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## **Here's Your Hockey**

Written By: Harry Gribnitz

*I am a hockey nut and have been for many years. I grew up in Chicago as a Blackhawk's fan watching games from SRO in the Stadium. I have been a Griffin's season ticket holder since the very beginning. By March we should be anticipating the Stanley Cup Playoffs. But the only NHL news is about the CBA (Collective Bargaining Agreement). As I write the "negotiations" continue but it appears the season is gone. I started thinking about how great the game used to be and what I would like it to be again.*

### *Here's My Hockey*

- 1. No names on the back of the uniform. Our players play for their teammates and the name on the front of the jersey*
- 2. Goalies with pads that don't fill the entire net. Eccentricities in the goalies is not just encouraged but required.*
- 3. Players with names and skills like "the Golden Jet", "Rocket", "Gordie", "Boom Boom", "Gump", "Stash", Stevie Y" and "the Great One".*
- 4. Players who will fight to protect a teammate, but never because it is their only hockey skill.*
- 5. Every player uses a wooden stick that is carefully hand shaped and taped by the individual player.*
- 6. Each team will be required to have one player like Jack Evans, the old Blackhawk, so tough and respected he rarely had to fight. About once per year some young tough guy would see if the old man still had it, only to wake to the odor of smelling salts.*
- 7. Players that make less money than the President of the United States and would play the game for free. No agents, attorneys, personal trainers and "people".*
- 8. Owners who can control their own budget (like normal people do).*
- 9. Watching players like Bobby Hull spending most of the pre-game warm up signing autographs or tossing pucks to young fans. Then scoring a hat trick. (Yes, I still have the puck). For those of you that don't remember Bobby, substitute Darryl Bootland.*
- 10. Buildings with names like "The Stadium", The Forum" or "The Garden". Buildings named after great community leaders like the Van Andel Arena. None will start with the word "New". No building will be named the United Airlines, Capital One, State Farm Insurance, Ameritech, General Motors Sports Complex.*

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11. Arenas filled with the smell of hot dogs, popcorn and spilled beer. No tofu, deli sandwiches or wine coolers allowed.
12. Playoff games that end at 1:00AM in the third over time periods. The roar of 18,000 fans that shakes the building after the winning goal is scored. The stunned silence if the visitors scored. They call it sudden death for a reason.
13. Tickets for a family of four that don't require a second mortgage. Following the example of the Griffins to make hockey an affordable, fun, family night. (It is ok if the seats are in the upper level. That is where the real fans sit.)
14. Live organ music played by someone that understands the game and the music. (The playing of YMCA or Cotton Eye Joe earns a two minute bench minor for the home team.)
15. A team in every major Canadian and Michigan city. No teams in Florida.
16. Team captains that lead their teams with how they play, not what they say. (See Steve Yzerman, Pierre Pilote, Blake Sloan, and Ed Patterson)
17. The tradition of the Stanley Cup Playoffs must be maintained. The traditional line up for handshakes at the end of each series. No player touches the cup until he has won it. The skating of the cup once that privilege is earned.
18. The Griffins in first place in the "A" and win the Calder at home. The Blackhawks skate the cup every year. Remember this is My Hockey!

Thanks,

Harry Gribnitz  
Your Home Loan Specialist for Life!