



New hockey fan **Abdullah Ghori** outside the Hockey Hall of Fame in Toronto.

Hockey for newcomers

Getting in the spirit of this great national sport could help you feel more Canadian

asides from maple syrup, there is nothing more Canadian than hockey. Even though a Canadian team hasn't won the Stanley Cup since 1993, Canadians love this sport. Many of this country's heroes come not from politics or wars fought, but from on-ice excellence.

Hockey is not just a sport, but a symbol of national pride. If the 2010 Winter Olympic Games were any indication, being a hockey fan

is as much a symbol of Canadian identity as wearing the maple leaf on your sleeve. When Canadian player Sydney Crosby scored the gold medal goal in overtime, the country burst into a collective whooping cheer that could be heard from coast to coast. For newcomers who are unfamiliar with the sport, learn-

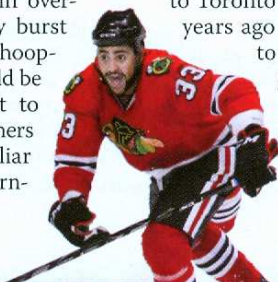
By Lisa Evans

ing about hockey culture could be as crucial to integration as learning to say "eh."

Abdullah Ghori immigrated to Toronto from Pakistan three years ago and has since come to love the sport. "I just gradually fell in love with the fast pace of the game," he says. Living in Toronto has transformed

him into a Maple Leafs fan, and he shows his optimism despite the team's shortcomings. "Even though their chips have been down for the last few years, I sense something brewing this year," he says.

Ghori agrees that following the sport is a great way for newcomers to integrate into their new country. Becoming a hockey fan "gives you a sense of belonging. It gives you a reason to be happy or sad with your fellow countrymen.



Canada losing a soccer game or a cricket match wouldn't have the same effect on Canadians, but losing a hockey game is a very big deal," he says.

"[I think] hockey should be a very integral part of new immigrants' education program. I think it should also be part of the Canadian citizenship test," jokes Ghori.

For many Canadians, Saturday nights during the National Hockey League (NHL) season are as sacred as Sunday is for churchgoers, with fans glued to their televisions, set to CBC's *Hockey Night in Canada*.

But, as the country has become increasingly multicultural, so has the national sport followed. Punjabi commentators Parminder Singh and Harnarayan Singh (and later Amarinder Singh) represented a new generation of Canadian hockey fans when they became the hosts of *Hockey Night in Canada — Punjabi Edition*. Hoping to introduce Punjabi Canadians to Canada's national winter sport, the Singhs became household names in many immigrant homes. Unfortunately, the broadcast was cancelled this fall by CBC, which could not find a sponsor for the program.

"A lot of the attention that hockey received from the community has been attributed to this broadcast," said Harnarayan Singh to the *Toronto Star*. "This broadcast wasn't just any broadcast; it was really creating something special."

CANADIAN HOCKEY HEROES

Until now, Canada's biggest hockey heroes have all been Canadian-born athletes. Here below are some of the country's most famous hockey icons, from the 1940s to today. Who will be the next big Canadian hockey icon? Maybe it will be a first-generation Canadian!

Sidney Crosby

Nicknamed "Sid the Kid," Sidney Crosby was the youngest player to be named MVP (most valuable player) of the NHL. He led his team, the Pittsburgh Penguins, to the Stanley Cup in 2009, when he was only 21 years old and became a legend when he scored the overtime goal to clinch Olympic gold for Team Canada in the 2010 Winter Olympic Games.

Wayne Gretzky

Nicknamed "The Great One," Wayne Gretzky won four Stanley Cups in his career spanning 22 NHL seasons. He played for the Edmonton Oilers, Los Angeles Kings, St. Louis Blues and New York Rangers.

By December, the Punjabi edition was back on CBC's airwaves, thanks to new sponsor Chevrolet. Harnarayan Singh returns to call the play-by-play for two games every Saturday during the regular season and one series in each round of the Stanley Cup playoffs.

Bobby Orr

Bobby Orr played in the NHL for a dozen years in the 1960s and 1970s, first with the Boston Bruins and then the Chicago Black Hawks. Orr, from Ontario, is widely acknowledged to be one of the greatest hockey players of all time.

Gordie Howe

Often referred to as Mr. Hockey, Gordie Howe is regarded as one of the greatest hockey players of all time. Originally from Saskatchewan, he played from the 1940s to the 1980s. He is a four-time Stanley Cup champion with the Detroit Red Wings.

Maurice Richard

Nicknamed "The Rocket," Maurice Richard won eight Stanley Cups with the Montreal Canadiens in the 1940s and 1950s and was the league's first 50-goal scorer.

For Ghori, the next step is getting his two sons hooked on the game — and maybe even donning a pair of skates for the first time himself. "Since I wasn't brought up here, I never learned the art of skating [on ice], but it's something that I want to learn at some point," he says. 🍁

Hockey talk

Not sure what it means when the referee calls "icing," or a player "dekes" successfully, gets a "breakaway" and achieves a "hat trick"? Here is some need-to-know hockey terminology.

● **Breakaway** When a player has possession of the puck and there is no one other than the goalie between him and the opposing net.

● **Deke** When a player handles the puck in such a manner to fool the opponent into moving out of position, allowing the player to get past.

● **Faceoff** At the beginning of a period or after a stoppage of play, the two teams line up in opposition to each other. The puck is then dropped and one player from each team attempts to gain control of it.

● **Icing** When a forward player shoots the puck from behind the centre line to behind the other team's goal line (the red line) without it being touched.

● **Offside** When a forward player enters the other team's zone before the puck does.

● **Hat trick** When a player scores three goals in one game.

● **Zamboni** The ice resurfacer machine that drives around on the ice to smoothen it after a game.

Hockey primer

For first-time hockey game viewers, here is a quick hockey primer.

➔ HOW LONG IS THE GAME?

A hockey game is made up of three 20-minute periods, with intermissions of 15 minutes between each period.

➔ WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THERE'S A TIE?

Unlike soccer and baseball, a hockey game cannot end in a tie. During the regular NHL season, teams will play five minutes of overtime (extra time) with four players on the ice instead of five. If neither team scores a

goal, they will go to a shootout in which players shoot one on one against the opposing team's goalie. The shootout continues until one side scores a goal and the opposing team does not.

➔ WHAT ARE PENALTIES AND POWERPLAYS?

Think of the referee as a parent monitoring his children and sending them to their room when they do something they shouldn't. In hockey, minor penalties include actions such as tripping, elbowing and high sticking (hitting another player above the waist with the stick). Players are given two minutes in the box for these misbehav-

ours. More serious violations such as checking (hitting) from behind can result in five-minute penalties.

When one team has a penalty called against them, the punished player sits in the "penalty box," leaving their team "short-handed" (with four players on the ice), while the opposing team continues to play with five, giving them a "one-man advantage" or a "powerplay."

➔ WHAT IS THE STANLEY CUP?

Named after former governor general Sir Frederick Arthur Stanley, the Stanley Cup is the coveted trophy fought for each NHL season. The cup has every

winning player's name inscribed since it was first awarded in 1926. You can see the cup on display at the Hockey Hall of Fame in Toronto.

➔ WHO ARE RON MACLEAN AND DON CHERRY?

Ron MacLean and Don Cherry have become household names since they began their popular segment *Coach's Corner* in 1987. During the first intermission, the straight-dressed MacLean goes head-to-head against the over-the-top, eccentri- cally dressed former coach Don Cherry on topics such as fighting and the best and worst plays of the week. 🏒

