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## FROM THE MONTREAL CANADIENS LOCKER ROOM

### Camp hectic but fun for Gervais

**P**ierre Gervais has seen his share of training camps. After all, the 45-year-old is entering his twentieth season as an equipment manager with the Montreal Canadiens, nine of them as the head man. Yet, Pierre remains as enthusiastic as ever about the start of a new campaign. We caught up with Pierre as he and his team were busy preparing for Habs training camp.

**THN:** How is it like working for the storied Canadiens?

**PG:** Obviously, in Montreal, like it is in the rest of Canada, hockey is religion. There's a lot of buzz in the city, even for the start of training camp.

**THN:** Do you find training camp stressful?

**PG:** It can be, definitely. Things are coming at you left and right. We

have 62 guys at camp this year and each guy has his own particular equipment needs. We have a bunch of exhibition games over a short period of time, including one in Moncton, N.B., and another in Halifax, so there's a lot of travel. Lineups are being juggled; some guys are playing one night, others just practising. It's a lot of work, but also a lot of fun.

**THN:** How do you deal with the pressure?

**PG:** It's challenging, but I have great guys helping me out. There are my assistants here in Montreal, we have the equipment guys from Hamilton (AHL) here, and some other help too. In total, we have eight equipment guys here for camp, and four or five medical guys. During the

season, it's half that size.

**THN:** How is it for the rookies during training camp?

**PG:** They're amazed with everything. They're excited to be wearing an NHL jersey and being in a big-league atmosphere. And you can see the influence of the older players on them. The rookies watch the older guys; they keep a low

profile and listen to the veterans.

**THN:** Do things settle down during the season?

**PG:** Yes. The team is down to 20 or so players, and all the equipment needs have been sorted out, so a routine develops.

**THN:** How has training camp changed over the years?

**PG:** To be quite honest, it hasn't that much. The only difference is there is a lot

more equipment now, and every guy has his own particular thing.

**THN:** You use the new Blademaster Ultimate for sharpening skates. How do you like it?

**PG:** I love it. It runs very smoothly and all the parts are very responsive. I'm intending to get another one for the practice rink.



**Pierre Gervais**  
Equipment Manager



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