

FROM THE TORONTO MAPLE LEAFS LOCKER ROOM

PAPINEAU KEEPS LEAFS SHARP

One of the longest tenured equipment managers in the NHL, Brian Papineau started with the Leafs organization in 1986 as equipment manager for the farm team Newmarket Saints. Since getting the call to the NHL in 1988, Papineau has worked with some of the best players in the game, both with the Leafs and with Team Canada at the World Hockey Championships.

THN: What's been the biggest change in your job over the years, in your opinion?

BP: A lot of equipment has evolved over the years – different foams and plastics to keep the players protected, regulations on shoulder pads, and also the goaltending equipment.

THN: What's the best part of the job?

BP: Meeting all the different players and staff coaches and management over the years; just getting to share in the emotion with the players – whether you win or lose, you feel like a part of the team.

THN: You were caught on TV during the 1993 playoffs squirting a water bottle like champagne and celebrating when the Leafs knocked out the Red Wings in overtime. Where does that rank in terms of your personal highlights?

BP: It was definitely one of the top ones for me. That year the team was doing well and it was probably my first opportunity to be in a play-off series like that. There was so much emotion that when we won, it was overwhelming and just it felt great. All the other conference finals



**BRIAN
PAPINEAU**
EQUIPMENT
MANAGER



and playoff games that we've gotten to play over the years – there've been a lot of good moments.

THN: Who's been the hardest player to please? How finicky are guys with their equipment?

BP: It's hard to pinpoint

one player. Every year you probably find one or two guys that you have to spend more time working with on their skates or equipment. Most players in general don't care too much. It's just a handful of guys that might want to tinker with their equipment.

THN: How long have you used Blademaster skate sharpening, and how has your experience been with it?

BP: I just recently switched back to a Blademaster machine – over the last seven or eight years it's amazing to see the change in machinery. The PLATINUM machine they have today is wonderful. It's got a clean filtered exhaust, the machine is quieter, and the tabletop made of granite allows for a smooth surface to work with.

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