

SITTING DOWN WITH LEGENDARY PHOTOGRAPHER BRUCE BENNETT (PART I)

Bruce Bennett, Director of Photography, Hockey Imagery for Getty Images, has worked over 5,200 hockey games. He shot his first game on October 9, 1974, a contest between the Capitals and Rangers at Madison Square Garden. The game, it should be noted, was the first match in Capitals' history.

Our Rini Krishnan spoke with Bennett and discussed the following:

FAVORITE ARENAS TO SHOOT IN:

They would be the brighter arenas like Madison Square Garden, Wells Fargo Center in Philadelphia and the Islanders' new home at Barclays Center. They're brightly lit and photo positions are perfect. They're in what we call a deep corner. What that means is that our photo positions are where the goal line intersects the boards -- or as close to that as possible. Because, from that position, I can twist enough to see behind the goal and all the way down-ice as well.

BIGGEST CHALLENGES IN ARENAS THAT ARE NOT NECESSARILY EQUIPPED FOR PHOTOGRAPHY:

There are a lot of arenas that switched over to the new LED lighting. So when you go in, it's very dimly-lit, and it's very hard to get good photos when there is lower light. Basically, you change your camera's setting and your images come out a lot greener and noisier. The colors end up being more muted.

The other big issue is the photo positions in many arenas-- sometimes they're such that you only see a third of the ice, and when the puck is on the other two-thirds of the ice, you end up just sitting there, watching the game. That's a bad feeling.

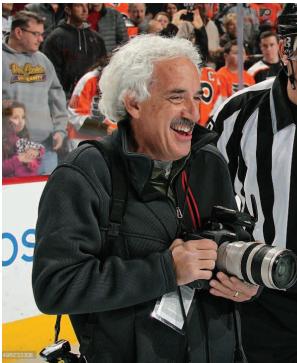
PHOTOGRAPHING IN BARCLAYS CENTER VS. NASSAU COLISEUM:

In Barclays Center, there are some terrific positions halfway up in the arena, where photographers have the benefit of seeing the entire ice surface. But I always prefer ice-level. And my position here is probably the best in the NHL because it's a very deep-corner position and if I am limber enough, I can stretch to see the entire sheet.

In Nassau Coliseum, the position wasn't quite as deep, so I would miss some things along the boards.

THREE MOST ICONIC PHOTOGRAPHS:

The one that I like the most is an old black-and-white photograph of Denis Potvin throwing a hip-check into Guy Lafleur. That's been used many times, and it's just a classic shot. I mean, you don't see players really throwing a hip-check anymore. So, that's



probably number one.

Number two is a black-and-white from 1980 -- Bobby Nystrom scoring the overtime goal to win the Islanders a Stanley Cup. That's a great celebration shot.

And number three, the one that gets a lot of notoriety, is a photograph I did of Mike Bossy in a studio with his stick on fire.

HEAT FROM PLAYERS WHO WEREN'T PHOTO-READY:

Well, I remember getting squirted with the water bottle by Dennis Polonich in Detroit. I guess it was his way of implying that I should get the camera out of his face, even though he was about eight feet away.

He was sitting in the penalty box, and I was in the photo box, and this is in the old Nassau Coliseum. We were just about eight feet away, and he heard the shutter going. So he turned with his water bottle and soaked me.

I've also had the honor of being tapped on the head with a hockey stick by Gordie Howe in a way to say "Leave me alone, I am trying to concentrate on my game." So, I learned my lesson, turned around, and followed the game from that point forward.

But I haven't really had any comments from players in terms of anyone not being happy or disappointed with photographs.

ANTICIPATING WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN NEXT:

It's really the product of knowledge of this sport, experience and honing your sense of anticipation.

The key is experience and knowing which players move in certain directions, concentrating on the sport as it plays out and not losing your focus. Examples, unintended, would be looking at the crowd and looking at the back of your camera because in digital days now, it's very easy to look at the back of your camera and go through your photos during a game. Doing that saves you time afterwards, but when you do that you lose your ability to see which players are talking to each other, which players are motivated, and which players look like they're going to make a move.

PRE-GAME PLANNING OR HOPING FOR THE BEST:

I pretty much hope for it. There are some games that we will set up remote cameras, whether in the rafters or in the hockey net itself. We'll put cameras around depending upon how big of a game it is, and how important it is to capture that individual moment. A lot of what we do on game night is we try to get out 25 images to tell the story of the game. For those, you don't really need to do anything special except concentrate on making sure you have all of those, and the important moments, covered. There really isn't that much planning that goes into your game-night coverage for most games.

The remainder of Rini's discussion with Bennett will be featured in next week's Part II.

SITTING DOWN WITH LEGENDARY PHOTOGRAPHER BRUCE BENNETT (PART II)

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Below is the second part of Rini Krishnan's interview with Bennett.

PROTECTING HIMSELF:

I flinch a lot. In the earlier days when I started, I would be in a photo box wide open. Madison Square Garden was one location where I would stand in part of the penalty box, completely exposed with no glass in front of me. I would get popped with players' sticks from every direction. I used to go home and, in the middle of the night, I would wake up flinching and twitching.

