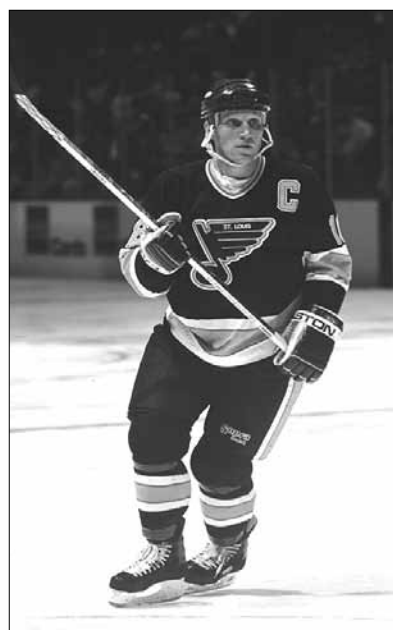




Luc Robitaille
ANDREW D. BERNSTEIN/GETTY IMAGES



Brett Hull
GLENN CRATTY/ALLSPORT

YZERMAN, LEETCH, HULL, ROBITAILLE, AND LAMORIELLO ENTER HALL

Hall of Fame Class of 2009 one to remember

By DANE CROCKER
Epoch Times Staff

A truly stellar lineup was inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame Monday night—Brian Leetch, Brett Hull, Steve Yzerman, Luc Robitaille, and Lou Lamoriello comprised the class of 2009.

Leetch got a phone call, informing him of his induction into the Hall, while he was driving his car. In an interview with Canadian sports network TSN, Leetch said, "It was an amazing feeling. I just kind of sat back and said, 'Wow!'"

Leetch played 17 of his 18 NHL seasons for the New York Rangers before finishing off his career with the Toronto Maple Leafs and then the Boston Bruins. He is widely regarded as one of the best defensemen to ever play the game.

Leetch scored 247 goals and 1,028 points in his career, and was one of only eight defensemen ever to score over 1,000 points.

Despite his amazing statistics, Leetch is perhaps known best in New York for playing an integral role in the Rangers 1994 Stanley Cup victory. In that postseason, despite players of the calibre of Mark

Messier and Pavel Bure playing in the Cup final, it was the defenseman, Leetch, who was the highest playoff scorer. He was also awarded the Conn Smythe Trophy as playoff MVP.

Leetch remembered that year and reflected on the impact his famous teammate, Messier, had on his career.

"I always look back at Messier coming to the Rangers and wonder where my career would have gone had he not done that. He's one of the big reasons we won a championship, one of the big reasons my jersey is hanging from the rafters, and one of the big reasons I am here tonight."

STEVIE Y

Steve Yzerman is the longest serving captain of any team in North American major league sports history, having served in that role for 20 seasons with the Detroit Red Wings.

Yzerman, who is the sixth all-time leading scorer in the NHL, amassed 692 goals and 1,755 points in his career. He won three Stanley Cups while becoming the captain of the Red Wings, and a playoff MVP in 1998.

Leetch and Yzerman both entered the league as top prospects and through their careers, fulfilled their expectations of themselves.

EARLY CHALLENGES

Brett Hull and Luc Robitaille on the other hand, both faced challenges early in their careers, breaking into the league.

Robitaille entered the league to low expectations due to his slower skating speed, however he scored 45 goals in his rookie season, on the way to becoming the all-time leading scorer among left wingers in the NHL. He also won a Stanley Cup with Yzerman and Hull in 2002.

Hull, who came into the NHL under that shadow of his Hall of Fame father Bobby, and onto a stacked Calgary Flames team, ended up becoming one of the most prolific goal scorers in the game's history.

He scored over 70 goals three years in a row and was one of the few players to ever score 50 goals in 50 games. Over his career he scored 741 goals and collected 1,391 points. He won Stanley Cups with Detroit and Dallas.

"How many great players are out

in the workforce today, that never played in the NHL just because maybe they were in a bad situation, or the coach may not have liked them, or there were too many other good players at the time and they kind of got lost in the shuffle," said Hull to a crowd of reporters.

"So I think being here ... there is more than a little bit of luck involved as well."

