

Coach Rex's Corner

A Tribute to a Hockey Legend - Jean Beliveau

One of the greatest ambassadors of the game of hockey passed away on Tuesday, December 2nd, 2014 at the age of 83. It was another major loss to the hockey world.

In the past couple weeks have seen the passing of Pat Quinn, Viktor Tikhonov and Murray Oliver. On the ice Jean Beliveau played with incredible skill and gracefulness. He often worked the puck with stick handling magic.

Jean Beliveau was indeed a winner! In his storied NHL career, he won 10 Stanley Cups with the Montreal Canadiens as a player and 7 as an executive. He was elected into the Hockey Hall of Fame in 1972. Jean Beliveau was rated by a Hockey News publication as the 7th best player to ever play the game.

As great a player as Jean Beliveau was on the ice it was overshadowed by the man off the ice. Many words can define him - gentleman, class act, humble person, someone who cared, humanitarian, a tremendous ambassador of hockey, and someone who was very respectful of everyone associated with the game. In fact, he would not turn away any hockey fan seeking his autograph. But no matter how busy he was with hockey related matters his family always came first. Jean Beliveau was truly a dedicated and loyal family man.

Personally, growing up, I was a die hard Chicago Blackhawks fan not a Habs fan! Bobby Hull was my favourite player. I remember when the Montreal Canadiens defeated the Black Hawks in game 7 of the 1970 – 71 playoffs to win the Stanley Cup. As a young boy, I was extremely upset over the devastating loss that particular evening. So much so that I went to bed and did not watch the presentation of Lord Stanley's trophy and witness Captain Beliveau skate around the ice! However, as I grew older and learned more about the game of hockey, I realized how great a player and how well respected a man he was in the hockey world. He was admired by so many people! Jean Beliveau always placed the integrity of the game, the essence of team play and winning over any individual accomplishments or accolades. It became easy to be a fan and admire the man. He inspired

everyone to be a better person.

In closing, I wish to recall Louis Armstrong's song "What a wonderful world".

Mr. Beliveau was a tremendous role model for the game of hockey and an upstanding citizen. His legacy is surely inspiring to today's NHL players and the public in large. Imagine what a better and more beautiful world we would live in if more people exhibited the personal traits and qualities of Mr. Beliveau. Just imagine what kind of society we would have if everyone lived that way? We could close up our jails! Parents certainly can use Jean Beliveau as a positive role model for their children, a standard of character to live up to, such a kind and decent man. On behalf of the common man such as myself, who grew up on Little Bay Island, Newfoundland and looked up to Mr. Beliveau, I wish to say thank you for your wonderful hockey legacy and inspiration. You have definitely touched so many lives with your class and gentlemanly ways. You have made "a difference" that will not be forgotten in the hockey world. Your positive role model and legacy will certainly live on! Rest in Peace Mr. Beliveau. You will be missed.

A Zen Poem

**If there is light in the soul
There is beauty in the person
If there is beauty in the person
There will be harmony in the home
If there is harmony in the home
There will be order in the nation
If there is order in the nation
There will be peace in the world**