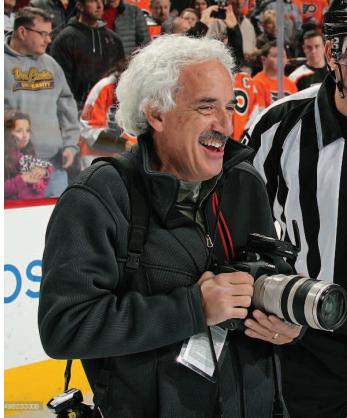
Now most of the positions we have are behind the glass and we shoot through a small four-and-a-half by-five-and-a-half-inch hole. You have to be alert and aware of players hitting in that area, sticks coming through the hole and players shooting pucks into the hole and hitting you in the head.

WHAT MAKES PHOTOS ICONIC:
The iconic photos are the ones that combine historic moments with great image quality. So, if I think back at the photographs that I shot or another photographer shot, the image usually will tell the story. When the Rangers lost the Stanley Cup to Los Angeles, there was an overhead shot from a camera above the rafters, and that image showed the Kings' jubilation and the dejection by Henrik Lundqvist in the same frame.

To me that's the image that becomes iconic, because it tells the entire story in one frame. It was sharp, clear and when you look at it you go, "Wow. That's what the game is all about. That's the end of the Stanley Cup right there."

The emotion is interesting as people have gone through my book and certain photographs. It's interesting to see which photos people remember and which ones have provoked some emotions in them. Most of those emotions are based on historic significance of moments that have been captured.

PLANNING FOR THE ICONIC PHOTO:
There's no planning. The only planning that you do is to make sure you're covered from every angle in big games such as the Olympics or Stanley Cup games. Whether it's by yourself or with other photographers working for you, you're filling the gaps of having cameras on remote cameras in different locations so if a player scores and he turns to a certain direction, you have a chance of getting it from some angle. Our high was the gold-medal game at the Sochi Olympics in 2014. We had five photographers and 12 remote cameras.



REMOVING HIMSELF FROM THE EMOTION OF THE GAME:

It's a little bit of -- I hate to use the word -- meditation but before the game I try to tone my emotions down and concentrate. Basically, this is the job that I am here to do. I don't care which team wins. I think about the lens choices. I look around the ice, and I know that I can hit this corner and I can hit that corner and, if it goes to my right, I'm going to be able to twist enough, so I basically just calm myself down and go. It doesn't matter what's happening around me. I don't hear the fans; I don't hear anybody else. I put myself in the zone. I hate to compare myself to a goalie or somebody who's got to go through that physical torture, but some of what I do also is physically draining and you have to really be on your game and into the game to capture the most significant moments.

MORE GOSSIP: Our man in Duckland, Joel Bergman, offers his take of the **Jonathan Drouin** situation. "There had been a lot of talk/speculation in the **Anaheim** press box and in the papers regarding a trade with the **Lightning** for disgruntled forward **Jonathan Drouin**. A number of people were saying that a 20-year-old who hasn't accomplished much in his year or so in the NHL shouldn't be 'demanding' a trade. My feeling and advice for Tampa g.m. **Steve Yzerman** -- Hold your ground and leave Drouin in the AHL (suspended for refusal to play, if necessary) for the entire season, even if it means missing out on a good trade possibility. Drouin is not the only player you will need to deal with. Show some backbone and it will inhibit others from pulling this stunt on you down the road." ... Quote of the Week: **Ducks**' radio play-by-play announcer **Steve Carroll**, being interviewed on KNX radio after the **Ducks-Washington** game was postponed and the team was about to charter to **Detroit** in the snow: "We're about to leave for Detroit. I'm not a good flyer. I think I'm going to walk to Detroit." ... The **Ducks** won in Detroit, 4-3, and are poised to make a run in the second half. Coach **Bruce Boudreau** after the victory: "It's a really good sign when you're getting a balanced attack. We hadn't had that all year. We're getting goals from different lines. These are all really good signs of a team coming together." ... Names to ponder: **Tampa Bay** is eyeing right-handed defenseman **Cody Ceci** and/or left-handed d-man **Thomas Chabot** from the **Senators** in a possible Drouin deal. Ceci, 6-3, 205, has four goals and nine assists this season in 43 games. Chabot, 6-2, 295, was plucked 18th by Ottawa in last June's draft. ... The **Hawks**, despite their recent success, need a top-line left wing. Chicago's been using **Andrew Shaw** and, while it's worked so far, there's still something missing. In addition to a top-six forward, **Stan Bowman** -- he of the new deal -- needs a top four d-man as well. The Hawks may lead the West but have played three more games than second-place **Dallas**. ... **Lou Lamoriello** knows a thing or three about leadership and has been more than impressed with **Leafs**' captain **Dion Phaneuf**. Lamoriello told co-hosts Bob McCown and Ken Reid on *Sportsnet 590 the Fan*: "This man has extremely impressed me. Watching him, how he's handled the young players, watching how his work ethic has been, watching how he's handled the media. He's been one of the most impressive individuals I've been around. The leadership qualities that he's shown me are genuine." ... The NHL's decision on suspending **Dennis Wideman** will go a long way in determining how much the Player Safety Department values the defenseman's claim that he was concussed and did not mean to crosscheck the linesman. Some respected officials such as **Kerry Fraser** believe that Wideman may have not been within his senses -- thanks to the concussion -- and perhaps some leniency will be involved.