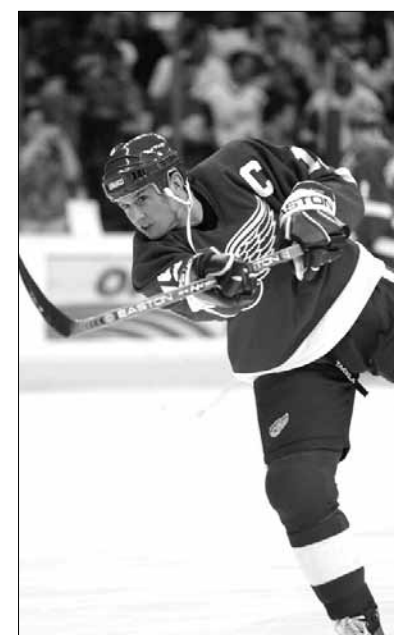
Lou Lamoriello, is a hockey lifer. In the 1950s, he served as a stick boy for an AHL team, and coached for 20 seasons at Providence College.

Inducted into the Builders category, Lamoriello, has been the president and GM of the New Jersey Devils since 1987, a 22-year span during which his team has only had two losing seasons.

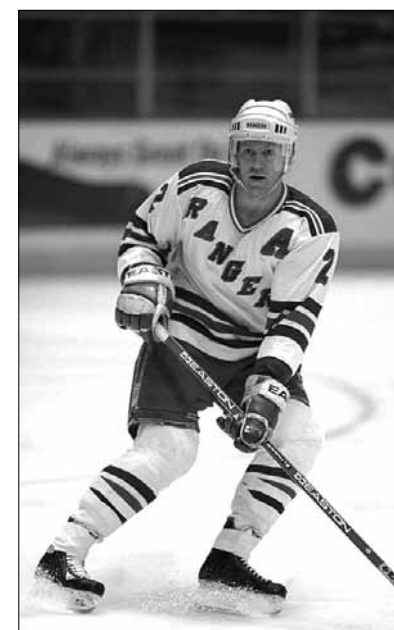
The Devils won the Stanley Cup three times over this period, in 1995, 2000, and 2003.

Despite his success, Lamoriello reflected on those who would never get the kind of recognition he has.

He said it is, "almost sometimes embarrassing to get this type of recognitions when you know of all the people who do the things they do without any kind of recognition."



Steve Yzerman
VICTOR DECOLONGON/GETTY IMAGES/NHLI



Brian Leetch
AL BELLO/ALLSPORT

Abdul-Jabbar announces 2008 leukemia diagnosis

Prognosis looks good after a year of treatment

By DAN POMERLEAU
Epoch Times Staff

Kareem Abdul-Jabbar told the Associated Press (AP) on Monday that he had been diagnosed with leukemia in December 2008 and has been undergoing treatment since.

Abdul-Jabbar, now 62, said he had been getting hot flashes on a regular basis and went to see his doctor, who found his white blood cell count to be abnormally high and made the diagnosis after further tests.

The form of the blood cancer the former Los Angeles Lakers great has is called Chronic Myeloid Leukemia. It affects approximately 22,475 Americans, according to the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society.

There is no cure yet for the disease but Abdul-Jabbar's doctor said he had a very good shot at living his life normally into old age.

Abdul-Jabbar has been taking an oral drug treatment that acts on the Bcr-Abl cancer gene that causes the disease.

"I responded well to the treatment," he told the Los Angeles Times on Tuesday. "I just want that to continue to keep happening."

Abdul-Jabbar told AP that he would like to use his announcement and successful treatment to bring awareness to the potentially fatal disease.

"I've never been a person to share my private life," he said. "But I can help save lives. It's incumbent on someone like me to talk about this."

Abdul-Jabbar is a six-time MVP and the NBA's all time leading scorer. He played professional basketball for 20 years, including 14 years with the Lakers where his signature "skyhook" and famous goggles wowed crowds.

He has served as a special assistant to the Lakers since 2005 and has maintained his normal routine since the diagnosis.

"There is hope. This condition can be treated. You can still live a productive, full life," he said.



WILL BE BUSY: Danica Patrick will apparently drive in both IRL IndyCar and NASCAR Nationwide in 2010. ROBERT LABERGE/GETTY IMAGES

Danica Patrick may drive in IndyCar and NASCAR in 2010

By JAMES FISH
Epoch Times Staff

It seems Danica Patrick, arguably the most popular driver in the IRL IndyCar series, will be returning to her present seat on the Andretti Racing team (formerly AGR) and will also probably be driving a handful of NASCAR races for JR Motorsports.

Though neither deal has been finalized or announced officially, the consensus among experts is that Patrick will sign a three-year contract with Andretti Racing and a two-year deal with JR.

Though the Andretti team's fortunes have fallen since the team's heyday in the middle of the decade, the team is reorganizing and refocusing, and apparently Patrick feels she can find success with Andretti Racing. Patrick has won only one race with AGR, but has finished fifth in the standings twice in a row.

