



## **Memories of Sport**

**By Ted Holland**

**(courtesy of Canstar Community News)**

In February 1976, Toronto Maple Leafs centre Darryl Sittler established an NHL scoring record that stands today. He scored six goals and added four assists in an 11-4 win against the Boston Bruins. The previous record for points in a single NHL game was eight, held jointly by Maurice Richard and Bert Olmstead, both of the Montreal Canadiens.

Meanwhile, Winnipeg had its own hot scorer in Art Stratton, a playmaker deluxe. Fifty-five years ago this week on St. Patrick's Day in 1963, the Buffalo Bisons centre chalked up nine assists in an 11-2 victory over the Pittsburgh Hornets, an American Hockey League record for points in one game that remains in the record books. Doug Robinson, Ed Kachur and Cliff Schmutz all registered hat tricks in the game with Billy Dea and Brian Smith adding singles. Former Winnipegger Billy Reay was the Buffalo coach.

Art and his brother Gord played junior for the Winnipeg Barons, a team owned by hockey legend Eddie Shore. In 1954-55 they tied at the top of the MJHL scoring race. Joe Cyr was the third member of the high-scoring line with occasional appearances by Jimmy Chow. Art later joined the St. Catherines Teepees juniors, a team that had Winnipeggers Ab McDonald and Ed Hoekstra and a young Bobby Hull in the line-up.

Art then embarked on a career that took him across North America.

"I've been everywhere," he likes to say.

Stratton's 20 pro seasons included 95 NHL games with New York Rangers, Detroit, Chicago, Pittsburgh and Philadelphia. His odyssey through the east and midwest also saw him in the lineup of the Cleveland Barons, Springfield Indians, Kitchener-Waterloo Beavers, St. Louis Braves, Tidewater Wings, Virginia Red Wings, Rochester Americans, Richmond Robins and Hampton Gulls as well as the Bisons and Hornets.

Stratton loved to play hockey but believed a player should be adequately compensated for his effort on the ice. He often would add personal bonuses to his contract before signing.

In 1956-57 when Cleveland balked at his salary demands, he chose to play senior for the North Bay Trappers. The next season, Stratton returned home and played in the Western Hockey League with the Winnipeg Warriors. The Manitoba contingent on the team included Ray Mikulan in goal, Frank Arnett, Mickey Keating and Danny Summers on defence and forwards



Pete Kapusta, Bill Mosienko, Gordie Redahl, Murray Wilkie and Steve Witiuk. Late in his career, Stratton spent four more years in the WHL with the Seattle Totems.

He went on negotiating his own contracts until he claimed he was the most hated player by general managers.

"I talked to a lawyer named Eagleson (Alan, the late disgraced founder of the National Hockey League Players' Association) but he didn't do anything for me. He sent me a bill for \$300. I sent him a cheque for \$150," Stratton said.

In 1965 with Buffalo, Stratton was the AHL most valuable player, a first-team all-star and the scoring champion. He also made the first team in 1963 and 1964 and won another MVP award in 1974 with Rochester. In 2015, Stratton, who played for seven different AHL teams, added to his honours when he was inducted into the league Hall of Fame. The 1989 Manitoba Hockey Hall of Fame inductee lives in St. Adolphe, MB.

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