

The Wisdom of Billy Joel

Sometimes, hockey teams can learn from other franchises in their sport, or occasionally, in other athletic endeavors. But, believe it or not, the Caps could learn a thing or two from Billy Joel's song, "The Entertainer."

For example, towards the beginning of the song, Joel sings:

*"Today I am your champion, I may have won your hearts
But I know the game, you'll forget my name
And I won't be here in another year
If I don't stay on the charts"*

The Caps certainly "won the hearts" of their fans and the NHL with their exciting playing style and regular-season winning ways. But they haven't been able to translate that to playoff success, winning just one of four series under Coach Bruce Boudreau. It's time to make some changes and tweak the personnel. And, most importantly, slightly alter their style of play or, more accurately, ensure everybody on the roster sticks to Boudreau's brilliant system.

*"I am the entertainer and I've had to pay my price
The things I did not know at first I learned by doing twice"*

The Caps now have blown a two-game lead in a series in consecutive seasons. Serious Stanley Cup contenders possess a killer instinct and don't give any hope to their opposition. The Caps need to develop that and, quite frankly, worry about results more than style points. It's more than "if, at first you don't succeed, try try again." The Caps need to do something to ensure that, in their case, the third time isn't another curse.

*"I am the entertainer, the idol of my age
I make all kinds of money when I go on the stage
You see me in the papers, I've been in the magazines
But if I go cold, I won't get sold
I get put in the back in the discount rack
Like another can of beans"*

Hypothetically, the Caps' window of opportunity is wide open. They've got a young core who, for the most part, hasn't even reached their 25th birthdays. Their farm system is stacked and there is tons of hope. But they need to make sure they do everything in their power to stay on top of things. They don't want anything to get stale and end up, as Joel sings, "back in the discount rack."

Making some changes this summer—by both addition and subtraction—will help the Caps get closer to their ultimate goal: the Stanley Cup. *Look for lots more on this subject moving forward.*