Target-Ganassi team owner Chip Ganassi was apparently considering offering Patrick a ride with his team—if she could bring enough sponsorship to fund a third car—but for unknown reasons, Ganassi decided to stick with current series

champion Dario Franchitti and former champ Scott Dixon and a two-car team.

An official announcement from Andretti Racing is expected in December.

Patrick has been looking for a part-time ride in NASCAR since before her AGR contract expired, meeting with several teams informally. Many had expected her to drive for her friend Tony Stewart.

Instead, she will apparently sign a two-year deal with JR Motorsports, the NASCAR Nationwide Series team owned by Dale Earnhardt Jr.

"She's really serious about coming to NASCAR. A lot of people, I guess, thought that it was just a media hoax or her kind of blowing smoke," Earnhardt Jr. told ESPN. "She's really serious about it, and she's going to do it with somebody."

While the details have yet to be released, most assume Patrick will drive a full season in IRL IndyCar, and will drive a nationwide car for JR Motorsports on weekends when IRL doesn't race.

RECOGNIZABLE FACE

Patrick is probably the most

recognizable face in IndyCar racing, and appeals to fans across a much wider demographic than the series usually attracts. Her continued presence in IndyCar is a boon to the series.

Many have been skeptical about Patrick's chances in NASCAR, pointing out that former AGR teammate Dario Franchitti won two IRL championships but performed poorly in NASCAR. Questions have been raised about the ability of the 5'2", 100 lbs. Patrick to handle the 3,450 lbs. NASCAR vehicles.

Patrick, whose strong will bolstered her while facing discrimination while racing in Europe as a teenager and also supported her while breaking into the ranks of IndyCar, will certainly be needed as she faces NASCAR's more traditional racing culture. The fan base tends not to see driving as a sport for women, and regards her largely as a media sensation instead of a driver.

It is unlikely Patrick will pay any attention to her detractors. She has proven throughout her three-year IRL career that she can run with the best when her car allows, and that she cannot be intimidated.

Injury plague strikes NHL

List of injured superstars includes Ovechkin, Malkin, and Kovalchuk

By KARL YU
Epoch Times Staff

Injuries through the 82-game NHL season are a regular occurrence but having entered the second month of the 2009-10 season, the league is without a large number of its brightest stars due to injury.

Two-time NHL MVP and Washington Capitals left winger Alexander Ovechkin suffered a shoulder injury on Nov. 1, and even though he won't be missing four to five weeks (as he had initially joked), he will still miss another week.

Ovechkin isn't the only notable NHLer in the infirmary.

Canadian sports Web site www.tsn.ca, reports that a number of top-flight players are grounded. The site stated last Friday that 126 players were out due to either sickness or injury.

Atlanta Thrashers winger Ilya Kovalchuk has been on injured reserve (IR) since Oct. 25 with a broken foot.

Two Boston Bruins workhorses, left winger Milan Lucic and center Marc Savard, suffered finger and foot injuries respectively in mid-October and both were lost for four to six weeks at the time.

Carolina Hurricanes netminder Cam Ward suffered a deep cut on his left leg this past Saturday and will be out indefinitely.

Detroit Red Wings winger Johan Franzen tore his ACL in early October, had surgery, and is expected to miss a minimum four months.

Art Ross Trophy holder Evgeni Malkin has been out of the Pittsburgh Penguins lineup since Oct. 29 thanks to a strained shoulder, although he is expected back shortly.

Vancouver Canucks goalie Roberto Luongo missed six games with a fractured rib and just returned on Tuesday.

The list goes on and on.

MAN-GAMES LOST

Tim Wharnsby from www.cbc.ca estimates that teams lose 200 to 300 man-games due to injury

a season and teams could surpass that at the end of 2009-10—the Canucks had lost an NHL-high 96 through 18 games as of last Saturday.

In fact, according to data from CBC Sports, 27 of the 30 teams in the NHL have reached the double-digit mark in man-games lost as of the end of last week—the Tampa Bay Lightning lost a league low five man-games and numbers were not provided for the Columbus Blue Jackets or the New York Islanders.

There isn't any way to prevent someone from suffering a shoulder injury from a clean hit—short of removing body-checking and the physical play from the NHL altogether—and the injury suffered by Cam Ward, as freakish as it was, is a fairly rare occurrence.

Many hockey fans love the sport for the physicality and taking away hitting would be the death-knell for the league.

But what is the reason for all the injuries so early in the season?

After the 2004-05 lockout, the league sought to remove the clutching and grabbing from the game that had become commonplace since the New Jersey Devils captured the Stanley Cup in 1995 and ushered in the period known as the "Dead Puck Era."

