

HOT DOG EATING CHAMP CHOKES — LITERALLY

Almost guaranteed to happen in the final six months of 2023:

July — Cam Smith makes headlines by being the first LIV Golf Tour player to win a major, taking the Open Championship at Royal Liverpool; Leylah Annie Hernandez of Canada captures the women's singles crown at Wimbledon; Major news out of New York: Hot dog eating champion Joey Chestnut chokes on frankfurter No. 53 during the annual Fourth of July competition on Coney Island and is given the Heimlich manoeuvre by a quick-thinking bystander.

August — The Blue Jays maintain a top-two standing in the A.L. East, led by the slugging heroics of Vladimir Guerrero, Jr., the pitching of free-agent right-hander Chris Bassitt and the flashy outfield defence of Kevin Kiermaier; Canada's Alphonso Davies leads Bayern Munich to the Champions League title; Rory McIlroy's victory at the Tour Championship for the Fed-Ex Cup is mocked by Patrick Reed for having been won "against a second-rate field."

September — It's the month of debuts, as Connor Bedard skates in his first pre-season NHL game with the (Blackhawks, Blue Jackets, Flyers ... ?); Former Calgary quarterback Bo Levi Mitchell guides his new CFL team, Hamilton Tiger-Cats, to first place in the East Division; and Canadian QB Nathan Rourke gets his first NFL action in a pre-season game with Jacksonville, wowing the coaching staff and football fans.

October — Tom Brady leads his newest team, the Las Vegas Raiders, to a 5-0 start in the NFL while Aaron Rodgers is the toast off New York as his new team, the Jets, scoot off to a 4-1 start; Seattle Mariners knock off Toronto Blue Jays in the American League championship and then go on to beat Los Angeles Dodgers in an all-West Coast World Series.

November — The all-Connor scoring race is heating up in the NHL, with McDavid holding a slight edge over Bedard after 20 games; Winnipeg Blue Bombers knock off Hamilton to win their third Grey Cup in four years; French-born basketball sensation Victor Wembanyama makes the biggest rookie splash in the NBA since LeBron James.

December — Once again, Patrick Reed will not receive a Christmas card from Rory McIlroy; Alex Ovechkin gets to within 40 goals of Wayne Gretzky's career total of 894, and North American calls grow louder for Putin to bring the Great 8 home to fight in the war with Ukraine; O.J. Simpson concludes another year without finding the real killer.

- **Jason Sobel** of Sirius SX, on Twitter: "**Patrick Reed** threw a tee at Rory McIlroy, which might not sound like much, but this is essentially golf's version of a bench-clearing brawl."
- From **Pro Golf Stuff**, on Twitter, expanding on the **Rory McIlroy-Patrick Reed** rivalry: "**Patrick Reed** spoke out against Rory saying 'He'll never win a Masters to complete a career Grand Slam.' Rory later said 'The only chance Reed has of getting a Grand Slam is at Denny's.'"
- Blogger **Gregg Drinnan** in his very entertaining Taking Note column, quoting 1970s Winnipeg junior defenceman **Kevin McCarthy**, who, when as a member of the Vancouver Canucks, was part of a group mugged by a gang of youths in Chicago: "One guy started it by suckering **Jere (Gillis)**." "I thought I was back in Queen's Park Arena."
- Comedy writer **Alex Kaseberg**: "PGA golfers **Patrick Reed** and **Rory McIlroy** are in a feud. Golf feuds are different. McIlroy accused Reed of wearing white after Labour Day, and Reed mocked the pleats in McIlroy's khakis."
- Columnist **Mike Bianchi** of the Orlando Sentinel: "I just saw where 'Triangle of Sadness' got nominated for an Academy Award. I haven't seen it, but I'm thinking it's a documentary about the weekly meetings last season between USF's offensive, defensive and special teams coordinators."
- **RJ Currie** of sportsdeke.com: "The Edmonton Oilers hung updates of their 20 total NHL division, conference and Cup banners at Rogers Place. Not to be outdone, the Winnipeg Jets installed new Plexiglas"
- Headline from fark.com: "**Chet Holmgren** voted as an All-Star starter by several NBA players presumably because they all wanted to take turns dunking on him."
- Former junior hockey player **Brant Kersey**, reacting to a Lethbridge Hurricanes' Wall of Honour recognition for longtime coach and scout **Bob Loucks**: "The guy has such a terrific eye for talent, watched me in '94 and knew I wasn't good enough."
- **Steve Simmons** of Sunmedia: "Depending on who you follow, listen to, or read, the Maple Leafs will be acquiring **Ryan O'Reilly**, **Timo Meier**, **Bo Horvat**, **Patrick Kane**, **Jonathan Toews**, **Max Domi**, **John Klingberg**, **Jake McCabe**, **Vladislav Gavrikov** and the Mormon Tabernacle Choir at or around the NHL's trade deadline next month."
- Golfer **Max Homa**, basking in the glow of a victory at the Farmers Insurance Open in an interview with **Kira K. Dixon**, when it was mentioned it was his first win since becoming a father: "This will definitely be the best-smelling

diaper I have changed.”

Care to comment? Email brucepenton2003@yahoo.ca