

Consider me one pissed-off Canuck today.

Here's the deal. A sacrilegious event occurred yesterday. Lord Stanley's Cup - the highest award in all of hockey - the gleaming 36" cup that every male Canadian kid dreams of raising when he's growing up - has gone south on us. Again. Literally.

You see, last night, the Anaheim Mighty Ducks (now that's a lame Disney-fied name if ever I've seen one), beat the Ottawa Senators to take home the Stanley Cup.

What? What has this world evolved into now?

We've got a war in Iraq. Kobe can't decide if he likes Los Angeles or not. Jordan's retired for good. The health care system is in the toilet.

And now - this.

The last time a Canadian team won the Stanley Cup was the Montreal Canadiens - and I would add, the dreaded Les Canadiens if you're a Toronto Maple Leaf fan - in 1993. Yes, that's right - we own the game, supply the NHL with 65% of the players (it used to be higher until the Russians, Finns, and Czechs got hockey visas), and can't taste the champaign out of Lord Stanley's mug?

Of course, for those of us who really care, the last time the "right" team won, Canadian or otherwise, was 1967. That was the last magical year for the Leafs - it's been the northern version of a drought ever since.

Hockey, when played at this time of year, is one of the fastest, most elegant, and most physically sports alive. It's a beautiful sport - when played at the highest level (and not the holding and fighting and mugging that takes place in the lower echelons).

Last night, to me, was a mockery of what hockey is all about. Oh, the quality of hockey was just fine, thank you very much. But last night was the epitome of what hockey has become lately. California? Florida? Hello? Take a look at the Cup winners over the past 14 years of Canadian anguish:

2006-2007: *Anaheim Mighty Ducks* ... yeah yeah, alright already!
2005-2006: *Carolina Hurricanes* ... say what? Where?
2004-2005: *No Cup* ... no joy in Mudville that year - we should check the sales of Prozac that year.
2003-2004: *Tampa Bay Lightning* ... isn't that a place to retire?
2002-2003: *New Jersey Devils* ... this I can live with - barely.
2001-2002: *Detroit Red Wings* ... ok, fair enough, at least they are one of the original six NHL teams.
2000-2001: *Colorado Avalanche* ... at least they know what snow is.
1999-2000: *New Jersey Devils* ... Springsteen, yes ... hockey, no.
1998-1999: *Dallas Stars* ... more sacrilege - the former Minnesota North Stars were like the Baltimore Colts of the NFL ... and after the Stars won, you'd have thought Big D invented hockey. Trust me, I lived in Texas when this occurred.
1997-1998: *Detroit Red Wings* ... compared to the other options, a Red Wings dynasty is palatable - almost. Don't tell the Leafs I said that.
1996-1997: *Detroit Red Wings* ... Steve Yzerman was an Ottawa boy (Bell High School).
1995-1996: *Colorado Avalanche* ... at least this one had Patrick Roy, one of the greatest goaltenders of the modern era (and a Canadian no less).
1994-1995: *New Jersey Devils* ... the former Kansas City Scouts and Colorado Rockies ... need I say more about this storied franchise?
1993-1994: *New York Rangers* ... again, one of the original six - and were waiting longer than the Leafs - 54 years to be exact. Oh and let's not forget Mark Messier's pre-game 6 promise of a win (with NY down 3-2) - as he then went out and scored a hat trick to tie the series! Another Candian legend, I might add ...

Need I say more?

Hockey Night in Canada - every kid

Hockey Night In Anaheim | Allan Besselink

Written by Allan Besselink

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grows up watching it every Saturday night. Hockey cards. Pick-up hockey at night under the lights on the frozen river. Don Cherry's commentary (if you saw Game 4 on NBC you know what I mean). Now THAT is hockey.

What has it become now?

Here's the recent time-line: Gretzky wins his fourth Stanley Cup (can you say Tiger Woods?) and suddenly leaves Edmonton in 1988 for Los Angeles (thanks, Janet). A Canadian national crisis occurs. Los Angeles? The team with the perennially bad uniforms (if you know hockey from the '70s, you will know exactly what I mean). Hockey is introduced to the masses in the US (for good and bad, as always). Three more Canadian teams win between 1988 and 1993. There is still balance in the world as we know it. I can live with the Rangers and Red Wings (just don't tell anyone I said that - they might revoke my Leafs fan card). And now ... four cities known more for celebrities, earthquakes, heat and humidity, Disney (the OTHER Disney), and football have now won the Stanley Cup.

So what do we do now?

The same thing we've done for the last 14 years - we wait until September again. Game on, eh?!