The removal of such elements is a double-edged sword says Michael Russo on www.startribune.com, "because you can't hold guys up on the forecheck anymore, today's checks are power-packed. Two hundred-pound guys are skating into other players at 30 miles per hour."

The NHL is going into its third season with its new clutch-free rules however and this is the first time there have been so many stars out so early in the season.

Injuries will always happen in professional hockey and the fact that Ovechkin and Malkin are out at the same time is merely an anomaly, so people needn't fret.

As Detroit Red Wings GM Ken Holland said, the injuries are a result of the nature of the game. "If there were 85 people out with the same injury, then I would say let's study it," Holland told the CBC.

"But a lot of these injuries are the result of this being a physical game."

TENNIS RANKINGS		MEN'S GOLF RANKINGS	
Women			
Name	Points	Name	Points
1. (1) Serena Williams (U.S.)	9,075	1. (1) Roger Federer (Switzerland)	10,340
2. (2) Dinara Safina (Russia)	7,800	2. (2) Rafael Nadal (Spain)	8,845
3. (3) Svetlana Kuznetsova (Russia)	6,141	3. (3) Novak Djokovic (Serbia)	8,300
4. (4) Caroline Wozniacki (Denmark)	5,875	4. (4) Andy Murray (Britain)	7,140
5. (5) Elena Dementieva (Russia)	5,585	5. (5) Juan Martin del Potro (Argentina)	6,050
6. (6) Venus Williams (U.S.)	5,126	6. (6) Andy Roddick (U.S.)	4,500
7. (7) Victoria Azarenka (Belarus)	4,820	7. (7) Nikolay Davydenko (Russia)	4,430
8. (8) Jelena Jankovic (Serbia)	3,965	8. (8) Fernando Verdasco (Spain)	3,360
9. (9) Vera Zvonareva (Russia)	3,560	9. (9) Jo-Wilfried Tsonga (France)	2,985
10. (10) Agnieszka Radwanska (Poland)	3,450	10. (10) Robin Soderling (Sweden)	2,935
11. (11) Marion Bartoli (France)	3,415	11. (11) Fernando Gonzalez (Chile)	2,780
12. (12) Flavia Pennetta (Italy)	3,150	12. (12) Gilles Simon (France)	2,675
13. (13) Samantha Stosur (Australia)	3,045	13. (13) Marin Cilic (Croatia)	2,400
14. (14) Maria Sharapova (Russia)	2,820	14. (14) Radek Stepanek (Czech Republic)	2,310
15. (15) Li Na (China)	2,541	15. (15) Tommy Robredo (Spain)	2,175
16. (16) Yanina Wickmayer (Belgium)	2,385	16. (16) Gael Monfils (France)	2,055
17. (17) Francesca Schiavone (Italy)	2,375	17. (17) Tommy Haas (Germany)	1,845
18. (18) Kim Clijsters (Belgium)	2,340	18. (18) David Ferrer (Spain)	1,840
19. (19) Virginie Razzano (France)	2,300	19. (19) Mikhail Youzhny (Russia)	1,690
20. (20) Nadia Petrova (Russia)	2,220	20. (20) Tomas Berdych (Czech Republic)	1,655
		Name	Avg. Points
		1. (1) Tiger Woods (U.S.)	15.70
		2. (2) Phil Mickelson (U.S.)	9.22
		3. (3) Steve Stricker (U.S.)	7.38
		4. (5) Lee Westwood (Britain)	6.13
		5. (4) Paul Casey (Britain)	6.02
		6. (6) Padraig Harrington (Ireland)	5.71
		7. (7) Henrik Stenson (Sweden)	5.63
		8. (8) Kenny Perry (U.S.)	5.36
		9. (9) Sergio Garcia (Spain)	5.31
		10. (10) Jim Furyk (U.S.)	5.23
		11. (11) Martin Kaymer (Germany)	5.11
		12. (14) Geoff Ogilvy (Australia)	4.82
		13. (15) Ian Poulter (Britain)	4.71
		14. (12) Stewart Cink (U.S.)	4.62
		15. (13) Sean O'Hair (U.S.)	4.60
		16. (24) Ernie Els (South Africa)	4.47
		17. (18) Rory McIlroy (Britain)	4.37
		18. (16) Lucas Glover (U.S.)	4.20
		19. (17) Ross Fisher (Britain)	4.18
		20. (21) Retief Goosen (South Africa)	4.09

Rankings as of November 10, previous rankings in parentheses