 million in severance pay. "You miss the friendships with the players, not going to the rink, the trips."

"(Trottier) said to me: 'Patrick, you need about six months.' He was right."

"The first three months didn't really count. I quit (in May), and the summer is just the normal process. Retirement really starts in September, when you don't show up in camp, you don't have exhibition games. You then need six months for your body to heal, and your mind to heal."

"I'm just starting to feel retired now," said Roy, who claims he hasn't watched an NHL game all year. (He also reportedly backed out at the last minute of a trip to Montreal on Tuesday to see the Canadiens play the Avalanche so he could watch Remparts video with Lavigne.)

"I'm lucky because I've got a great wife and children that have been supportive for me, not just today but all my life and my career. For me to be able to do what I love in my life, that's what I'm doing now."

"I always believed that, if you want to make a good investment, you have to invest in what you like. I did that, and I love doing what I'm doing right here."

"I don't want to go nowhere."

Mark Cardwell is a freelance writer who lives near Quebec City