



Balsillie vs. Bettman

(June 17, 2007)

The funniest reality sitcom circa now pits the dinosauric NHL owners versus the Balsillie maverick who is calling the collective bluff of the league's corporate status quo. JB has been energetic, proactive, impassioned, culturally-aware, and proud in his attempt to save good hockey from bad, but all this has done is rankle league owners whose collective posturing has led to the worst US tv ratings in history; a game, once again, seized by defence-first conquerers; and a new CBA that has done little to support the game's small markets, or foster new interests. For the NHL to imply that JB's attempts to go his own way would be destructive to the league as a whole is proposterous considering the self-inflicted nature of many of the league's ills. And putting more teams in Canada will be good for America because American hockey fans love to beat Canadian teams (see NY Islanders vs Toronto Leafs, 1970s/80s; the last three Stanley Cups Finals). Unless the league cries uncle on its shopworn NHL into America! nonsense, the patient will have very little chance of continental recovery.